



**Capitulum
Generale**
OFM 2027



INDEX

Convocation of the General Chapter 2027	1
General Curia Agenda	2
Solemnity of St Francis 2026	3
Franciscan Bookmark.....	4
A new Via Crucis is blessed as a sign of the VIII Franciscan Centenary.....	4
General Chapter 2027: CEME meets in Florence.....	5
Letter from the Minister General and the Definitorium on the occasion of the Solemnity of Saint Francis 2026.....	6
Visit of the Minister General and the Vicar General to the Custody of the Martyrs in Morocco.....	6
Fraternal Visit of the Minister General to the Province of Santiago de Compostela.....	7
Meeting of the Provinces of the Iberian Peninsula.....	8
Reflections by Br. Massimo.....	9
Chapter of the Custody of Christ the King in Switzerland.....	10
New Forms of Life and Evangelization: European Friars' Meeting.....	11
General Office for JPIC Joined Interfaith Youth Forum in Nairobi, Kenya.....	11
The Continental Meeting of African JPIC Animators was held in Rwanda	12
Sarajevo: meeting of the 'Under Ten' friars of the Conference of St Jerome.....	14
Life in the Order.....	15
Celebrations for the 50th anniversary of the canonization of Saint Beatrice da Silva	16

**Convocation of the
General Chapter 2027**

*Sanctuary of Our Lady of Núi Cúi, Đồng
Nai, Vietnam, from May 5 to 30, 2027*

Given in Rome, at the General Curia of the Order

on October 4, 2026, Solemnity
of our Seraphic Father St. Francis

To all members of the General Chapter 2027

Dear Brothers,

May the Lord grant you His peace!

In this year in which we commemorate the eighth centenary of the Transitus of Saint Francis, these words of the earlier Rule have renewed significance for us. The General Chapter will once again be the place where we come together fraternally “to address matters concerning God”: to consider our mission and discern together how best to follow Christ and proclaim the Gospel today, as we entrust the future of the Order to the Lord.



This gathering will afford us the opportunity to celebrate fraternity as we give thanks for over eight centuries of fraternal life and ministry and discern together a path to the future.

With a similar desire and excitement as Saint Francis, in accordance with art. 141 §1 of the General Statutes, observing what has been established by the Rule (Chap. VIII) and the General Constitutions, art. 190 §1, I hereby officially convoke the ordinary General Chapter of the Order of Friars Minor, which will be held at the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Núi Cúi, Đồng Nai, Vietnam, from May 5 to 30, 2027.

The election of the Minister General is scheduled for May 17, 2027. On that day, in all the fraternities of the Order, the Eucharist should be celebrated with the specific intention of invoking the light of the Holy Spirit on the Chapter

and the election of the Minister General, using, where liturgical norms permit, the Mass of the Holy Spirit.

I invite all the brothers to pray from now until then and to prepare spiritually for this important stage in the life of the Order. A special invocation, to be prayed by all Friars and in all fraternities, will be available from today on the Chapter's webpage.

Read the full text of the Letter:

[Italiano](#) - [English](#) - [Español](#) - [Deutsch](#) - [Français](#) - [Hrvatski](#) - [Polski](#) - [Português](#)

Download the Prayer:

[Italiano](#) - [English](#) - [Español](#) - [Polski](#)

Watch the video on [Youtube](#)

General Curia Agenda



☑ Until the 10th October, the General Definitory will be at Mount Nebo (Jordan) for spiritual exercises. From the 11th to 14th October, the friars of the General Definitory will visit the friars of the Custody of the Holy Land.

☑ On 14th October, the Minister General, Br. Massimo Fusarelli, will attend a meeting in Rome with the 'Blessed Gabriele Allegra' Fraternity. From 16th to 22nd October, together with the General Definitory, Br. Joaquín A. Echeverry Hincapié, he will visit the Province of Saints Peter and Paul (Mexico).

☑ From 7th to 12th October, the Delegate pro Monialibus, Br. Fabio César Gomes, will take part in the Assembly of the Federations of the Poor Clares of Portugal and Spain. He will also visit the monasteries of Fátima, Santarém and the Azores in Portugal.

☑ From the 10th to 14th October, the Secretary General for Formation and Studies, Br. Darko Tepert, will visit the formators and those in formation in the two Peruvian Provinces: St Francis Solano and the Twelve Apostles.

☑ From the 14th to 18th October, together with the Vice-Secretary for Formation and Studies, Br.

Edson Augusto Nathuve, he will visit the formators and those in formation in the Province of St Francis of Quito, Ecuador.

☑ From 18th to 22nd October, the two friars will meet in Bogotá, Colombia, with the Provincial Secretaries for Formation and Studies of UCLAF (Union of Franciscan Conferences of Latin America).

☑ From the 12th to 16th October, the General Definitory, Br. Jimmy Zammit, will be in Washington, DC, for the meeting of the ESC (English-speaking Conference), which will be attended not only by ESC members but also by a number of Provincial Ministers from the Conference of Our Lady of Guadalupe (Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean).

☑ From 19th to 21st October the meeting of the International Commission for the Safeguarding of Minors and Vulnerable Adults will be held at the General Curia.

☑ From the 19th to 23rd October, the General Definitory, Br. Cesare Vaiani, will be in Santiago de Compostela, Spain, for the Ordinary Assembly of the CEM (Conference of Southern Europe).

Franciscan Centenaries



Solemnity of St Francis 2026

A symbol of peace with universal significance



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In 2026, the celebrations of the Solemnity of St Francis took on a truly special significance, marking the 800th anniversary of the *Transitus* of the *Poverello*, the poor man of Assisi. St Francis is not only the Patron Saint of Italy—where, beginning this year, 4th October is a national holiday—but also a universal symbol of peace. This theme served as the common thread linking the various events held in Assisi on 3rd and 4th October to commemorate St Francis's death. These events marked the culmination of [the Centenaries](#) that the Franciscan Family has been celebrating since 2023.

“On the Eighth Centenary of St Francis's death, the Porziuncola aims more than ever to be a place from which a message of encounter and hope can be conveyed,” said Br. Saul Tambini, Custos of the friary of the Porziuncola at Our Lady of the Angels- *Santa Maria degli Angeli*, where the *Transitus* was celebrated on the evening of the 3rd October. “It was here that St Francis chose to end his earthly life, leaving his brothers a great legacy of fraternity and reconciliation. For us, welcoming pilgrims, dignitaries, and representatives from all over Italy this year means renewing the Porziuncola's vocation to be a home open to all, a place of forgiveness and peace.”

The Saint of Assisi's universal message of peace—an icon of hope and fraternity—has reached the whole world, as demonstrated by the presence of ambassadors accredited to the Italian Republic. Those present also included Cardinal Matteo Maria Zuppi, Archbishop of Bologna and President of the Italian Bishops' Conference, and Monsignor Felice Accrocca, Bishop of Assisi-Nocera Umbra-Gualdo Tadino-Foligno. Monsignor Accrocca described Francis as a “defenceless herald of peace: a figure who still has so much to say to a world in which the winds of war are blowing, when many seem eager to flex their muscles, as if to convey the idea that issues should be settled not by the force of law, but by the law of force”.

The presence of the President of the Italian Republic, Sergio Mattarella, who addressed the congregation from the *Loggia* of the Sacred Convent following the Mass, made the day all the more significant and solemn.

[Read the Minister General's homily](#)

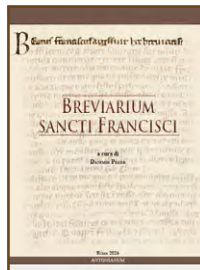
[Read the message from the President of the Italian Republic](#)





Franciscan Bookmark

Breviarium sancti Francisci



A cura di
Fr. Danimir Pezer, OFM
Prefazione di
Fr. Massimo Fusarelli, OFM
Edizioni Antonianum

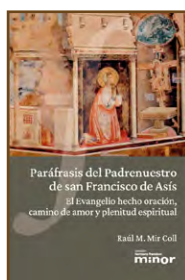
Haz de mí un
instrumento de tu paz.
La «oración simple» atribuida
a san Francisco de Asís.



Fr. Fidel Aizpurúa Donazar, OFMCap
Ediciones Franciscanas Arantzazu

Paráfrasis del Padrenuestro
de san Francisco de Asís.

El Evangelio hecho oración, camino
de amor y plenitud espiritual.



Raúl M. Mir Coll, OFS
Ediciones Franciscanas Arantzazu

A new Via Crucis is blessed as a sign of the VIII Franciscan Centenary

17 September 2026, Livno
(Bosnia-Herzegovina)



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On the occasion of the Feast of the Stigmata of St. Francis, on the 17th September, 2026, at the Franciscan friary of Gorica in Livno, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the new outdoor Via Crucis, created in the year of the eighth centenary of the death of St. Francis of Assisi (1226-2026), was blessed.

After Mass at the friary church, the Minister Provincial of the Franciscan Province of the Holy Cross – Bosnia Srebrena, Br. Zdravko Dadić, OFM, blessed the new Way of the Cross.

At the beginning of the celebration, the Guardian of the convent, Br. Marko Ešegović, OFM, greeted those present and recalled the spiritual and commemorative significance of the work.

The Stations, made of concrete and bronze, are the work of academic sculptors Anto Jurkić, Dejan Pranjković and Ilija Skočibušić. Br. Jozo Vrdoljak, OFM, promoted the realisation of the Via Crucis with particular commitment, whilst the friars of Gorica wanted to offer it to the faithful as a permanent sign of the VIII Franciscan Centenary.

The blessing on the Feast of the Stigmata recalls, in particular, the profound conformation of St. Francis to Christ crucified and invites the faithful to follow in His footsteps the path of discipleship and the Gospel.

The friars of the Franciscan friary of Gorica-Livno



General Chapter 2027



General Chapter 2027: CEME meets in Florence

Executive Committee for Missions and Evangelisation



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On the 14th and 15th September 2026, the Executive Committee for Missions and Evangelisation (CEME) met at the friary of Monte alle Croci in Florence, in the context of preparations for the 2027 General Chapter.

document dedicated to parishes and shrines, and prepared the response to be sent to the Secretary General of the General Chapter, which will be held in Vietnam from the 3rd to 29th May 2027.

This meeting was also marked by a significant moment of reflection on the journey made during the Committee's term of office. Each member was invited to look back on the experience shared; both in terms of the work accomplished and the fraternal life lived together.

A common conviction emerged from the various contributions: CEME has carried out its mission in a spirit of collaboration, mutual trust and shared responsibility. This way of working has helped to build a solid fraternity among its members and to strengthen their commitment to the service of the evangelising mission of the Order.

At the end of the meeting, the Minister General, Br. Massimo Fusarelli, addressed the participants by video link and expressed his gratitude to the members of the Committee. In his message, he thanked them for their availability, dedication and the quality of the work carried out during their term of office.

The meeting therefore marked the conclusion of one phase and, at the same time, an important step in the preparation for the 2027 General Chapter, called to continue and deepen the missionary orientations of the Order for the years ahead.



The meeting gave the members of the Committee the opportunity to continue their reflection on several matters central to the life and mission of the Order. Particular attention was given to the presentation of the *Vademecum* prepared for the implementation of the *Ratio Evangelizationis*, a resource intended to help each Entity draw up its own *Ratio particularis*. The participants also reviewed the specific Statutes of the Secretariat, worked on a new

During the meeting, Br. Matteo Brena, Secretary for Missions and Evangelisation of the Province of St Francis of the Stigmata, which hosted the gathering, was invited to share his experience and the challenges encountered in carrying out this service. His testimony enriched the Committee's reflection and offered a concrete contribution to the work of missionary animation, both at provincial level and within the Southern European Conference (CEM).



Government of the Order

Letter from the Minister General and the Definitorium on the occasion of the Solemnity of Saint Francis 2026 *The Passing Over of Francis – Eighth Centenary of the Transitus*



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Dear brothers and sisters:

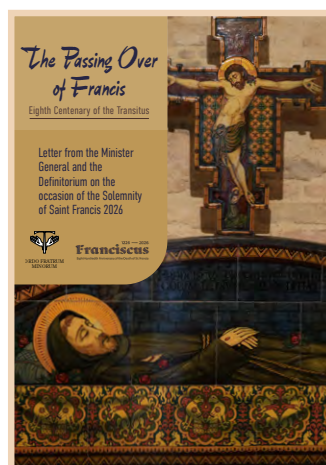
May the Lord give you peace!

For four years we have been preparing for and celebrating these special moments. You'll recall that we began in 2023, celebrating the 8th centenary of the approval of our Rule while commemorating the Nativity scene that Francis created at Greccio. The following year, 2024, it was the anniversary of the Sacred Stigmata, and so we contemplated that unique grace, the wounds of love that Our Lord shared with Francis 800 years earlier on Mount La Verna. In 2025, we meditated on the Canticle of Brother Sun, completed in 1225, and we were blessed to unearth even more of the richness and wisdom of this simple but beautiful poem. And now it is time, this year, to celebrate his Transitus, the 800th anniversary of the "passing over" of Saint Francis, the culminating moment of a life lived in intimate

union with Jesus Christ, the "passing over" of a man who had lived with a deep love for the Lord's paschal mystery.

Read the full text of the Letter:

[Italiano](#) - [English](#) - [Español](#) - [Deutsch](#) -
[Français](#) - [Hrvatski](#) - [Polski](#) - [Português](#)



Visit of the Minister General and the Vicar General to the Custody of the Martyrs in Morocco *Rabat, September 22-23, 2026*



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In Rabat, Morocco, on September 22 and 23, a joyful and serene meeting took place, which saw the friars of the Custody of the Blessed Martyrs welcome the Minister General, Br. Massimo Fusarelli, and the Vicar General, Br. Ignacio Ceja. Taking advantage of the visit, the Minister also visited the Poor Clares of Casablanca, who received him with songs and joy; the religious sisters also had the opportunity to dialogue and pray with him.

The meeting with the friars of the Custody had the main purpose of evaluating the state of the mission in this area of North Africa and of

encouraging the friars to continue to live the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ in these Muslim lands.

The Guardians of each of the six fraternities – Tetouan, Tangier, Larache, Rabat, Meknes and Marrakech – described the work carried out in their respective communities and shared the daily challenges they face. One of these challenges is the shortage of friars for missionary activity; due to the limited number of members, the workload has increased significantly, highlighting the urgent need for new missionaries for the Custody.

In a climate of dialogue, reflection, and prayer, Br. Massimo urged the brothers never to neglect the Franciscan charism, in order to preserve the Order's oldest mission, located right in Morocco. Br. Massimo concluded by inviting the brothers to "entrust the Custody into the hands of the Father, especially because we experience fragility," and acknowledged the difficulty in finding candidates for the mission: "It is increasingly difficult to find brothers for the mission." Currently, the Custody has 19 members of different nationalities: Brazil, Ivo-

ry Coast, Costa Rica, Philippines, France, Italy, Mexico, Peru, Poland, Democratic Republic of Congo, Togo, and Hungary.

At the end of the meeting, the Holy Eucharist was celebrated within the fraternity; the General Minister presided over the celebration and blessed the brothers with affection and gratitude. The event concluded with a convivial moment, during which the brothers shared the hope of living the Franciscan charism in this land of mission.



Fraternal Visit of the Minister General to the Province of Santiago de Compostela *Spain, 24-27 September 2026*



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From 24 to 27 September, the Minister General, Br Massimo Fusarelli, accompanied by the Definitor General Br Cesare Vaiani, made a fraternal visit to the Province of Santiago de Compostela in Spain. During the plenary meeting and his visits to the fraternities, he had the opportunity to meet almost all the friars of the Province.

At the heart of his message was gratitude for the history, life and mission of a Province whose roots reach back to the time of St Francis. Many of its friars gave their lives in the Holy Land, Morocco and Venezuela. Particu-

larly moving was the meeting with the friars in the infirmary, several of whom had devoted their lives to the missions.

Drawing on this memory, Br Massimo reflected on the present situation of the Province, marked by a decline in numbers. The call is to view this situation in the light of faith, aware that it is precisely from our poverty that a future can emerge. The ongoing journey involving the three Provinces of Spain and the Province of Portugal seeks to respond to this call. The Minister and the Definitor also met the Poor Clares of Santiago, the Conception-

ist Nuns of the Federation, several OFS fraternities, parishioners and volunteers involved in social outreach. These were moments of listening and sharing, marked by the joy of a common mission.

The Eucharist celebrated with the friars and the Franciscan Family in the historic friary of Herbón, the celebration with the Conceptionist Nuns, and the one with the community and the Franciscan Family in Pontevedra brought together and entrusted to the Lord the journey of these days. They were days that open us to hope in the new future that the Spirit is calling for and unfolding in this moment of our history.



Meeting of the Provinces of the Iberian Peninsula

Looking to the Future with Faith and Courage



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The Ministers, Vicars and Definitors of the Franciscan Provinces of the Iberian Peninsula -Aránzazu, Immaculate Conception, Santiago de Compostela (Spain) and Holy Martyrs of Morocco (Portugal) - met in Madrid on 11-12 September to discern together the future of their presence in Spain and Portugal.

The meeting, attended by General Definitor Br. Cesare Vaiani and the Delegate of the Minister General for the unification process, Br. Sergiusz Bałdyga, agreed to move forward decisively towards the unification of these Provinces. To facilitate this process, the creation of a transitional Federation with a simple and flexible structure has been proposed. This juridical framework will make it possible to strengthen shared projects and responsibilities, with 2028 identified as a key moment

for evaluating the progress made. Among the immediate priorities agreed upon are:

- Improving communication and fostering the participation of all the friars and fraternities.
- Moving towards the establishment of a common novitiate for the four Provinces, with the aim of beginning this experience in September 2028.

These days unfolded in a truly fraternal atmosphere, in which dialogue, discernment and prayer set the rhythm of the meeting, strengthening the commitment to journey together towards the future with faith, responsibility and courage.



Reflections by Br. Massimo

September 2026



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In Madagascar, on the high plateau, I saw the friars bent over the red earth. A farm: rice fields, vegetable gardens, a few animals, a small cheese-making facility. The young men in formation worked alongside the older friars, their hands in the soil. They lived partly off the fruits of their work and shared them with the surrounding villages. I saw the same thing in Myanmar, Laos, and Cambodia: fraternities learning to sustain themselves through their own work, without expecting everything to come from elsewhere. That scene brought me back to a word from the Testament, which we are rereading in this year of the Transitus: "And I worked with my hands, and I want to work." Francis does not speak of work as a burden to endure or a punishment to bear, but as a way of being in the world. Bending over the earth, producing bread, sharing it with others: here work becomes grace, a participation in God's good creation and in the growth of the men and women of our time, especially the smallest and most vulnerable. As I watched those friars, I understood that work keeps us close to the earth and to the real life of people and protects us from the temptation to live above it.

Today, our work is almost always pastoral and educational, and only rarely professional. Yet many friars pursue studies and practice a profession, and small fraternities exist in which some friars work outside the friary, support themselves through their own work, and share the circumstances of ordinary people. This path also has a particular place for the lay brothers. It was a strong impulse in

the years around the Second Vatican Council; today it has faded. Perhaps we need to look around us again and ask what this experience still teaches us. Not to set manual or professional work against our pastoral ministry, but we do not reduce our life to a single model, one that is pastoral and centred on worship. Minority, a key to our way of living as brothers and of being among people, asks this of us as well: to share in the ordinary struggles of life, to learn from those who work, and to recognise work as a place where God continues to form us. We can share the experiences that already exist in our fraternities, listen to the lay members of our Franciscan Family and to others as well, and find new ways of making work part of our life. Not out of nostalgia for a world that has disappeared, but because work, when lived in this way, evangelises us. It reminds us that bread is earned through effort, and that when we share that effort, it makes us brothers.

I return in my mind to those friars in Madagascar, bent over the red earth. They were doing nothing extraordinary: cultivating, repairing, keeping in order what was needed for daily life. Yet in those simple gestures I recognised something of the *Poverello*—the Poor Man of Assisi, who wanted to work to the very end and asked the same of his brothers. The work of our hands is not a remnant of a bygone age. It is still an open path for remaining lesser brothers among people, close to that earth which the Cantic calls sister and mother.

Let us learn to work again!



Chapter of the Custody of Christ the King in Switzerland

Näfels, 21st –24th September 2026



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From 21st to 24th September 2026, the Chapter of the Custody of Christ the King in Switzerland was held in Näfels. The Provincial Minister of the Province of St Leopold (Austria-Italy), Br.Friedrich Wenigwieser, presided over the meeting *ex officio*. In a spirit of fraternity, the Chapter reviewed the current situation with gratitude and considered the new challenges facing the Custody. The meeting focused on formation within the Custody, strengthening international ties, and responding positively to new challenges. The Chapter therefore decided to establish a working group to explore the possibility of opening new houses and to promote the involvement of friars from Asia in the Custody. Christian Welti, a Reformed minister at the Grossmünster in Zurich, shared his personal reflections on Francis of Assisi as a living model of discipleship. The Custos, Br.Christoph-Maria Hörtnner, was re-elected by an almost unanimous vote for a further term. During the clos-

ing Mass, he emphasised that we friars, both individually and as a fraternity, are built on a common foundation. At the same time, each of us brings our own life experience, and ultimately, God shapes us all.

The Custos will be supported in his role by a newly elected Custodial Council, comprising Br. Mauro Zannin, Br. Raphael Fässler, Br. Mathias Müller and Br. Maximilian Blum.

Almost all the friars took part in the Chapter, from the eldest, aged 90, to those still in initial formation. The friars concluded the meeting with gratitude for its deeply fraternal atmosphere and with hope and confidence in what God will bring about among them in the coming years.

Br. Maximilian Blum

[Lesen Sie die Nachricht auf Deutsch.](#)



Animation of the Order



New Forms of Life and Evangelization: European Friars' Meeting Prague, 26-30 October 2026



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The journey of exploring and renewing our charism in Europe continues: from October 26 to 30, 2026, the Hájek Monastery (Prague) will host the upcoming meeting dedicated to the “New Forms” of fraternal life and evangelization (following the document *Ite, nuntiate*). Responding to the invitation of the Minister General, Br. Massimo Fusarelli, to seek new paths for evangelical life, this gathering will offer an opportunity for prayer, discernment, sharing, discussion, and collaboration with the Franciscan Family, featuring an online connection with the Minister General himself.

The meeting is open to a maximum of 25–30 friars (languages: Italian and English); regarding expenses, only a contribution towards meals is required. We invite the Provinces to register one friar by sending an email to Br. Fer van der Reijken (fervdreijken@gmail.com).

Rediscovering the freshness of our charism is an essential and joyful challenge. We look forward to seeing you!

Commission for New Forms of Life and Evangelization



General Office for JPIC Joined Interfaith Youth Forum in Nairobi, Kenya 18-19 September 2026



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From 18-19 September 2026, General Office for JPIC OFM in Rome, Br. Daniel Rodriguez Blanco OFM and Br. Taucen Girsang OFM, Director and Vice-director, attended an event of Interfaith Dialogue for Peace and Renewable Energy in Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Nairobi, Kenya. Their presence was a part of the JPIC Office's commitment to collaborate with University, JPIC Franciscans Africa, Franciscan Family Association, Franciscan Network for Peacebuilding and Environmental Justice in East Africa, and Laudato Si Africa movement. The event was organized by Sr. Mary Wangari Sebastian, LSSJ, Director of JPIC Franciscan Africa, and was attended by

more than 300 participants from around Nairobi, included Br. Francis Mbuvi OFM, local JPIC animators. The theme was “Young People Building a World of Peace and Justice for Our Common Home for Future Generations.” Different representatives from various religions and NGOs came together in the spirit of unity in diversity to demonstrate their commitment to environmental justice, renewable energy, and peacebuilding.

There was an opportunity to meet with the incoming Vice Chancellor of the Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Very Rev. Prof. Elias Omondi Opongo, SJ. During our meeting, we

spoke about collaboration between the Franciscan Network and the University on activities related to caring for our common home, for example, creating a Laudato Si' garden and planting trees. At the same time, we visited our partner, the Center for Justice and Ethics, to discuss running a project to help people, named the Laudato Si' Center.

Together with the other participants, Br. Daniel and Br. Taucen joined the march for climate justice, peace, and renewable energy. The more than 300 participants carried slogans and pamphlets to raise their voices and demand climate justice, peace, and renewable energy. The march started at Nairobi Animal Orphanage. It took two hours to arrive at the Catholic University of eastern Africa for the subsequent presentations. The young people read their declaration to the press, calling for a complete transition to green energy.

At the Langata formation house, we had the opportunity to meet and dialogue with young friars studying at Tangaza University College. It was a great opportunity to introduce the tasks and duty of the General Office for JPIC to

the students. At the same time, it was a chance to invite the friars to deepen their awareness of and involvement in JPIC. Working for JPIC is always an open invitation, and there are many things that we, as Franciscan friars, can do by recognizing that JPIC is a lifestyle, our witness, and our mission.



The Continental Meeting of African JPIC Animators was held in Rwanda

22-26 September 2026



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The JPIC (Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation) Animators from both English-speaking and French-speaking African Conferences gathered in Kivumu, Rwanda, from 22nd to 26th September 2026. Attendees included the Definitor General for Africa, Br. Sipehelele Gwanisheni, representatives from the Secretariat for Formation and Studies, the Secretariat for Mission and Evangelization, a delegate from the Franciscan Network, and other guests.

The meeting began with the celebration of the Holy Mass, presided over by Br. Hermenegilde Birushe, OFM, Custos of the "Our Lady of Kibeho" Custody, which hosted the gathering. In his opening remarks, Br. Hermenegilde warmly welcomed the friars and reminded participants that JPIC's mission is more relevant in Africa today than ever before. This sen-

timent was echoed by the Minister General in his letter, which stated: "We live in a wounded world, and our vocation is to be healers, repairing with love what has been broken."

Br. Shipelele reflected on the theme "St. Francis of Assisi: A Beacon of Peace and Harmony Among All Creatures in Africa." He emphasized that JPIC requires being prophetic and creative in their mission. To achieve this, he stressed the need to strengthen collaboration and communication by working as a cohesive team, especially since Africa remains deeply wounded by war and urgently requires peace.

Guided by the wisdom of the Church and the exemplary life of St. Francis, reports from all attending Entities were presented, highlighting key achievements as well as ongoing challenges. Friars across the region have been

actively engaged in numerous initiatives, including serving migrants and refugees in vulnerable situations; implementing environmental initiatives to care for Mother Earth; advancing human empowerment programs for youth and students; raising a peaceful voice against violence and regional conflicts; developing strategic efforts to alleviate poverty; offering fraternal dialogue to address and tackle insecurity. Participants recognized that becoming promoters of justice and peace, alongside serving as guardians of creation, is a direct call to implement the Franciscan Order's core commitments.

Communication and collaboration were other critical topics thoroughly discussed during the meeting. Br. Daniel Rodriguez Blanco, OFM, shared strategies on how to build organizational bridges between the JPIC Office and the Secretariats of Formation and Studies, as well as Mission and Evangelization. Following this, Br. Edson Nhaturu, OFM, Vice-Secretary General for Formation and Studies, highlighted that Franciscan formation must emphasize Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation from its very beginning. He reminded participants of how St. Francis lived out these values through the kissing of the leper, a powerful testament to charity, mercy, and forgiveness.

Additionally, Br. Francisco Gomez, OFM, Secretary General for Missions and Evangelization, who participated virtually, guided the participants through the Ratio Evangelizationis. He urged a collective awareness that JPIC activities are at the absolute frontline of the Franciscan mission. Consequently, collaboration is essential for Franciscan ministry to bear lasting fruit; it is only by moving forward together that the mission can truly flourish.

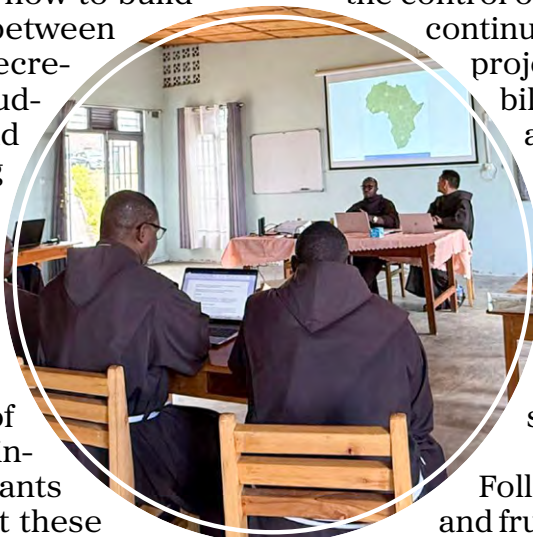
Later, Sr. Mary W. Sebastian, LSSJ, offered another vital perspective on collaboration by sharing the work of the Franciscan Network in Africa. She explained that a network is defined by its members, their connections, and the flow of information or support between them. These interactions strengthen both the

individuals and the group as a whole, fostering growth and resilience.

The participants discussed three distinct levels of challenges facing JPIC: global and societal challenges common across Africa presented by Mr. Rusine Alexis, Franciscan continental challenges presented by Br. Evodio João, OFM, and the specific challenges faced by JPIC animators presented by Br. Daniel Blanco, OFM. In general, the key systemic challenges identified include: a weak response to addressing severe poverty; an unstable social and political climate across many regions; the massive issue of migration, both within and outside of the continent; a severe shortage of funding for local and regional programs; violent competition over the control of mineral resources; a lack of continuity in leadership and ongoing projects; an overload of responsibilities placed on individual friars. These stark realities call for a deeply renewed commitment and institutional unity to ensure that JPIC remains a living, prophetic mission rather than a dormant structure. For this reason, all agreed to make a statement.

Following three days of intense and fruitful work, the journey culminated in a trip to the Kabgayi Genocide Memorial and the Kibeho Shrine of Our Lady of the Word. At the memorial site, participants laid a wreath to honor the victims of the genocide. This experience served as a profound and sobering reminder that peace is of the utmost importance. Following this, the visit to the Kibeho Shrine, renowned as a center of prayer and reflection, offered everyone a moment of spiritual grace and renewal. Additionally, time spent at the Bible Center allowed the participants to deepen their encounter with the Word of God, illuminating the path they had walked together during the meeting. The entire pilgrimage concluded with a solemn closing Mass celebrated in thanksgiving for the blessings of our gathering and the inspiration drawn from Kibeho.

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News from the Entities



Sarajevo: meeting of the 'Under Ten' friars of the Conference of St Jerome

Fraternity, discernment, and prospects for the future



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From the 17th to 19th September 2026, the Franciscan Theological Faculty and the Convent of St Paul in Sarajevo hosted a meeting of the *Under Ten OFM* friars, attended by around sixty friars from all the Franciscan Provinces of the Conference of St Jerome. The gathering was conceived as a time of fellowship, listening, and sharing, offering friars in the first ten years of their religious life a space to reflect on their journey, discuss their experiences and look to the future with greater awareness. The chosen theme, 'The first ten years: realities, expectations, moments of crisis', guided the activities toward personal and communal reflection, fraternal life, Franciscan identity, and discernment. The meeting began on Thursday, the 17th September, with the participants' arrival, followed by Vespers and a communal dinner. During the evening programme, Br. Siniša Balažić, Minister of the Province of the Most Holy Redeemer (Croatia), presented the meeting's theme and programme. This was followed by a session for the friars to introduce themselves to one another, allowing them to get to know each other and share their experiences from the start. Friday began with the celebration of the Eucharist and the prayer of Lauds. Before the presentations began, Br. Konrad Cholewa, Definitor/s General, greeted the participants, having travelled from Rome to be present for this important occasion of fellowship and fraternity. Br. Konrad also read out a message from the Minister General, Br. Massimo Fusarelli, addressed to the young friars gathered in Sarajevo. The message was a significant sign of solidarity and encouragement from the General Government of the Order to the friars in the early years of their Franciscan journey. The first reflection, presented by Br. Josip Vlašić (Province of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary – Bos-



nia and Herzegovina), was on the theme 'Who am I today as a friar?' Starting from the relationship between ideals, reality and personal history, the participants were invited to reflect anew on their vocational journey and to consider the person and the Friars they have become over the years. The reflection continued through group work, during which participants shared experiences, questions, and insights. The second presentation, given by Br. Danijel Nikolić (Province of the Holy Cross – Bosnia and Herzegovina), addressed the theme 'A fraternity that supports – a fraternity that can become a burden'. The reflection focused on the day-to-day life of the fraternities, fraternal relationships, the relationship with authority and obedience, as well as experiences of loneliness and a sense of belonging. This session was followed by group work and a plenary session, during which participants shared the insights that had emerged from their discussions. In the afternoon, the friars learned about Sarajevo, its history, and its unique religious and cultural heritage. The tour included visits to the old town, the Franciscan Convent of St Anthony in Bistrik, the Gazi Husrev-beg Mosque, the Old Orthodox Church, and the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart. Visiting these places of worship allowed them to rediscover Sarajevo as a city where, throughout its history, different religious and cultural traditions have come together and coexisted. The day drew to a close with communal prayer, supper, and a convivial evening filled with conversation, testimonies, and questions. In a simple, family-like atmosphere, the friars shared their experiences of religious life, the joys and difficulties of their vocational journey, and the challenges of serving within the Franciscan fraternity. Saturday, the 19th September, was devoted to discernment and looking to the future. The

concluding reflection, presented by Br. Kristijan Stipanović (Province of the Most Holy Redeemer – Croatia), was entitled ‘How to move forward? Remaining, growing, asking for help’. At the heart of the meeting was the question of what every friar needs today to remain faithful to his vocation, to continue to grow as a person and spiritually, and to recognise, when necessary, the possibility of asking for help. The group also identified possible steps, both personal and communal, to continue the journey with greater awareness and responsibility. The meeting concluded with the celebration of Holy Mass, presided over by Monsignor Miro Relota, OFM, Military Ordinary for Bosnia and Herzegovina, and concelebrated by Brother Zdravko Dadić, Minister of the Province of the Holy Cross, and the other participants. The days spent in Sarajevo gave the Under Ten friars precious time for fellowship and sharing. The frank discussion about their experiences during the early years

of religious life enabled them to recognise not only the expectations and difficulties but also the experiences of grace and growth that accompany the Franciscan journey. Through prayer, listening to one another, group work, the celebration of the Eucharist, and informal moments of fellowship, the gathering fostered deeper mutual understanding and reminded them of the importance of walking together, supporting one another in fidelity to the Gospel and to one’s Franciscan vocation. The experience in Sarajevo thus represents a further step on the path towards communion amongst the Provinces of the Conference of St Jerome and encourages the young friars to continue to live out the call they have received with confidence, freedom, and responsibility.

Br. Danijel Nikolić, OFM

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LIFE in the Order



Solemn professions

19th September, Custody of the Holy Land: Br. Fares Mardini.

8th September, Province of St Benedict the African (DRC): Br. Jonathan Disasi Bamotema, Br. Merveille Kieta Makieya, Br. Moïse Mumbala Kayembe, Br. Noel Modeste Mwela Bidiatu.

15th August, Province of St Michael the Archangel (Indonesia): Br. Felisian (Novendro) Ambal, Br. Trivosa (Kurniawan) Gunardo, Br. Bonakasius Jebarus, Br. Marianus (Marianus Harianto) Leto, Br. Paulus (Paulus Yanuario) Musrilan, Br. Stefanus (Fandrosel) Nadut, Br. Bonaventura (Yubiliano Nabu) Pandu, Br. Yusuf (Raditya Prima) Rahadi, Br. Hedwig (Oktavi- an Rajahali Ama) Ruing.



Priestly Ordinations

19th September, Province of the Immaculate Conception (Spain): Br. Agustín Llopis Bautista

8th September, Province of St Michael the Archangel (Indonesia): Br. Polikarpus (Polikarpus Wiglis) Bria, Br. Teofilus (Teofilus Armando) Gadong, Br. Agustinus

Noning, Br. Andreas (Andreas Ivan) Setiawan, Br. Tarsisius (Tarsisius Mardi) Sudirman, Br. Agustinus (Agustinus Alanersase) Vanri.



Deceased Brothers

† 28th September: Br. Warren (Edward) Rector, Province of Our Lady of Guadalupe (USA); Br. Giorgio Auletta, Province of St Anthony of the Friars Minor (Italy)

† 25th September: Br. Kunibert (Helmut) Jendroszek, Province of St Elizabeth (Germany)

† 24th September: Br. Diego (Manuel) Rivera Robles, Province of Sts Francis and James (Mexico); Br. Ramiro Vega Santos, Province of the Immaculate Conception (Spain)

† 21st September: Br. Marcos Rincón Cruz, Province of the Immaculate Conception (Spain)

† 20th September: Br. Ljubo Lebo, Province of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Bosnia and Herzegovina)

† 16th September: Br. Dominic Vincent (Brian Thomas Vincent) Monti, Province of Our Lady of Guadalupe (USA)

† 30th August: Br. Dino Barichello, Province of St Anthony of the Friars Minor (Italy)

† 9th August: Br. Sylwan (Jerzy Augustyn) Jędryka, Province of the Immaculate Conception (Poland)

Information received from the General Secretariat



**Celebrations for the 50th anniversary
of the canonization of Saint Beatrice da Silva**
Toledo (Spain), 15-18 September 2026



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From September 15 to 18, the celebrations for the 50th anniversary of the canonization of Saint Beatrice da Silva, founder of the Order of the Immaculate Conception, took place in Toledo, Spain. About 170 nuns from all over the world gathered for the occasion. At the opening, Br. Fabio César Gomes, General Delegate *pro Monialibus* (for cloistered religious women), presided over the Eucharistic celebration and read the message of the OFM General Minister, Br. Massimo Fusarelli, addressed to the sisters. Saint Beatrice lived her last earthly stage right in Toledo and was canonized by Pope Paul VI in 1976, on October 3, the day of the Transitus of St. Francis: "This is not just a coincidence to be noted with curiosity, but a light from which to re-read your vocation", wrote Br. Massimo.

A rereading that leads to the Franciscan depth of the charisma of the Conceptionists, based on the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary that St. Francis called the *Advocate* of his Order, the *Virgin made Church*. "It was the Franciscan school that defended and developed the truth of the Immaculate Conception when it was still the subject of debate: that same truth

that Beatrice put at the center of your life centuries before it became dogma. Your devotion to the Immaculate Conception does not merely stand alongside the Franciscan charisma: it constitutes the Marian heart of it".

The jubilee event, organized by the Confederation of Conceptionist Sisters of St. Beatrice da Silva, was also attended by Br. José María Alonso OFM (conference "The historical, religious and social context of 15th century Spain. Beatrice in Toledo"); Br. Ángel Pinedo OFM, Assistant of the Our Lady of Aránzazu Federation ("The spirituality and charisma of Santa Beatrice"); Br. Joaquín Zurera OFM, Minister of the Province of the Immaculate Conception; Br. Santiago Agrelo OFM and Br. Juan Oliver OFM, the bishops emeriti, who participated in the final Eucharist and gratitude for the meeting.

Download the message from the Minister General: [Español](#) – [Português](#)

Download the program of the event: [Español](#)



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Ordo Fratrum Minorum
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