



FRATERNITAS

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The Inauguration of the Auditorium Antonianum

The General Chapter of 2003 decided upon the kind of restructuring that should take of the Great Hall of the PUA, so that it may become usable, not only for our internal purposes, but also for external events as well. The wait to obtain necessary permissions from the State for the restructuring proved long and tiring. The building is located in the Historical Center of Rome and is protected by the office of Monuments and Cultural Heritage. The main problem the Friars have never been able to resolve was to add emergency doors that lead outside the building in case of need. Thanks to intelligent and understanding State Officials, however, who considered this restructuring as a way of "restoring" to the city a property in disuse, permission was granted to reopen this important structure in accordance with the law for the city of Rome. It took about 3 yrs before this goal was achieved. The Inauguration Evening was aired by RAI and was broadcast during the Christmas season. The actors and the Friars alternated between each other during the 70 minutes broadcast. The former took turns in the reading of excerpts from the Franciscan sources while the latter shared their experiences at the Leprosarium of Cumura in Guinea Bissau and at the village of the Ark in Kazakhstan. There was a presentation by Fr. Eligio Gelimin re- his community of "Mondo X" as well as the sharing of other experiences.



50 Years of the Marian Academy

Pontificia Academia Mariana Internationalis



On December 8, 1959, Blessed Pontiff John XXIII granted with the *motu proprio* the title of "Pontifical" to the International Marian Academy. Founded in 1946 by Fr. Carlo Balić as the "Commissio Marialis Franciscana", it became a Pontifical Institution of Mariology with experts from around the world. In order to remember this anniversary, a concert was held on December 20, followed by the Celebration of the Eucharist presided by the Minister General.

Visit the website at
<http://www.accademiamariana.org/>

Agenda of the Minister General

- **06 January:** Feast of the Epiphany of the Lord/Saint Mary in Aracoeli in Rome, Italy.
- **08-10 January:** Visit to the Province of Sts. Cyril and Methodius in Zagreb, Croatia.
- **11-17 January:** Meeting of General Definitory at the General Curia in Rome, Italy.
- **15 January:** Feast of the University and the Great Chancellor at the PUA in Rome, Italy.
- **18-29 January:** Meeting with the New Ministers Provincial at the General Curia in Rome, Italy.

The Animation Committee of JPIC to the Order

The animation committee of JPIC of the Order met in Rome from October 26-31. The members exchanged information about their experiences in the last six months and the Friars of the JPIC of Rome updated all their most recent initiatives. The main objectives of the meeting were to draw up a six months straight program and prepare for the upcoming international meeting which will take place in Bolivia from February 21-27, 2010. The half-yearly program was presented to the General Definitory during their meeting in November. It is

very much based on the document of the General Chapter, *Bearers of the Gift of the Gospel*, which can be easily downloaded from the website of the Order. The document recommends all the Entities of the Order to get involved with the help of the JPIC office. The next JPIC course will be at the *Antonianum* from **April 13 -23, 2010**.

For more information see <http://www.ofm.org/ofmnews/?p=2625>

Central African Republic – National Chapters of the SFO and YouFra

Both the SFO National Elective Chapter and the Chapter of Mats of YouFra took place from Nov. 19-26, 2009, in the Central African Republican city of Bangui. The SFO fraternity there was celebrating 50 years since its birth. Before the celebration of the Chapters, there was a formation course for both the SFO and YouFra. A major help behind its preparation and meetings came from the Spiritual Assistants Br. Aristide Ngoto, OFMCap, SFO Assistant National Br. Toussaint Zoumalde, OFMCap, and Br. Thaddee Kusy, OFM. The last two are SFO Regional Assistants. Present on behalf of the Presidency of the SFO International Council (aka CIOFS) were Encarnacion del Pozo,

Minister General of the SFO, Michèle Altmeyer, Councilor of the Presidency for the French language, Elisabeth Collet as the delegate for YouFra, and Br. Ivan Matić, OFM, Assistant General of the SFO-YouFra. All of them pitched in to guide all the moments of formation during the meeting.

The elective session of the SFO Chapter unfolded on Nov. 23 during which Cyriaque Dominique Kangala was elected as National Minister and Adolphe Leon Nzafio Binguinimi as International Councilor. It was then concluded with the Celebration of the Eucharist presided by Msgr. Dieudonné Nzapalainga, Apostolic Administrator of Bangui.

New Critical Edition on the Writings of St. Francis

The Minister General and his Definitory in 2005 entrusted Br. Carlo Paozzani of the Province of Trent and a member of the College of St. Bonaventure of Grottaferrata to produce a new critical edition on the writings of St. Francis. After many years of dedication, Br. Carlo has finally concluded this work.

The edition is available in Latin/Italian and Latin/Spanish. The title of the Critical Text is *Francisci Assisiensis Scripta* and is divi-

ded in three sections: (1) Praises and Prayers, (2) Letters, (3) Rules and Admonitions. There is also an appendix with the "dicta" and the lost letters. The text will appear in the *Editiones Collegii S. Bonaventurae ad Claras Aquas, Grottaferrata*, Rome, 2009.

Australia – Conference for the 800th Anniversary

A Conference entitled, *Interpreting St. Francis and St. Clare in a Multi-Religious Society: From the Medieval to the Present*, took place at Yarra Theological Union, Box Hill in Melbourne, Australia from November 19-21, 2009, to underscore 800 years since the approval of our Franciscan Charism.

Some of the international experts who gave the main presentations were Professor Jacques Delarun, Br. Michael Cusato, Br. Maurice Carmody and the Poor Clare Briege O'Hare. About 100 persons participated in this Conference. Different aspects of the Conference were worthy of notice. First of all, the original idea came from two lay people, Dr. Constant Mews, Director of the Center for Religious and Theological Studies at the Monash University, and Dr. Claire Renkin, Lecturer in history of Art and Spirituality at the Yarra Theological Union. The Conference was organized by both Academic Institutions and supported financially by the Australian Province of the Holy Spirit with donations generously also by other aid agencies.

While looking at the great themes in Franciscan history through the centuries, the Conference also made note of the Franciscan Charism as it is incarnated in modern times. The presentations covered the Franciscan Intellectual Tradition in its many facets of theology, spirituality, art, poetry, and living examples of contemporary Franciscan and Clarian life.

Also worthy of mention among these 25 lecturers was the presence of many young lay experts whose interest in Franciscan Studies led them to give speeches for the Conference; their presence and culture was a source of encouragement for the future of Intellectual Franciscan Tradition in both Australia and New Zealand. The publication of the speeches is foreseen for the year 2010. Writing to the Friars of the Provinces, the Minister Provincial Paul Smith summarized the event well for us by saying that "It was a conclusion truly worthy of the Eighth Centenary.

Italy – Celebration of the Eighth Centenary in Milan

The celebration of the 8th Centenary of the approval of the Rule in Milan is becoming an instrument of reflection and involvement for the entire civil and ecclesial community around both the figure and message of Francis and his Friars.

The first moments together were spent in prayer and meditation; they consisted in a prayer vigil on the Feast of the Stigmata in the Church of St. Angelo and the celebration of the Eucharist by the Cardinal Archbishop of Milan Dionigi Tettamanzi with other concelebrant bishops from Lombardy. The Liturgical Celebration took place in the Basilica of St. Ambrose on Oct. 2, 2009, in preparation for the feast of St. Francis. It not only showed the ties that exist between the Franciscan family with the local Church, but also the expressions of gratitude of latter toward the former for the good sown for eight centuries in the city of Milan as well as in the whole Lombard region. After the homily by the Cardinal, the representatives of the Franciscan families of the First Order renewed their religious profession in the hands of the Archbishop as a way of expressing their willingness to serve the Church.

In the meantime, an exhibition organized by the whole First Order Franciscans and other experts from various

fields took place at Milan's Capuchin Museum of Fine Arts. It will be open to the Public from November 29, 2009 – March 21, 2010 and will display the text of the Later Rule of St. Francis through artistic works, such as paintings, manuscript, pictures, ancient printings, etc., which are part of the Franciscan patrimony of Lombardy. One piece, in particular, from the Museum of the Porziuncula has never been in Milan before until now; it is the ancient and famous painting of St. Francis, attributed to Cimabue. A virtual visit is now possible thanks to the rich catalog published by the Franciscans Biblioteca Publishers.

The same publishing house is publishing "St. Francis in Milan", which is a guide to Franciscan Places in the city that has been around since its founding in the XIII century to the present day. Furthermore, in order to deepen the knowledge of some of these places there will also be a season of concerts until May of 2010. To complete the program, there will be a study convention on the early Franciscan Fraternity and its development and spreading throughout Lombardy. Presentations will be given by Cesare Vaiani, OFM, Luigi Pellegrini, OFM Cap, and other Professors from both the State and Catholic Universities of Milan.

France – Celebrations for the VIII Centenary of the Franciscan Charism

The Franciscan family of France promoted various ways of celebrating the VIII Centenary of the birth of the Franciscan Charism. Among the most recent ones are an international Symposium on "St. Francis of Assisi Today" and a great national gathering at Lourdes.

The first event unfolded in Paris at the College of the Bernardines from Oct. 2-4, 2009. About 300 participated in the Symposium among whom were a good number of thinkers, intellectual, and medievalist; it was concluded with a solemn celebration of the Feast of St. Francis presided by Msgr. Jérôme Beau, Auxiliary Bishop of Paris in the Cathedral of Notre Dame of Paris.

The second event unfolded in Lourdes, France, from Oct. 24-26. All the branches of the Franciscan Family of France, Belgium, and Switzerland participated, which was about 2000 persons of which 200 were youth belonging to YouFra. The days unfolded in

the grotto of Massabielle and were marked by moments of prayer, listening, meetings, and shows. During both events, a message of the Minister General was read.

For further information about these two events, check the website at both www.ktotv.com and www.franciscains.fr

The Minister General as Member of the Executive Committee of the USG

During the half yearly assembly of the Union of Superiors General (USG), the Minister General was re-elected for an additional three years as member of the Executive Committee of the USG. The number of male religious institutions that belong to the USG is 220. The Minister General was also appointed as President of the Theological Commission of the same Union and a member of the committee responsible with the Congregation for the Consecrate Life regarding matters pertaining to Consecrated life.

Poland – Study Day on the 4 Franciscan Rules

On the occasion of the celebration of the VIII Centenary of the approval of the Protorule of St. Francis, there was a day of study on the formative and pastoral aspects of the Franciscan rule entitled, "This is the Rule and Life according to the Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; it took place on November 21, 2009, in Warsaw at the Franciscan Center for Eastern Europe and Northern Asia.

The day was marked by speeches, a round table discussion, and the showing of film entitled, "Let us Live the Spirit of St. Francis". The total number of speeches were 5: (1) Rules, Appreciation or Formalization of Charisms?" by Sr. Teresa Paszkowska, professor at the KUL of Lublino; (2) The Protorule in Light of the Way of Life of Clare of Assisi" by Br. Wiesław Block, ofmcap, professor at the PUA of Rome; (3) "The Rules of the 1st and 2nd Order: Genesis and Originality" by Br. Andrzej Zając, ofmconv, Kraków; (4) The Rules of the 3rd Order and of the Secular Franciscan Order, Features, History, and Relevancy" by Br. Prejs, ofmcap, professor at the KUL of Lublino; (5) "Common Elements of the 4 Franciscan Rules and their Realization Today" by Br. Thaddée Matura, ofm, Avignon. The round table discussion tackled two problems, that is, whether or not it is still possible today to understand the rule of St. Francis "simpliciter e sine glossa" and how to present Franciscan Radicalness to the world today. The film last 20 minutes and was made by Sylwester Jasionkiewicz after being inspired by the writings of St. Francis and the discourse of John Paul II in Assisi.

This day of study was sponsored by the Conference of Franciscan Ministers Provincial in Poland (5 OFM, 3 OFMConv, and 2 OFMCap); it was promoted by three Franciscan Centers: The OFM Franciscan Center for Eastern Europe, Northern Asia, and Warsaw; the OFMConv Franciscan Institute Łódź, Łagiewniki; and the OFMCap Spirituality Center "Honoratianum", Zakroczym. Seventy participants, the majority of whom work in the area of formation represent all the branches of the Franciscan movement in Poland, including Franciscan youth.

Great and Small News

► **A Book by Br. Dominic Mandić:**

The second edition of the volume on Ancient Croatian History entitled, ""De Croatorum historia antiqua" by Dominik Mandić (1889-1973) was presented on November 18, 2009. Br. Dominik was a famous Croatian historian who was also both Definitor General and Economo General

The first edition was published in 1963 from the Historical Institute of Rome by both Br. Dionizije Lasić, Professor at the *Antonianum* and Br. Bazilije Pandžić, archivist of the Order; it included articles of history published in magazines outside of Croatia due to the communist regime in that country at the time. The original idea of coming up with a new edition in order to make it more readily accessible to the public is owed to the famous writer Mile Pešorda.

► **Growth and Future for the children of Bethlehem:** The Franciscans and the workers of the Custody of the Holy Land are endeavoring to sustain and strengthen Christian communities through new strategies that prevent future inconveniences for them.

In Bethlehem, for example, new ways of formation are being encouraged, such as the opening of schools in the afternoon for both mother and children; communal moments of animation that normalize social relations among the people and ensure children to grow up in conditions that are safe, serene, and secure.

Although educational work and support is promoted by the schools of the Custody to the neediest students, ordinary and urgent health care remain a priority for helping families in poor living conditions. For more info, click on <http://www.proterrasancta.org>

► **Day of the First Order in Trent – Italy:** On November 30, 2009, a day was celebrated to celebrate 800 yrs of our Order since its approval by Pope Innocent III. In the morning, 70 Friars Minor, Capuchin, and Conventual, gathered together at the Convent of St. Bernardine in order to pray, reflect, and share on the theme, "Our Rule: is the *forma vitae* still relevant?"

Those present were engaged by the witness of Br. Giacomo Bini. In its reflection, the former Minister General helped to re-read the Rule as still relevant, inviting us to live as a fraternity the fundamental dimension of our life (Gospel radicalness, contemplation, solidarity, and mission).

Moreover, by sharing his experience with his fraternity in Palestrina, Rome, he exhorted us not to be afraid to go among the people.

In order to express the ecclesial rootedness of our charism, the Friars gathered in the afternoon in the Cathedrals. There, they were welcomed with a liturgy by the Archbishop of Trent, Msgr. Luigi Bressan, before whom they renewed their religious profession. The Archbishop thanked God for Franciscan presence in Trent for over eight centuries, especially for the missionary thrust they gave to the Trenton Church. He also urged them not only to celebrate history, but also to build the future through a fruitful dialogue between charism and institution.

► **V Centenary of the Decision of the City of Fano, Italy:** On Jan. 21, 1509, the General Council of the City of Fano decided with a unanimous vote of more than 90 members that the Feast of the Immaculate, celebrated only in the Convent of Santa Maria Nuova, should be upgraded to the rank of Feast in all the city "so that God can deliver us from future evils." Since then, the Feast has been celebrated uninterruptedly with a great number of the faithful, even when the Church was badly damaged by war in 1944. On the occasion of the V Centenary of this decision, the Presidency of the Communal Council of Fano promoted an exhibition of images and post cards of Marian in nature inaugurated on Dec. 8, 2009, in the hall of Santa Maria Nuova.

► **6th Formation Course of Ongoing Formation on Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue in Istanbul:** In collaboration with the General Secretariat for Evangelization, the Commission of Service for Dialogue offers the Friars Minor and any one interested among the Franciscan Family a course of ongoing formation in Istanbul on Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue in both **English and French**. This course will unfold from October 18-29, 2010. The themes will be on *Formation to Dialogue in the Franciscan Charism, Ecumenical, Islamic-Christian, and Judeo-Christian Dialogue*. During the course, 3 days will be set aside for visiting the places that marked the "Churches of the Apocalypse". The cost of the course is € 500, 00. Friars interested may send their request for a reservation and all other information to Br. Rubén Tierrablanca at

rtierrablanca@ofm.org or via fax +90-212-2432791 by July 31, 2010, the latest. The first 20 Friars enrolled will be confirmed and will receive a detailed program of the course. The same course is foreseen to be offered in both **Italian and Spanish** from Oct. 17-29.

► **The South Asia, Australia, and Oceania Conference (SAAOC)** held its annual meeting at the St. Francis Retreat Center in Auckland, New Zealand, from Nov. 4-7, 2009. The president of the SAAOC, Br. Paul Smith gave a welcoming greeting to 14 Friars representing a great part of the 13 Entities of the Conference. The Friars that were present do ministry in Australia, India, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, West Papua, Singapore/Malaysia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, e New Zealand. Unfortunately, the Custos of Pakistan and the President of the Foundation in Timor East weren't able to be here due to visa problems. The Definitor General for Asia, Paskalis Bruno Syukur, OFM, was warmly received at the meeting. During his presentation, he repeated the call of the General Chapter and invited the Friars to plan according to the recommendations of the Chapter and in light of evangelizing missions. There was a proposal to develop an integrated method between the Secretariats of the Missions and Evangelization and JPIC and Formation. Plans are in the works, so that this meeting may be held in Thailand by the end of 2010.

► **Master of Evangelization in Brazil:** A group of 13 Friars coming from different parts of Latin America, a religious, and a member of the SFO completed their Master's degree in Evangelization on Oct. 30, 2009, at the Franciscan Theological Institute in Petropolis, Brazil. Each one received a certificate handed out by the Antonianum University. All of them expressed their overall satisfaction for the quality of the course and professors, for the methodology followed, the fraternal atmosphere, the inserted local fraternities, the richness of the library, and the sharing moments. Enrollment is open for the next course in March of 2010. Visit the website at www.itf.org.br

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