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Notitiarium Fratrum Minorum Conventualium



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MINISTER GENERAL

MINISTER GENERAL

Friar Marco TASCA



Calendar of the Minister General

JULY

- 14: Assisi: Second part of the Provincial Chapter of the Italian Province of St. Francis (Central Italy)
- 26-28: Baia Domizia, Italy: Second Part of the Provincial Chapter of the Province of Our Seraphic Father St. Francis in Italy (Naples)

AUGUST

- 1-4: Buenos Aires, Argentina: Meeting with the Definitory of the "Rioplattense" Province of St. Anthony of Padua in Argentina-Uruguay
- 5-10: Chile: Fraternal visit to the friars of the Provincial Delegation
- 21-15: Cres, Croatia: Meeting with members of the General Definitory
- 26-28: Lithuania: Inauguration of the reacquired friary
- 29-

SEPTEMBER

- 1: Rome: Session of the General Definitory
- 4-15: Brazil: Visit to the formation houses of the Province of St. Francis (São Paulo)
- 18-22: Brazil: Provincial Chapter of the Province of St. Francis (São Paulo)
- 25-28: Rome: The Seraphicum, Justice Peace and Integrity of Creation (GPIC) meeting
- 30-Oct, 1: Argentario, Italy: Outing for members of the Secretariats and the General Definitory

GENERAL SECRETARIAT

Friar Vincenzo MARCOLI
Secretary General



Session August 29 – September 1, 2017

At its session held at the friary of the Twelve Holy Apostles, in Rome, the General Definitory:

- approved the minutes of the meeting held June 17 and 26-30, 2017;
- approved "*By Node, Development & Cooperation Associazione*" as the name for the association being developed in collaboration with the *John Paul II Foundation, ONLUS*;
- met with Friar Cosimo ANTONINO, Minister Provincial and Friar Paolo GALANTE, Vicar Provincial, of the Province of Naples;

GENERAL DEFINITORY

- met with Friars Dinh Anh Nhue NGUYEN, Domenico PAOLETTI, Louis PANTHIRUVELIL and Giulio CESAREO for an update on the work being done towards the inter-Franciscan Franciscan University project (UNIFRA);
- with Friar Valentin REDONDO, Coordinator of the Executive Committee for the Revision of the Constitutions (CERC) and Friar Timothy KULBICKI, CERC Secretary present, proceeded to the final definition of Chapters I and II of the Constitutions to be presented to the 2018 Extraordinary General Chapter;
- with Friars Valentin REDONDO and Timothy KULBICKI present, dealt with the organization of the 2018 Extraordinary General Chapter;
- listened to and commented on the reports of the General Visitor (Friar Jude WINKLER) at the end of his general canonical visitation to the USA Province of St. Joseph of Cupertino;
- listened to reports of visits made by the Assistants General to various Jurisdictions:
 - from the Assistant General for the CEF, Friar Miljenko HONTIĆ, on the occasion of:
 - the Extraordinary Custodial Chapter of the Provincial Custody of Austria-Switzerland (Flüeli-Ranf, July 3-6, 2017);
 - from the Assistant General for the CFF, Friar Jude WINKLER, on the occasion of:
 - the start of the year of the common novitiate for the USA Provinces (in Arroyo Grande, CA, USA, July 19, 2017);
 - from the Assistant General for the FALC, Friar Carlos TROVARELLI, on the occasion of:
 - his participation in the second part of the Provincial Chapter of the Province of Mexico (Cuautitlan Izcalli, Mexico, July 3-7, 2017);
 - his meeting had, together with the Minister General, with the Minister Provincial of the Rioplatense Province and his Definitory (Buenos Aires, Argentina, August 1-3, 2017);
 - his fraternal visit to the Provincial Delegation of Peru, August 6-11, 2017;
 - the meeting of the formators of the FALC novitiate houses (Cuautitlan Izcalli, Mexico, August 14-18, 2017);
 - from the Assistant General for the FIMP, Friar Joaquin AGESTA, on the occasion of:
 - his participation in the second part of the Ordinary Provincial Chapter of the Italian Province of St. Francis (Assisi, Italy, July 10-20, 2017);
 - from the Assistant General for the FAMC, Friar Benedetto BAEK, on the occasion of:
 - his participation in the Custodial Chapter of the Provincial Custody of Indonesia (Pematangsiantar, Indonesia, July 31- August 3, 2017);
- suppressed the friary of the Holy Family, in Grand Lancy, Switzerland;
- met with the members of the General Financial Office, Friar Nicola ROSA, Friar Wojciech KULIG and Friar Maurizio DI PAOLO and dealt with some financial issues;
- dedicated time to the reading and discussion of a topical religious article;
- considered some personal cases.



The General Definitory

Eighth Centenary of the Birth of St. Bonaventure

■ General Secretariat

Bagnoregio. Every celebration of a centenary offers us a chance to draw nearer to the saint we are commemorating. This year we have the eighth centenary of the birth of St. Bonaventure of Bagnoregio.

On the vigil of the feast, July 14, Barbara FAES'S book, *Bonaventura da Bagnoregio*, was presented in the municipal auditorium of the city of Bagnoregio. After the presentation the liturgical feast of the saint began with the Most Reverend Lino FUMAGALLI, Bishop of Viterbo, presiding at solemn vespers in the co-cathedral, followed by the traditional procession of St. Bonaventure's relics through the streets of the city. Then, on July 15, the solemn stational Mass was celebrated. Representatives from all branches of the Franciscan Order were present for all the events.

St. Bonaventure of Bagnoregio (1217-1274). Franciscan, bishop, cardinal, philosopher and theologian, called the Seraphic Doctor. He taught at the University of Paris and was a friend of St. Thomas Aquinas. Canonized by Pope Sixtus IV in 1482, St. Bonaventure was then proclaimed Doctor of the Church by Pope Sixtus V in 1588. He wrote what was meant to be an official biography of St. Francis – the *Legenda maior* – which served as inspiration for the Master of the St. Francis Cycle in the production of the frescoes in the Upper Basilica in Assisi.

St. Bonaventure was Minister General of the Franciscan Order for eighteen years, for which he is sometimes called a 'second founder.' Under his guidance the Order promulgated the Constitutions of Narbonne, on which all further constitutions of the Order of Friars Minor have been based.

The Ministers General of the Franciscan Family have written a letter for the occasion of the centenary, recalling the saint, his theological thought, and his important role in the history of the Franciscan Order.

Link: <http://www.ofmconv.net/famiglia-francescana/?lang=en>



Our friars among the participants

Announcing the Kolbean Congress

■ Friar Raffaele DI MURO

As part of the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Militia of the Immaculate, (M.I.) as requested by the last Ordinary General Chapter of the Friars Minor Conventual, an International Congress entitled Saint Maximilian Kolbe: *The Lifestyle of a Friar Minor Conventual in the Light of the New Evangelization* shall be celebrated on October 19-20, 2017, at the Seraphicum, in Rome.

The Minister General and the General Definitory will be present at this meeting, along with fifty-one delegated friars from all over the world, and some lay guest speakers who are experts in Kolbean subjects. They will discuss the style of the Martyr of Auschwitz in living the evangelical councils, fraternity and mission. The participants will try to focus on those aspects of the Saint's prophetic vision which can be effectively updated in the life of the Order—in light of what the Church is asking and from the perspective of the work of revising the Constitutions of the Order. The aim of this Assembly is to give valuable impetus to the present and future of the Conventual Franciscans around the world, based upon the message and spiritual experience of St. Maximilian.

<http://www.ofmconv.net/annuncio-convocazione-del-congresso-kolbiano/?lang=en>

Announcing the Extraordinary General Chapter

The General Secretariat

In the meeting of the Presidents of the Federations of the Order with the General Definitory, it was decided that the 2018 Extraordinary General Chapter will begin on Tuesday, July 24, 2018, at 5:00 p.m., and, as an indication, the closing date will be Sunday, August 26.

The Chapter will be celebrated at the "Centro *Ad Gentes*" Retreat Center operated by the Society of the Divine Word, Via dei Laghi bis no. 52, Nemi, RM, Italy.

The sole and very broad theme of the Extraordinary General Chapter is the approval of the changes made to the Constitutions.

<http://www.ofmconv.net/annuncio-del-capitolo-generale-straordinario/?lang=en>

The Pardon of Assisi 2017

■ From the Communication Offices of the OFM, OFM Conv., and OFM Cap.

This year's anniversary was particularly solemn; given it was the closure of the 800th Anniversary of the Pardon of Assisi.

This jubilee was inaugurated on August 2, 2016, by Gualtiero Cardinal BASSETTI and was enhanced by Pope Francis' private pilgrimage to the Porziuncola two days later, on August 4, 2016. The solemn closing celebration for the Jubilee of Pardon took place at 11:00 a.m. on August 2, 2017, and was presided over by His Eminence Pietro Cardinal PAROLIN, His Holiness' Secretary of State. [<https://youtu.be/7z4uyeBjOEQ>]

Another peculiarity of this year, highlighting the bonds between the Franciscan Family, was a feast created by the ingenious intuition of our common founder, Francis of Assisi. This was the Triduum of Preparation (July 29-31) which was preached by the Ministers General of the three Franciscan Orders. (The Friars Minor Capuchin were represented by their Vicar General.) This shared event was placed in perfect continuity along the path that had been undertaken up to that point. The path culminated with the “Generalissimo” Chapter that the Franciscan families celebrated together. The program scheduled for August 1 was intensive:

- At 11:00 a.m. there was Mass presided over by Friar Michael A. Perry, the Minister General of the Friars Minor. It was followed by the Procession of the “Opening of Forgiveness” (so-called because from that moment, i.e. from noon on August 1 until midnight on August 2, the Plenary Indulgence which is granted to the Porziuncola every day was extended to all the parish churches around the world, and to all Franciscan churches;

- In the afternoon, at the end of the pilgrimage of the Diocese of Assisi, there was Evening Prayer I, presided over by the Most Reverend Domenico SORRENTINO, Archbishop of Assisi-Nocera Umbra-Gualdo Tadino, in Italy.

- Incense was offered by the mayor of Assisi, Stefania PROIETTI;

- There was an evening prayer vigil with a candlelight procession led by the Most Reverend José Rodríguez CARBALLO, OFM, Secretary of the Congregation of Institutes of Consecrated Life. August 2 once again saw the arrival of thousands of young people from the 37th Franciscan March “One Step Beyond”. They met at the Porziuncola to rejoice in the Father’s Mercy. Finally, the Vatican Gendarmerie Band performed a concert in the evening followed by a fireworks show in the piazza of the Porziuncola.

New Videos for Rethinking the Constitutions

■ CERC Secretariat

The Executive Committee for the Revision of the Constitutions (CERC), together with the General Definitory, has produced a series of videos to be used at Friary House Chapters as a tool for deeper reflection on the renewal of the Order.

There are six short presentations that bring together the viewpoints of some friars of the Order on the following themes:

1. AUTHORITY AND POWER ACCORDING TO SAINT FRANCIS
2. SOLIDARITY AND ECONOMIC SHARING FROM THE FRANCISCAN PERSPECTIVE
3. PROPHECY, MISSION AND CHARISM
4. PROVINCIALISM
5. RELATIONS AT THE FEDERATION AND JURISDICTIONAL LEVEL
6. CHAPTERS

As you can see, all of the themes revolve around the last chapter of the current Constitutions and are designed to show the important values behind the review process, the problems that have been perceived and some possible solutions. In this way, we wanted to present a mosaic of different voices and perspectives, which express the wide variety of opinions within the Order, as well as the basic principles on which our communion is founded.

Friary House Chapters will be able to use this material freely, in ways that are more convenient to the fraternities. It is very important that we generate real discussion among the friars, which can then be shared, in order to enrich our efforts to be more faithful to the evangelical vocation we have received.

constituciones@ofmconv.net

Seraphicum: 6th Spiritual Theology Forum

■ Friar Raffaele DI MURO

On September 14-16, 2017, the St. Bonaventure Pontifical Theological Faculty hosted the sixth edition of the Forum of Spiritual Theology.

Every year, professors of this discipline, coming from various Italian and foreign academic centers, are provided a venue to reflect on topics related to the study and didactics typical of this field. This is an exchange of views among scholars, facilitated by ad hoc reports from the professors themselves. This undoubtedly, mutually enriching event generated excellent ideas that everyone could utilize to make their academic work increasingly fruitful. This conference more deeply explored the topic of spiritual pathways, that is, those paths that theological research identifies to express the modalities of human faith.

Throughout the centuries, theology has gradually identified spiritual evolution by means of stages. For example, the triple steps (purifying, illuminating, and unifying) – of the Bonaventurian school - is one of the most famous and successful attempts. The theologian tries to give names and meanings to the various periods in which the conversion of the believer is realized, not with the pretense of reducing his path to a diagram, but with the purpose of understanding his progression in holiness. Those present also discussed the theme of spiritual growth from the point of view of various schools of spirituality (Franciscan, Carmelite and Salesian).

Excellent results were achieved by Claudio STERCAL; Antonio BERTAZZO, OFM Conv.; Christof BETCHART; Jesus Manuel GARCIA; and Laurent TOUZE. The event coordinator was the "Master of the House," Friar Raffaele DI MURO.

This conference yielded valuable results and came together in a climate of cordiality and collaboration. It was a source of great pleasure and prestige for our faculty to have hosted such an insightful event.

Next year, the event will be held at the Teresianum, since it is their turn to host the Forum.



The participants

Works of the Organizing Committee for the International Youth Toward Assisi Meeting

■ Friar Miljenko HONTIĆ, Assistant General for the CEF

On September 16-17, 2017, the organizing committee of the International Youth Toward Assisi Meeting met at the Seraphicum College, for the first day and at the General Curia in the Friary of the Twelve Holy Apostles, for the second day.

The International Youth Toward Assisi Meeting is scheduled to take place on August 12-19, 2018, at Assisi and Rome.

All members of the committee were present (for the first time): Friars Simone TENUTI, Giulio CESAREO, Francesco SCIALPI, Jack MARDESIC, Massimiliano VOLANTE and Miljenko HONTIĆ.

The committee members picked up where they left off and defined several things for increased clarity. All of the workshops were defined, as well as the street evangelization events that will be carried out in some of Rome's squares. The International Meeting will end in Rome with participation in the Angelus and a meeting with the Pope. Among other things, the Committee decided to recommend that young people arriving on their own buses should bring camping tents for themselves to lower the costs of the Meeting.

In addition, on September 16-17, 2017, at the same two places in Rome, the National Youth Toward Assisi Meeting Choir held rehearsals for their Youth Toward Assisi Meeting, which will take place at the end of October. On Sunday, the choir animated the parish Mass at the Basilica of the Twelve Holy Apostles while the organizing committee members of the International Youth Toward Assisi Meeting concelebrated.



The team during a session

CERC: Review of Chapter IV in Friary Chapters

■ Friar Timothy Kulbicki Secretary, CERC/CIRC

A good number of friaries in the world (c. 46%) continues to participate in the review of draft Constitutions as a continuing formation process regarding our identity.

Many thanks to the members of the International Commission for the Revision of the Constitutions, to the Jurisdictional reference friars, and to the Friary Chapter Secretaries.

As you can see, participation rates have remained stable with Chapters II-III.

The majority of the friars continues to appreciate the more Franciscan and spiritual tone of the revised text, as well as the quotations from the writings of St. Francis.

More than 500 suggestions (most of which are either editorial/stylistic or regarding translations) arrived at the Executive Committee, and were examined to arrive at a second official draft.

You can find a more detailed report on the Web page dedicated to the Constitutions.

The Seraphicum in the Footsteps of St. Paul

■ Text: Friar Felice FIASCONARO, Photo: Friar Franciszek CZARNOWSKI

Four years ago, the Seraphicum's stable community of friars enjoyed the fraternal experience of making a spiritual retreat together in the Holy Land.

This year, they wanted to repeat the experience, almost as if to complete the previous retreat; however, this time, through retracing the path Saint Paul took while preaching in Greece.

From September 18-25, 2017, the friars spent eight intensive days hearing about Greek culture and Saint Paul's preaching. It goes without saying that these eight days were also spent moving from one place to another in order to trace the Apostle's itinerary.

Two guides took us, almost by the hand, to lead us along the challenging route. They were Apostholos and Father Romano PENNA. Apostholos is a Greek guide who speaks Italian very well. I should report to his agency that we hired, and his colleagues there, that he was one of the finest in the area. He immersed us in mythology, history and the archeology of Greece and the sites we visited there. His is a great culture and he had us voyaging through time, exploring Greek religious sentiment and following the pathways of the man of yesterday and today. Father Romano PENNA is one of the greatest authorities on Saint Paul at the biblical and theological level and he teaches in our Theological Faculty. He introduced us to the Apostle's thought, the problematic complexity of certain biblical-theological aspects, Paul's passion for Christ and the Gospel, and his deep affection towards the churches he founded and toward some of his collaborators. Whole days were spent listening and walking or, if you prefer, whole days were spent walking and listening. However, it was worth it. Even Constantine, the guide that replaced Apostholos, on the last day, was on the same level. It was no secret that the agency did everything so that we could have the best Greek guides one could have on that route. Well done!

Of course, it was up to us, as Friar Felice had suggested from the beginning, to make, from all that content, a spiritual route for our own path of faith and consecration to the Lord. Perhaps, there was not much time left for this other aspect. However, time, by the grace of God, stands before us and we can still inwardly relive that goodness to make it grow and mature.



The participants

GENERAL SECRETARIAT FOR FORMATION

Friar Louis PANTHIRUVELIL
Secretary General of the SGF



The Philippines: Course for Formators and Guardians

■ Friar Giulio CESAREO, SGF Vice-Secretary

On July 17-19, 2017, a formation course for the friars of the Provincial Custody of the Immaculate Conception and Blessed Bonaventure of Potenza in the Philippines took place at the St. Joseph formation house and friary in Tagaytay City.

The course was conducted by the Secretary General for Formation (SGF), Friar Louis PANTHIRUVELIL, assisted by Friar Joseph BLAY, The Delegate General for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (GPIC), and Friar Giulio CESAREO, Vice-Secretary of the SGF.

The Provincial Custos, Friar Francis Victor MATEO, was present for the start of the course which featured periods of discussion, listening and fraternal exchange. Speakers made presentations on the delicate and fascinating work of guiding a candidate's growth on the path to our Franciscan life. Nine friars were present.

On the afternoon of July 19, at the end of the course, some solemnly professed friars of the Custody joined the group of formators for a fraternal outing.

On July 20, after lunch, a course was held for guardians of the Custody. Again, the teaching methods were varied and included periods of discussion, lectures, interaction in assembly, and informal fraternal exchange outside of the study sessions. Eight friars took part in the experience.

One presentation that was particularly appreciated was a lecture by Professor Chester B. CABALZA, on the cultural challenges and opportunities of exercising the Franciscan style of leadership in the Philippines. The experience concluded on July 22 with the Vicar Custos, Friar Christian ORNUM, presenting the guardians with a mandate that emerged from the reflections during the course. Around that time, Friar Joseph Blay also held a meeting with the Custody's friars in formation on the topic of the Social Doctrine of the Church.

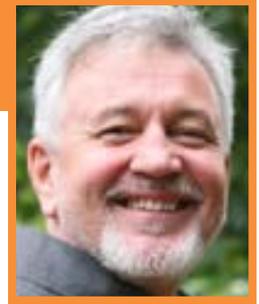
On July 22-24, Friar Louis PANTHIRUVELIL continued his stay and visited various formation houses. In Tagaytay City, he met personally with the novices at the international novitiate of the Federation of Asian Minors Conventual (FAMC) and the postulants of the St. Joseph formation house and friary. He also met with student friars at the St. Maximilian friary in Parañaque.



The participants

GENERAL SECRETARIAT FOR MISSION ANIMATION

Friar Jarosław WYSOCZAŃSKI
Secretary General of the SGAM



Peru: On the Trail of Martyrdom

■ Friar Jarosław WYSOCZAŃSKI

After the beatification of our brothers Miguel TOMASZEK and Zbigniew STRZAŁKOWSKI in 2015, an initiative arose among a group of friars and young people in Italy to learn more about the mission in Pariacoto, Peru, the village where the blessed friars carried out their missionary work and were martyred.

The main goal of the initiative was to share in an experience of missionary work in Peru, particularly in Pariacoto and its surroundings, to awaken the missionary spirit through a personal and group experience of faith and to extend that missionary experience by generating lasting commitments in the area.

Over two years, the group of young Italians received Franciscan missionary formation. They learned about the Pariacoto mission through several meetings held at different times and places in Italy. The formation was led by the Franciscan Missionary Center of Italy and by our Order's General Secretariat for Missionary Animation (SGAM). In addition to missionary formation and developing cohesion in the group, many fundraising activities were carried out for the mission.

At the end of this preparation for missionary work in Pariacoto, thirteen people were chosen: three friars, a nun and nine young people. The volunteers went to Peru and were integrated into a group of Peruvian missionaries among whom was a volunteer from Poland. Their missionary experience took place from August 7-28, 2017.

The missionary experience officially began on August 9 with a simple, but very significant and profound celebration of sending forth. The celebration was held in the chapel in which the blessed friar-martyrs were buried. At that time, the twenty-sixth anniversary of their martyrdom was commemorated.

The missionary volunteers were divided into four traveling groups. They focused on sharing in the life of some newly born communities in the Pariacoto area: Chauca, Callima, Paqueyoc, San Jerónimo and others such as Yaután, Valdivia, Rurashca, Cunco and Huallan, as well as Pariacoto itself.

At each location, they visited families and blessed them, paying special attention to the sick. Every afternoon they spent time with children and young people, teaching them catechesis and playing games.



The march for peace

GENERAL OFFICES – [SGAM]

One group settled in Casma, where they served at a residence of the Diocese of Chimbote. This place of service was chosen because for two years, a little girl (a toddler?) from Cunco lived among the resident adults. Cunco is part of the mission territory of Pariacoto. The young people from Italy wanted to serve at this center and also learn about the place the little girl came from. Cunco is very poor and has an elevation of 4,000 meters (13,000 feet) above sea level.

The stay in Pariacoto ended with a youth day aimed at preparing for Pope Francis' visit to Peru at the beginning of next year. The youth day also served to deepen our relationship with the blessed friar-martyrs on the occasion of their second anniversary of beatification. It was about awakening an experience of peace in one's heart, of feeling the joy of living and experiencing the power of love that Jesus Christ gives us. The young people came together from different places of the mission and took part in a March for Peace which started at the tomb of the blessed friar-martyrs and ended at the site of their martyrdom in Pueblo Viejo. In the afternoon, after lunch, there was time for games. The day ended with a Mass.

In addition to this experience, the young missionaries also participated in the second anniversary of the beatification of Blessed Don Alessandro DORDI, in the village of Santa. There, they learned about the place where he lived and carried out the mission the Lord entrusted to him, which led to his martyrdom.

The young Italians, as well as the Peruvian missionaries, are the best proof that martyrdom bears fruit, that truly "their flowers bloom in different lands" and become, for every person, witnesses of hope and charity.

Brussels: Course for New Missionaries

■ Friar Jarosław WYSOCZAŃSKI

On Monday, September 4, 2016, a course being taught in English, in Brussels, began for new missionaries of the three Franciscan families: the Capuchins, the Conventuals and the Minors.

The "Our Lady of the Nations" fraternity welcomed ten new friars who are preparing to do missionary work in various locations, including India (Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh and Kolkata), Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Rwanda, Ghana, South Sudan and Burkina Faso.

On the morning of September 8th, Friars Jarosław WYSOCZAŃSKI, OFM Conv., and Hugo MEJÍA, OFM Cap., animated the group. Both friars are the Secretaries General for Mission Animation (SGAM) for their respective Orders. On the afternoon of the same day, time was dedicated to discussion with the OFM Minister General, Friar Michael Anthony PERRY.

The course is being taught by Friar Gianfrancesco SISTO, OFM, and is being animated by Friars John Peter VALLABADOSS, OFM Cap., and Alphonse VAZHAPPANADY, OFM Conv.

Students attending from our Order include: Friars Abin VARGHESE, Sebastian JOSEPH and Paul Joseph POTHANATTUVELIYIL, all from India.



The future missionaries

■ GENERAL SECRETARIAT FOR JUSTICE, PEACE,
AND THE INTEGRITY OF CREATION

Friar Joseph BLAY
General Delegate for GPIC



Brazil: Formation in the Spirit of GPIC

■ Friar Joseph BLAY

On July 10-21, 2017, the 30th annual Winter Course for the friars of Brazil was held in the nation's capital, Brasilia.

Thirty-two friar priests participated: eighteen from the Province of St. Maximilian M. Kolbe (Brasilia); ten from the Province of St. Francis (São Paulo); and two from the Provincial Custody of St. Bonaventure (Maranhão). This year, the Provincial Custody of the Immaculate Conception (Rio de Janeiro) was absent. A friar from the Provincial Custody of Our Lady of Coromoto in Venezuela attended along with another friar from the Provincial Delegation in Chile of the Italian Province of St. Anthony of Padua. They were both very welcome.

Three formators led the friars through the program; they were: Friars Luis Felipe MARQUES CARNEIRO from the Province of St. Maximilian, who directed the course; Bruno M. MANZONI, from the Province of St. Francis; and Almir RODRIGUES DE SIQUEIRA, also from the Province of St. Maximilian.

The first two days of the course, Monday, July 10, and Tuesday, July 11, were dedicated to the theme "Educating in Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation." Friar Joseph BLAY, the Delegate General for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (GPIC), guided the friars with insights on the topic.

Actually, he arrived in Brazil on July 5 and the following day visited postulants and pre-novices to teach them about our charism as it relates to Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation.

On Saturday, July 8, the GPIC Delegate General concelebrated Mass with the rite of solemn profession for Friars Adailton Borges Gomez JÚNIOR and Décio Sousa CRUZ in the crypt of the Shrine of St. Francis in Brasilia.



The participants

Rome: Meeting of GPIC Representatives

■ Friar Joseph Kwame BLAY

At the invitation of the Minister General, thirteen friars participated in a meeting of representatives from various communities engaged in the field of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (GPIC).

The meeting took place on September 24-28, 2017, at the Pontifical Theological Faculty of St. Bonaventure (Seraphicum) in Rome. The main purpose of the meeting was to learn about the GPIC experiences of various communities in the Order. Another goal was to draw inspiration from what some Provinces are doing and to create a GPIC network among the friars involved.

The meeting participants included the Minister General, Friar Marco TASCA, the Vicar General, Friar Jerzy NOREL, and the Secretary General, Friar Vincenzo MARCOLI. The following General Definitors were also present: Friar Tadeusz ŚWIĄTKOWSKI, Friar Miljenko HONTIĆ, Friar Joaquín Ángel AGESTA CUEVAS, and Friar Benedict BAEK. The moderator was the Delegate General for GPIC, Friar Joseph Kwame BLAY.

Other participants included Friars Michael Joseph LASKY and Philip LEY (USA), Joseph KACHELEWA (Zambia), Luciano BERNARDI (Brazil), Bogdan Emilian BALAȘCĂ (Romania), Paweł CHMURA (Poland), Martin LEE (Korea), Miguel CAMPILLO BALLARÍN (Spain), Erick Gerardo MARÍN CARBALLO (Costa Rica), Fernando SPIMPOLO and Giovanni PALLEVA (Italy), Peter NGUYEN (Vietnam) and Andreas MURK (Germany). Friar Arcadio SICHER attended as an observer. A married couple was present as well; Elisabetta and Fulvio FERRARI. They gave a report on: "A Family's Supportive Lifestyle."

The participating friars shared their touching experiences about serving migrants, people with disabilities, lepers, autistic persons, the marginalized and the poor, refugees and stateless persons. Joseph Kwame BLAY gave a report on the Vatican's new Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development. Commenting on the shared experiences, Friar Joaquin said that the activities of the friars involved in GPIC are "hidden treasures". In his homily in Assisi, the Minister General admitted, on behalf of the Order, that he had not sufficiently cared for this aspect of our charism. However, in his final consideration, the Minister General was very pleased to see the friars involved and engaged in this ministry, contented and motivated by what they do. He also added that these religious do not act only on their own initiative, but are supported and approved by their communities, at both the friary and jurisdictional levels.

In the overall evaluation of the program, the friars were very pleased. Everyone expressed their hopes for an authentic, real and concrete awakening of GPIC in the Order.



The participants

OFFICE OF THE POSTULATOR GENERAL

Friar Damian-Gheorghe PĂTRAȘCU
Postulator General



General Postulator in Argentina

■ Friar Damian PĂTRAȘCU

Between July 10 and August 5, 2017, the General Postulator of the Order, Friar Damian PĂTRAȘCU visited Argentina in order to review and make direct inquiries into the cause of beatification for the Servants of God, the Most Reverend Enrico Angelo ANGELELLI, former Bishop of La Rioja, Argentina; Friar Carlos de Dios MURIAS; Father Gabriel LONGUEVILLE and layman Wenceslao PEDERNERA.

In all the communities that he visited (Cordoba, Chamental, Saldan, La Rioja, etc.) he witnessed the great fame of sanctity enjoyed by these Servants of God and participated in the celebrations organized in their honor. During this time, he met with the Most Reverend Marcelo COLOMBO, the current Bishop of La Rioja, the friars and the faithful involved in spreading knowledge of the Servants of God.

He also met members of the Definitory of the “Rioplattense” Province of St. Anthony of Padua of the Friars Minor Conventual in Argentina-Uruguay, and discussed different aspects of the cause with them.

The visit inspired faith in the Postulator and great hope that the cause will move along quickly. Heartfelt thanks goes to Friar Martin BITZER, the Vice-Postulator of the cause, who participated throughout the visit, showing great tact and delicacy.



At the tombs of the martyrs

General Postulator in Peru

■ Friar Damian PĂTRAȘCU

On August 6-14, 2017, the General Postulator of the Order, Friar Damian PĂTRAȘCU, together with the Assistant General for the Federación Conventuales America Latina [FALC], Friar Carlos TROVARELLI, visited Peru, where he attended the celebrations organised in honor of Blessed martyrs Michał TOMASZEK and Zbigniew STRZAŁKOWSKI, friars of the Order of the Friars Minor Conventual, who were beatified on December 5th, 2015 at Chimbote.

The celebrations began on the evening of August 8 with a pilgrimage, the Stations of the Cross and the Mass at martyrdom site in Pariacoto. A large gathering of the faithful, were present who came from many parts of Peru, as well as Italy and Poland. They were joined by the Most Reverend Luis Armando BAMBARÉN GASTELUMENDI, Bishop Emeritus of the Diocese of Chimbote, who also presided over Mass. Arriving at the last Station in the square in front of the church of "Pueblo Viejo," Mass was celebrated, the paschal sacrifice of the Lord, thanking God for the wonders he performs in his children in this Peruvian land. Returning to the parish church, everyone participated in a powerful moment of adoration. During adoration, they alternated between moments of prayer and silence, praying the Lord to make them witnesses of faith and hope, as is written on the tomb of Blessed Michał and Zbigniew.

The following morning, August 9, Morning Prayer was celebrated in the parish church and Mass, followed at 10:30 a.m., by presided over by the Most Reverend Ángel Francisco Simón PI-ORNO, present bishop of Chimbote, and concelebrated with Bishop Luis Armando BAMBARÉN GASTELUMENDI, as well as numerous friars and priests. Also present were seminarians of the diocese, numerous religious, many local and regional officials and local authorities. In his sermon, the bishop highlighted the spiritual and human stature of Blessed Michał and Zbigniew and repeatedly emphasized that their example of faith and hope and their martyrdom does not seem to have completely permeated the Christian community of Pariacoto and Peruvian society at large and is still waiting to come to complete fruition.

After Mass there was a procession through the streets of the town, for the first time with the statues of the two blessed friars. The celebrations concluded with lunch attended by several members of various faith groups which have arisen in Chimbote around the figures of Blessed Michał and Zbigniew.

Heartfelt thanks to Friar Dariusz MAZUREK, Provincial Delegate for Peru, and to the friars of the Friars Minor Conventual communities of Chimbote and Pariacoto for their warm fraternal welcome during these days of grace.



After the Mass

Romania: In Honor of the Servant of God

■ Friar Damian PĂTRAȘCU

On Sunday, August 27, 2017, the Postulator General, Friar Damian PĂTRAȘCU traveled to Romania where he participated in the celebrations in honor of the Servant of God, Veronica ANTAL, a Franciscan tertiary, on occasion of the 59th anniversary of her death on August 24, 1968.

Mass was celebrated at 11:00 a.m. in the presence of the faithful of the Franciscan parish of Nisiporești. Many tertiary Franciscans from Romania attended along with their spiritual directors and a number of Conventual and Capuchin friars. After Mass, everyone went in procession to the tomb of the Servant of God in the cemetery next to the church.

Festive songs and prayers were offered. Everyone thanked the Servant of God Veronica for her testimony of faith, for having offered up her own life. They invoked her intercession for their needs, imploring God for the gift of her beatification, which has been greatly desired by the entire Church in Romania, and above all by the Tertiaries who recognize her as their patron.



A moment during the Mass

postulator@ofmconv.net

■ GENERAL DELEGATE FOR ECUMENSIM
AND INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

Friar Silvestru BEJAN
General Delegate for EDI



Japan: Praying for Peace

■ Friar Silvestru BEJAN

On August 3-4, 2017, a delegation of the Order of Friars Minor Conventual attended the 30th anniversary of the Religious Summit Meeting on Mount Hiei: the Interreligious Gathering of Prayer for World Peace.

The delegation members were Friar Silvestru BEJAN, General Delegate for Ecumenism and Interreligious Dialogue (EDI); Friar Daniel PALATYKOOONATHAN, Delegate of the Sacro Convento of Assisi; and Friar Petre IȘTOC, Delegate of the Province of Japan.

The first Summit Meeting was held in 1987, on Mount Hiei, a sacred mountain in Tendai Buddhism. It took place one year after the first “World Day of Prayer” which was held in Assisi, on October 27, 1986. The Mount Hiei initiative was promoted by the venerable Etai YAMADA, leader of the Tendai school of Buddhism and head priest of the Enryaku-ji Temple on Mount Hiei. The initiative invited representatives of other Japanese religions to gather every year on August 3 and 4. At that meeting he stated: “It is true that there are many differences among the religions of the world, in almost every aspect. However, at the same time, they all share at least one common factor: the prayer for peace and happiness.”

The Summit Meeting began with a Plenary Assembly on the afternoon of August 3, followed by a panel discussion on the issue of the response of the various religions to violence and terrorism. On August 4, the Meeting opened with two panel discussions. The first was on the abolition of nuclear weapons. The second was on the process of eliminating poverty and promoting education. Friar Silvestru BEJAN represented the Order on the second panel and spoke about the human and Christian journey of the Poverello of Assisi, with his choice of living “without anything of his own.” The Poverello was an icon who illustrated the possibility of a ‘City of Man’ in which love reigns supreme and respect for one another is put front and center. Francis of Assisi’s choice of radical poverty still makes a big impact because in choosing poverty and professing it, a person opens up new spaces in his life. The Summit Meeting concluded that afternoon with the Prayer Ceremony for Peace at the Enryaku-ji Temple on Mount Hiei.

The friendship between the Friars Minor Conventual and the religions of Japan began many years ago and has continued to grow. This is demonstrated by the increasing presence of Japanese visitors to the Tomb of St Francis in Assisi and by the various meetings and celebrations that have been jointly realized.

World Peace events have not been limited to the city of Kyoto. On August 8-9, 2017, a Conventual Franciscan delegation went to Nagasaki to participate in the religious and civil celebrations marking the 72nd anniversary of the city’s atomic bombing by the United States at the end of World War II. The celebrations took place in the midst of the tensions surrounding the United States’ denunciation of the “threat” posed by North Korea’s nuclear plans.

St. Maximilian KOLBE made great sacrifices to found a community in Nagasaki. His efforts were generously continued by the Friars Minor Conventual and today his work is very much alive and appreciated. The Nagasaki community was spared from the bomb because it was located behind a hill that shielded it from the radiation.

The trip to Japan ended with a brief stay at the Shinmeizan Interreligious Dialogue Center, atop Narutakistan Hill in the village of Heboura (Prefecture of Kumamoto). Shinmeizan is a small community composed of two Saverian missionaries and a Conventual Franciscan Friar. It tries to embody the ideal of a Christian spirituality that is inspired by Japanese tradition and is in dialogue with the religions of Japan.

GENERAL ASSISTANT OF THE SECULAR FRANCISCANS ORDER

Friar Alfred PARAMBAKATHU
General Assistant of the OFS



Chile: National OFS Chapter

■ Friar Jack GINTING

On August 22-27, 2017, the elective National Chapter of the Secular Franciscan Order (OFS) in Chile was celebrated at the Friars Minor's St. Francis retreat house in Mostazal, Chile.

The Chapter was presided over by Maria Consuelo de NUÑES, Deputy General Minister of the OFS, and assisted by Friar Armando TRUJILLO, TOR, member of the Conference of General Spiritual Assistants of the OFA (CAS) and Silvia DIANA, President of the Cono Area of South Latin America. The National Spiritual Assistants Friar Victor HUGO, OFM and Friar Jack GINTING, OFM Conv., were also present.

Sixty laity with active voice and approximately fifteen without active voice participated at the Chapter.

In the afternoon of August 26th, William TAPIA was elected National Minister and Edita OLMOS was elected Vice-Minister.

The new National Council was established during Mass on August 26th. The Mass was presided over by Friar Armando TRUJILLO with Deputy Minister Maria Consuelo de NUÑES, present.

The closing Mass was presided over by Friar Carlos PAZ, OFM, Visitor of the Friars Minor of Argentina.



The Capitulars

Ghana: Formation Week about OFS

■ Friar Alfred PARAMBAKATHU

On September 25-29, 2017, the friars in Ghana took part in a week of ongoing formation.

During September 26-28, Friar Alfred PARAMBAKATHU served as the event's resource person. He was called in to speak about the Secular Franciscan Order (OFS). The friars in Ghana are planning to establish some OFS fraternities. Friar Alfred talked about the history of the OFS; the development of the legislation of the OFS; the present Rule and Constitutions of the

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OFS; how to establish OFS fraternities; and how the friars can provide the OFS with spiritual assistance.

On September 28, Friar Alfred also presented videos on the revision of the Constitutions. Best wishes to the friars in Ghana as they attempt to spread the charism of St. Francis of Assisi through the Secular Franciscan Order.

India: Meeting of the Superiors and the OFS

■ Friar Alfred PARAMBAKATHU

**On August 24-29, 2017,
Tibor KAUSER, the General Minister of the Secular Franciscan Order (OFS)
and Friar Alfred PARAMBAKATHU, OFM Conv., organized several meetings in India.**

The first was a meeting with the Major Superiors of the Franciscan First Order and Franciscan Third Order Regular (TOR). It took place on Thursday, August 24, in Assisi Shanthi Kendra, Karukutty, at the Conventual Franciscan Provincialate. All of the Major Superiors were present except for two.

The OFS General Minister explained what took place during the last OFS National Chapter and talked about the current status of the OFS in India. Friar Alfred made some suggestions for revising the OFS National Statutes.

The next day, the General Minister and Friar Alfred met with the OFS National Council at the Friars Minor Capuchin Church of Our Lady of Fatima in Coimbatore. They emphasized the need to convene the National Chapter for next year.

On August 26-27, the General Minister and Friar Alfred organized a meeting with the Spiritual Assistants to the Secular Franciscan Order, again at the Conventual Franciscan Provincialate. Twenty-four Franciscan First-Order Spiritual Assistants attended. The General Minister presented the general status of the OFS around the world. Friar Alfred presented the history of the OFS and the meaning of spiritual assistance in light of the OFS's new Rule and the current Constitutions. They devoted a lot of time discussing ways to solve the OFS's difficulties in India.

On the evening of August 26, the General Minister and Friar Alfred, along with the OFS National Assistants, went to see His Eminence George Cardinal ALENCHERRY, Major Archbishop of Ernakulam-Angamaly (Syro-Malabar Rite), India. They were well received by his Eminence and spoke with him about the 'Ritual of the Order'.

On August 27, both men visited the Most Reverend Joseph KALATHIPARAMBIL, Archbishop of Verapoly (Latin Rite).



The Capitulars

THE INTERNATIONAL ASSISTENT OF THE MILITIA OF THE IMMACULATE

Friar Raffaele DI MURO
International M.I. President



The MI in Poland Gathers in Prayer to Remember Kolbe

■ Friar Raffaele DI MURO

On July 29-30, 2017, members of the M.I. in Poland gathered in Niepokalanów for a large and well-attended gathering to commemorate St. Maximilian's entrance into the cell of his martyrdom.

During those two days, there were celebrations, theatrical representations and theological seminars, with top authorities of the Church and the Polish State in attendance. Numerous faithful participated with enthusiasm and joy. Also present was M.I. International President, Friar Raffaele DI MURO, representing the worldwide movement.

July 29-30 were the most likely days that the Saint was taken to the starvation bunker, a place where prisoners were condemned to die of hunger and thirst. The many faithful attending ideally "accompanied" St. Maximilian on his path to martyrdom.

This wonderful event was organized by the M.I. of Poland as part of the Association's centennial celebrations. The M.I. in Poland counts about two million members and is particularly active. In addition to this event and other initiatives, the Polish M.I. members are making a valuable contribution to the 100th anniversary of the Kolbean association. The M.I. occupies an important place among the ecclesial movements in Poland.



During the procession

Croatia: Visit of the International President

■ Friar Raffaele DI MURO

On September 18, 2017, following the Kolbean symposium held September 16-17, the International President of the Militia of the Immaculate (M.I.), Friar Raffaele DI MURO, visited Croatia's national M.I. headquarters at the Friars Minor Conventual friary of St. Francis in Zagabria.

During the visit, he had a productive chat with the National Assistant, Friar Zdravko TUBA. They discussed some interesting topics such as the national and international celebrations of the 100th anniversary of the M.I. Association and preparations for a forthcoming national assembly.

The M.I. is quite active and dynamic in Croatia. It offers the local Church a large number of apostolates, such as the *Mariafest* (a Marian song festival) and the musical about Kolbe called "Life for Life", which is often performed.

Prospects for the M.I. in this region are indeed very good; the movement is experiencing remarkable growth. At the end of his visit, the International President dropped by the editorial board of the magazine "Veritas", which dedicates two issues each year to Kolbean spirituality and has published an interview on Vatican Radio (Croatian branch).

Croatia: Kolbean Symposium

■ Friar Raffaele DI MURO

On September 16-17, 2017, marking the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Militia of the Immaculate (M.I.), the Friars Minor Conventual Province of St. Jerome in Croatia, the Croatian national headquarters of the M.I. and other institutions active in Croatia, organized a symposium on the "hot topic" of Freemasonry.

The symposium took place in the auditorium of the St. Francis friary in Zagreb. This delicate topic was dealt with from various angles (legal, spiritual, social, historical and political) thanks to the contributions of many illustrious scholars. As one may recall, the founding of the M.I. in 1917 was also in response to attacks against the Church made by Masonic associations of the time. St. Maximilian not only wanted the Militia of the Immaculate to counteract the activities of the lodges, but he also wanted to work toward the conversion of the Masons. The symposium covered this particular missionary aspect of the Marian-Kolbean movement, which still continues to be very important today. Only the pastoral impetus of St. Maximilian could make an apostolic outreach for the benefit of the Freemasons, so that even they would be included in the evangelical admonition the saint promoted.

To develop these topics, well-prepared and enlightening conference reports were made by noted lecturers such as Zdravko TUBA (the Croatian National Assistant of the M.I.), Zbigniew SUCHECKI (of the St. Bonaventure Theological Faculty), Milan GELO, Bernardin FILINIĆ, Ivan MUŽIĆ, Ivan KARLIĆ and many others. Friar Raffaele DI MURO, the International President of the M.I., was also invited to report on the New Evangelization, with respect to the criteria suggested by St. Maximilian Kolbe.

The symposium was attended by many people coming from neighboring countries, and was enriched by moments of fervent prayer. The tireless organizer of the symposium was the Minister Provincial of Croatia, Friar Josip BLAŽEVIĆ, who also announced the publication of "The Writings of Saint Maximilian Kolbe" in the Croatian language.

This Kolbean event was a worthy way to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the M.I. in Croatia.

www.ofmconv.net

Kolbean Sources: Volume One Published

■ Friar Raffaele DI MURO

There is some great news in light of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Militia of the Immaculate (M.I.): the first volume of the three-volume work Kolbean Sources has finally been published in the Italian language.

The work has been edited by Friars Raffaele DI MURO, Emil KUMKA, Tomasz SZYMCZAK and Roman WADACH. It presents the spiritual exercises, meditations, news records, articles, unpublished articles, notes for a book, personal writings, legal writings and the innovative ideas of Saint Maximilian Kolbe.

As mentioned before, the last Italian language rendition of the saint's writings has become obsolete. The editors have updated and improved the text based on new items in the recent Polish edition. The second volume (letters) and the third volume (conferences and canonization process) will be available respectively in 2018 and 2019. The work is being published by the Edizioni Messaggero of Padua and is already available at the International M.I. Center (Roma@mi-international.org).

This publication will be invaluable for scholars of the Martyr of Charity and for those who love Kolbean spirituality.

Fonti Kolbiane. Altri Scritti: www.edizionimessaggero.it

Two Crowns: A New Film about St. Maximilian Kolbe

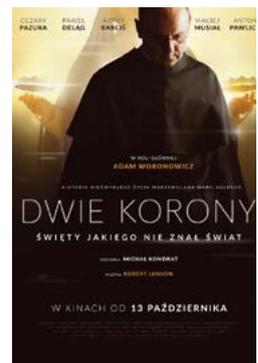
■ Friar Raffaele DI MURO

On September 26, 2017, an important Kolbean event took place at the Cardinal DESKUR Hall, located in the Vatican's Palazzo San Carlo. *Two Crowns*, a new film on St. Maximilian Kolbe, was given its first European showing.

Those who attended the private screening included the film's director, Michał KONDRAT, the actor playing Kolbe, Adam WORONOWICZ and distinguished members of the public who had been invited for the occasion. Friar Emil KUMKA was there on behalf of the St. Bonaventure Pontifical Theological Faculty, and Friar Raffaele DI MURO came on behalf of the International Militia of the Immaculate (M.I.).

The film presented the life story of the Martyr of Charity by alternating smoothly between scenes of his life and documentary-style interviews with various experts on the saint. The film was a masterpiece which depicted Father Kolbe in a historically impeccable manner and featured compelling performances by all of the actors. The audience members applauded for a long time in appreciation, and were clearly impressed by the quality of this cinematic work. It was indeed a wonderful event for the 100th anniversary of the founding of the M.I.

It is hoped the film will soon be seen worldwide.



The film's poster

web@ofmconv.net

Croatia: First National M.I. Assembly

■ Friar Miljenko HONTIĆ, Assistant General for the CEF

On September 23, 2017, the Militia of the Immaculate (M.I.) in Croatia held its first National Assembly at the friary of the Holy Spirit in Zagreb, Croatia.

Some 350 M.I. members attended the event, representing the various regions and provinces of Croatia. Croatia has about 4,000 M.I. members nationwide. Father Vladislav Žarko OŠAP, the first M.I. National Assistant for neighboring Bosnia and Herzegovina, was also present.

The Assembly began with some Marian devotional prayers, Eucharistic Adoration and Mass, which was presided over by the Most Reverend Ivan ŠAŠKO, Auxiliary Bishop of Zagreb.

During the second half of the day, there was a presentation on the book *The Writings of St. Maximilian Kolbe*. The complete edition was just translated into the Croatian language. The presentation was curated by Friar Josip BLAŽEVIĆ, the Minister Provincial of Croatia and Friar Ivan KARLIĆ, a professor and the Dean of the Croatian Institute of Mariology. Friar Zdravko TUBA, the M.I. National Director and Assistant for Croatia, was entrusted with the conclusion of the event and offering some words of thanksgiving.

During the Assembly, a short film called *Militia Immaculatae* was shown. It was produced by the Province of Slovenia and was presented by its Minister Provincial, Friar Milan KOS. The director of the film was Friar Danilo HOLC; he is also the Director of Clerical Students in Slovenia.

A number of celebrations gave the Assembly a more festive tone: the feast day of St. Jerome, the patron saint of the Province of Croatia; and the anniversaries of some friars of the Province. Friar Ambroz KNEŽIĆ celebrated his 50th anniversary of solemn profession and Friars Tomislav CVETKO and Miljenko HONTIĆ celebrated their 25th anniversary of priestly ordination.

All of the participants at the M.I. Assembly were welcomed into the friary courtyard where lunch was provided featuring typical dishes from the friars' parochial Caritas association.



With representatives of the M.I.

■ GENERAL FINANCIAL OFFICE



SOME THANK
YOU NOTES...

FOR OFFERING HOLY MASSES:

- Prov. of St. Anthony, Italy
- Cust. of Assisi

FOR THE NEEDS OF THE ORDER:

- Prov. of Spain
- Prov. of OLC – USA

FOR THE MISSIONS:

- Cust. of Great Britain-Ireland

FOR SCHOLARSHIPS:

- Del. of Holland
- Cust. of Canada
- Cust. of Austria-Switzerland

FOR THE FORMATION FUND:

- Cust. of the Philippines
- Prov. Puglia, Italy
- Prov. of OLC – USA
- Prov. of St. Anthony, Italy

THANKS also to those who have made donations using the communications channel of the **GENERAL CURIA**

The financial aid administered by the General Curia isn't the only circle of solidarity in the Order; in fact, there are commendable and exemplary solidarity initiatives, for example, between Mother Provinces and their Daughter Custodies or Delegations, or through 'twinning' thanks to the involvement of groups, institutions and parishes. We extend our thanks to you all!

AFRICAN FEDERATION OF CONVENTUAL FRANCISCANS



Friar Tadeusz ŚWIĄTKOWSKI
Assistant General for the AFCOF

Ghana: Friars Renew Their Vows

■ Friar Anthony BEZO, Provincial Custos

On July 15, 2017, the feast of Saint Bonaventure, twenty-three friars from the Provincial Custody of St. Anthony of Padua in Ghana renewed their vows in Saltpond, Ghana.

On the same day, friars from the Custody, but in different Jurisdictions, renewed their vows: three in Zambia, two in Uganda and two in Kenya. The Custody is very grateful for its booming vocations.



The participants

Zambia: Priestly Ordination

■ Friar Mathews KASONGO, Provincial Secretary

On July 22, 2017, there was great joy and jubilation when seven young men were raised to the Order of the Presbyterate in the Cathedral of St. Daniel in the Diocese of Solwezi, Zambia.

Six of these were Conventual Franciscan Friars. They were: Friars Peter Cliff MILANZI; Severiano Joseph BANDA; Emmanuel Nkonde CHAFWA; William CHANDA; Joseph KALWIJI; and Trywell Joseph NYIRENDA of our Province of the Franciscan Protomartyrs in Zambia. The seventh young man, Lameck NKHATA, was ordained a diocesan priest. All of them were ordained by the Most Reverend Charles KASONDE, Bishop of Solwezi.

The Bishop based his homily upon the scripture readings and reminded the young men that they were being ordained, not only for the Order of Friars Minor Conventual or the Diocese of Solwezi, but for the Universal Church. He encouraged them to go above and beyond so that they might not lose anyone entrusted to them. He cautioned them not to see race or tribal affiliation in the faces of those they serve as priests. The Catholic Church does not focus

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on someone's identity but rather accepts and nourishes everyone. Every human person was created in the image and likeness of God. As such, our work is to serve everyone from many different backgrounds because they are all sons and daughters of God, the God who created them in his own image and likeness. The Bishop reminded the young men that they were being ordained to feed the faith to the people of Christ. He pointed out that they were priests forever with God. The Bishop firmly recognized the role of the religious in the Church, stating that men and women religious help the Church care for the people of God. Hence, there is a need to work together in order to promote human life in every sphere of life. In their ministry, the new priests will be serving a people redeemed by Jesus Christ.

He reminded the young men to be prayerful because, if they did not pray, they would become mere ecclesiastical social workers. So they ought to pray in order to be empowered in their ministry. In order to serve the people of God better, they should always pray. He asked them to remember, that when they are sent forth, if they always look up to God in their ministry and apostolates, they will succeed. Their priestly ministry will be successful, if they always celebrate the Eucharist.



The participants

Uganda: Mission Developments

■ Friar Adam KLAG

The events this year in our mission in Uganda will be permanently recorded in the chronicles of the Order.

On Saturday, August 19, 2017, Friar Stevenson LUMBUYE professed his solemn vows. He is the first Ugandan to bind himself forever to the Franciscan Order through the vows of obedience, poverty, and chastity. The ceremony took place at the Shrine of the Ugandan Martyrs, where the Polish Franciscans carry out pastoral ministry. Friar Stevenson comes from the Franciscan parish of Matugga and undertook his theological studies at our seminary in Cracow, Poland.

This year, other important events are scheduled for the mission. In October, a new church will be consecrated at the Munyonyo shrine and a new friary will be erected. The friary will be used as a formation house for postulants from Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania.

East Africa: Vocations

■ Friar Tadeusz ŚWIĄTKOWSKI

Here are some events pertaining to Franciscan formation in East Africa:

Postulants: The Order's candidate formation for the three missions in East Africa is conducted jointly at two locations. The first year of candidacy is carried out in Ruiru, Kenya. The second year takes place in Munyonyo, Uganda. The formation year in Ruiru began on September 18, 2017, with a solemn celebration attended by Friar Tadeusz Świątkowski, the Assistant General for the African Federation of Conventual Franciscans (AFCOF) and Friar Kazimierz SZULC, the Custos of the Custody of St. Francis of Assisi in Kenya. Ruiru has nineteen postulants: five from Kenya, eight from Tanzania and six from Uganda. Their formators are Friars Blasio Ooko OLENGE and Gifton Kiwo MBAYA, both from Kenya.

The second-year postulants are formed in Uganda at the National Uganda Martyrs Shrine. The Shrine has been entrusted to the friars by the Archdiocese of Kampala. There are nine postulants at this formation house: three from Kenya, three from Tanzania and three from Uganda. Their formators are Friars Stephen Muriithi GATIMU, from Kenya; Marcin ZAŁUSKI, from Uganda; and Deacon Francis Muthoka NZYOKA, also from Kenya.



Postulants in Uganda



Novices Arusha/Poli Singhisi

Novices: On July 25, 2017, eight novices of East Africa officially started their canonical year at the novitiate headquarters in Arusha-Poli Singhisi. There is one novice from Uganda, four from Kenya, and three from Tanzania. The novices are under the direction of two formators, Friar Everest Valentine MKENDA, from Tanzania, and Friar Dennis Ntabo GWARO, from Kenya.

The Custos of Kenya, Friar Kazimierz SZULC, and the Custos of Tanzania, Friar Krzysztof CIEŚLIKIEWICZ, were both present at the celebration to mark the beginning of the year.

Solemn Vows: Friar Francis Daniel HIZA is currently a theology student in Nairobi. On September 3, 2017, he became the tenth friar from the Provincial Custody of St. Maximilian M. Kolbe in Tanzania to profess solemn vows. He professed his solemn vows into the hands of the Minister Provincial of the mother Province of the Immaculate Mother of God in Poland (Warsaw), Friar Wiesław PYZIO. Others present included the Assistant General for the AFCOF and numerous friars from Tanzania, Kenya and Zambia. There were many faithful at the ceremony. After the celebration, a friary agape meal was organized by local parishioners.

Ghana: 40th Anniversary of Conventual Presence

■ Friar Anthony Bezo KUTIERO

On September 30, 2017, the Provincial Custody of St. Anthony of Padua in Ghana marked forty years Conventual Franciscan presence in the country. The 40th anniversary celebration took place at St Francis of Assisi Church, Awoshie-Anyaa, Accra, Ghana.

This presence was founded in March of 1977 by four American friars from what was then the Province of Saint Anthony of Padua in the United States. They were: Friars Ignatius PIATZEK, Isidore KOWALSKY, Dominic SLEMBA and Vincent VIVIAN. Later the same year they were joined by three Italian friars, namely, Friars George ABRAM, Emilio GALLO and Joseph CONTESSI from Saint Anthony of Padua Province, Italy.

Starting with seven missionaries, the presence has since grown to include twenty-five solemnly professed friars, thirty-five temporarily professed friars, nine novices and twenty postulants. Even though this was an event for giving thanks, the friars were not oblivious to the fact that it was also a time for self-evaluation and looking towards the future. For this reason, a formation week was organized prior to the celebration and took place on September 26-29, 2017.

The formation week served as a time to reflect on bringing the spirit of Saint Francis into the ordinary Ghanaian home through the establishment of the Secular Franciscan Order (SFO) in Ghana. During the anniversary celebration, the remaining two original founders still in Ghana, Friars George ABRAM and Joseph CONTESSI, were commended and honored.



The celebration

CENTRALIS EUROPAE FOEDERATIO

Friar Miljenko HONTIĆ
Assistant General for the CEF



Denmark and Sweden: Visit to the Friars

■ Friar Miljenko HONTIĆ

On September 3-8, 2017, Friar Miljenko HONTIĆ, the Assistant General for the Centralis Europae Foederatio (CEF), visited our friars in Denmark and Sweden.

From September 5-7, he was joined on the visit by Friar Milan KOS, the Minister Provincial of the Province of St. Joseph in Slovenia.

In Denmark, Friar Tomislav CVETKO of Croatia and Friar Tomaž MAJCEN of Slovenia are living at the headquarters of the Diocese of Copenhagen and the Church of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. They are studying Danish and are joining the parish ministry apostolate of this community.

The Assistant General and the Minister Provincial met with the Most Reverend Czesław KOZON, Bishop of Copenhagen and the Reverend Niels ENGELBRECHT, Diocesan Vicar and prelate. On this occasion, a document was signed, in conjunction with the Provinces of Croatia and Slovenia, establishing the association of our friars with the Diocesan headquarters in Copenhagen. This officially registers our Order in Denmark.

On Wednesday, September 6, the Assistant General, the Minister Provincial and the friars in Copenhagen went together to visit the community of our friars in Jönköping, Sweden. The guardian of the community is Friar Joseph NILSSON. At the friary in Jönköping, everyone took part in the celebration of Mass and shared meals. Together, they visited the town of Vadstena where Friar Piotr ZACHAREWICZ, a member of the friars' community in Sweden, lives and works as a chaplain for the sisters. They also visited the Shrine of St. Bridget of Sweden and the two convents of the Bridgettine and Benedictine Sisters. Despite some cloudy and rainy weather, the friars were very happy with the meeting and were pleased to spend time together.



The participants

Holland: Annual Assembly

■ Friar Miljenko HONTIĆ

On September 10-13, 2017, members of the Provincial Delegation in Holland met at the Huize Elisabeth Retreat Center in Denekamp, Holland. The Provincial Delegate, Friar Thijs MOONS, presided.

The Assembly was attended by all the friars of the Delegation, except for two. One resides in a rest home in Maastricht and the other lives in Germany.

Friar Bernhardin SEITHER, the Minister Provincial of the mother Province of St. Elisabeth in Germany, was also present at the Assembly along with Friar Miljenko HONTIĆ, the Assistant General for the Centralis Europae Foederatio (CEF).

The first part of the Assembly dealt with spiritual topics; in particular, the theme “The Fruits of Their Franciscan Life” was explored.

On the second day, the former Minister Provincial, Friar Theo SCOLTES, made a presentation on the theme of St. Maximilian Kolbe and his influence on the Order and the Church.

Finally, the friars discussed practical matters concerning the ordinary life of the Delegation and plans for its future.

This year, the friary of Saint Joseph in Beek was sold and the Delegation gave a good part of the money earned from that sale to the Formation Fund.

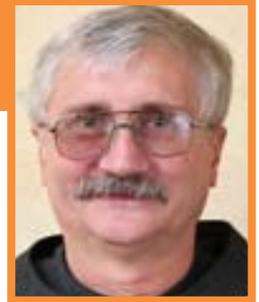
The Assembly ended with Mass, at which various friar’s anniversaries of religious profession and ordination were commemorated in a fraternal and peaceful atmosphere.



The participants

cef@ofmconv.net

CONVENTUAL FRANCISCAN FEDERATION



Friar Jude WINKLER
Assistant General for the CFF

Great Britain-Ireland: A Summer of Growth

■ Friar Peter Damian MASSENGILL, Custos

**In Great Britain and Ireland,
our friars of Our Lady of the Angels' Custody of Blessed Agnellus of Pisa
are known as the Greyfriars.**

Our Order's first presence there began when St. Francis of Assisi sent them to England in 1224. During the English Reformation, our friars loyal to the Holy Father were forced to flee and did not return until the early 20th Century.

Following a month-long Solemn Vow Program in Assisi, Friar Colin Mary EDWARDS (front left), Friar Joe FENTON (center) and Friar Paul Francis Becka (front right) professed their Solemn Vows in the Capuchin Church in Oxford on August 2, 2017, the Feast of Our Lady of the Angels.

The vows were received by the Custos, Friar Peter Damian MESSENGILL (rear right), and among the many celebrating was Friar Miljenko HONTIĆ, the Assistant General for the Central European Federation (CEF).

On the Sunday just prior to the Solemn Vow celebration, July 30, 2017, in the Blackfriars Church in Oxford, Friar Gerard Mary TOMAN (front left) and Friar Benedict ABUGU (front right) were ordained to the Transitional Diaconate at the hands of the Most Reverend. Malcom McMAHON, OP, Archbishop of Liverpool, along with three of their Dominican classmates.

Looking ahead, our three Novices-to-be are already in Assisi working on their Italian. Joseph David FREEMAN (left), Osvaldo LOPEZ-FIGUEROA (center), and Kieran John MURPHY (right) – the third Murphy in our Custody – will be invested into the Novitiate at the Sacred Convent in Assisi on September 9, 2017. Their postulant director, Friar Daniel GEARY will be present for the investiture.

Entering our postulancy program in Oxford this September are: Kyle David BANKS, age 30, on August 15, from Leeds, West Yorkshire; Bram DE BACKER, age 30, on May 15, from Zottegem, Belgium; and Peter Gerard FLYNN, age 28, on June 27, from Galway, Ireland

We welcome this gift of brothers the Lord has given us!

Visit www.thegreyfriars.org to read more of the latest news on our brothers serving in the Blessed Agnellus of Pisa Custody, under the jurisdiction of the USA Province Our Lady of the Angels.



Friars of the Custody

USA: Canonical Visitation of OLA Province

■ Friar Tadeusz ŚWIĄTKOWSKI, General Visitor

On July 3, 2017, Friar Tadeusz ŚWIĄTKOWSKI, the Assistant General for the African Federation of Conventual Franciscans (AFCOF) and Delegate of the Minister General, Friar Marco TASCIA, conducted the third and final part of the general canonical visitation of the USA Province of Our Lady of the Angels.

The visitation was carried out in preparation for the next Provincial Chapter scheduled for April of 2018.

This part of the visitation began with the two friaries in the Province of Canada—Toronto and Kingston—where both Americans and Canadians work.

After that, the Visitor returned to the United States to complete the visitation of the remaining friaries in the states of New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Maryland. A total of thirty-one friaries of the Province were visited from February to July of 2017.

On July 23, at the end of the visitation, the Visitor met with the Minister Provincial, Friar Jamesc McCURRY and his Definitory, in order to make a report and give a first impression on the state of the Province. The report could be helpful in preparing for the Ordinary Provincial Chapter. During the Chapter, the Visitor will make his final report.



Provincial Definitory / Ellicott City, Provincialate and friary



Point Pleasant Beach, community / church and friary



Seaside Park community / church and friary

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Shamokin church / community



Kensington church / community



Toronto friary/ Friar Jobe ABBASS with parishioners



Friars of the Custody of St. Maximilian Kolbe in Canada in the 80s

Arroyo Grande: From the Common Novitiate

■ Friar Jude WINKLER

On July 19, 2017, twelve novices received the habit of our Order and started their novitiate year at Arroyo Grande, California, USA, home to the novitiate of the Conventual Franciscan Federation.

Friar Joseph WOOD started his first year as the Novice Master and Friar Maurice RICHARD continues his assignment as Assistant Novice Master. This year, five of the novices are from the Province of Our Lady of the Angels, four novices come from the Province of St. Bonaventure, and three novices are from the Province of Our Lady of Consolation.

On the same day, the six novices who completed their novitiate, went back to their home Provinces where they will make their temporary profession of vows. Three of them, Friars Pedro LOPEZ, Calin VIDAURN and Alberto BRAVO, professed their vows in El Paso, Texas on July 21, 2017. Two others, Friars Angel GARCIA and Christopher GARCIA, will make their profession of vows in Hermosa Beach, California, on August 2, 2017. Finally, Friar Jason DE MARTINI will profess his vows in Ellicott City, Maryland, on July 24, 2017. Each novice received the cord with the three knots representing the professed vows, and a copy of the Blue Crucifix of Assisi, the same crucifix before which the novices prayed during their novitiate year.

Friar Giles ZAKOWICZ, who completed his term as Novice Master, will soon go to Oxford, England, to work in formation.



The group of novices

cff@ofmconv.net

■ FEDERACIÓN CONVENTUALES AMERICA LATINA

Friar Carlos TROVARELLI
Assistant General for the FALC



São Paulo, Brazil: Meeting of the *MiReFALC*

■ Friar Rogério PEREIRA XAVIER, *MiReFALC* Coordinator

The Ministry of Reflection of the Federación Conventuales America Latina (*MiReFALC*) had its annual meeting at the Bon Fim Friary of Santo André in São Paulo, Brazil.

The guest of honor at this meeting was Friar Mauro GAMBETTI, the General Custos of the General Custody of the Sacro Convento in Assisi.

The discussion topic of the meeting was "Crisis and Power". As per *MiReFALC* custom, the meeting took an interdisciplinary approach. Each member offered a reflection which was then opened to discussion to examine the topic more deeply.

The shared reflections will be published in the next issue the *MiReFALC* magazine "Decires."



The participants

Brasilia: Franciscan UCOB Course

■ Friar Luis Felipe MARQUES CARNERIO, Coordinator

On July 9-21, 2017, the 30th Franciscan Winter Course of the Union of Conventual Franciscans of Brazil (UCOB) took place at the Seminary of St. Francis of Brasilia, Brazil.

Thirty-two friars from the three Brazilian Jurisdictions attended, along with their formators, plus a friar from Venezuela and another from Chile. This year, the friars learned more about the topic of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (GPIC), with the Delegate General for GPIC, Friar Joseph BLAY. In addition, they examined some studies on the life of the friars in Franciscan history and learned about our Ratio studiorum with Friar Alexandre LIMA PATTUCI DE, of the Province of St. Francis in Brazil. In the second week, they studied the thought of St.

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Anthony with Friar Geraldo MONTEIRO of the Province of St. Francis in Brazil; and William Ockham with a professor from the University of Brasilia and Friar Alex Sandro CALHEIROS of the Province of St. Maximilian M. Kolbe in Brazil. Friar Alex is a professor at our St. Bonaventure Institute. The course provided some pleasant and productive days of study, prayer, interrelations and fraternity. It was a real opportunity for meeting and sharing amidst the diversity of Brazilian culture.



The participants

Uruguay: Extraordinary FALC Assembly

■ Friar Maurizio BRIDIO, FALC Secretary

On July 18-20, 2017, the Ministers Provincial, Custodes and Delegates of the Latin American Jurisdictions met for the 2017 Extraordinary Assembly of the Federación Conventuales America Latina (FALC).

The meeting was held at the friary of San José in Montevideo, Uruguay, part of the “Rio-platense” Province of St. Anthony of Padua in Argentina-Uruguay. The Assistant General for the FALC, Friar Carlos TROVARELLI, also attended.

The aim of the meeting was to review the General Statutes. The work was guided by Friar Victor MORA MESÉN, a member of the Executive Committee for the Revision of the Constitutions (CERC).



The participants

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Friar Victor introduced some guidelines that were helpful in understanding the statutory revisions. After reading each number, there was a period of fraternal dialogue.

Friar Victor also led a reflection on the main points of the revision of the Constitutions in view of the forthcoming General Chapter. The presence of the Assistant General Friar Carlos TROVARELLI was also helpful.

Other issues were dealt with during the Assembly: the next Rivortorto Course; the finalizing of a mission with the post-novitiate friars, and the second meeting of the FALC Novice Masters.

The FALC President, Friar Jhon Jairo MOLINA CASTAÑEDA, informed the participants about the meeting of the Federation Presidents with the General Definitory held last June.

Special thanks go to the Minister Provincial of the "Rioplataense" Province, Friar Aldo Andrés CÚCARO and to the guardian and friars of the friary of San José in Montevideo, for their fraternal spirit and hospitality.

Mexico: Meeting of Novitiate Formators

■ Friar Franklin Antonio DURÁN ZAMBRANO

On August 14-18, 2017, a meeting of FALC novitiate formators was held at the María Inmaculada Friary in Cuautitlán Izcalli, Mexico.

The meeting (courses and workshops) was coordinated and led by Friar Franklin DURÁN, ZAMBRANO with the support and presence of the Assistant General for the FALC, Friar Carlos TROVARELLI and FALC President Friar Jhon Jairo MOLINA. The Minister Provincial of the Province of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mexico, Friar Mario Castro MARTINEZ, took some time to share experiences, especially at the beginning of the work.

The meeting alternated between reports prepared by the participants themselves and other external contributors; There was time for discussion, listening and fraternal exchange about the fascinating and sensitive service of guiding novice brothers on the path toward maturation as well as guiding the formators on their own journey

Other formators in the Mexican Province entrusted with various stages of formation, postulancy, novitiate and post-novitiate programs, also participated. The presence and contribution of Friar Elio ROJAS, who is preparing to join the FALC novitiate team, was also much valued.

We thank the Order and the FALC Federation for its support and faith in this type of work, particularly in the animation of the formation program in our presences in Latin America.



The formators

Colombia: Canonical Visitation

■ Friar Carlos TROVARELLI

On July 9-16 and 22-31, 2017, the Assistant General for the FALC, Friar Carlos TROVARELLI conducted a canonical visitation to the Provincial Custody of St. Francis of Assisi in Colombia (belonging to the Province of Our Lady of Montserrat, Spain), in view of the 7th Ordinary Custodial Chapter, scheduled for this coming November.

The Custody currently counts six communities distributed in various parts of the country. Two of the friaries are formation houses, which include three stages of the formation process, one of which is the FALC St. Maximilian Kolbe international novitiate in the city of Itagüí, part of the Diocese of Medellín.

Colombian culture has great sensitivity to the practice of religion and the Church enjoys a promising vocational situation. For this reason, the main goals of the Custody include vocational pastoral care and initial formation.



I frati della custodia

Venezuela: Second Novitiate

■ Friar Franklin Antonio DURÁN ZAMBRANO, FALC Formation Assistant

From August 6 to September 2, 2017, a “second novitiate” course was held in the Provincial Custody of Our Lady of Coromoto, in Venezuela.

Participants in this fascinating experience included some temporarily professed confreres: Friars Juan Gregorio MARTINEZ CANELÓN; Domicio Ramón MOLINA PEREZ; Friar Manuel Edgardo NUÑEZ GALLARDO and Ramón Alfredo RUI UREÑA. Friar Matteo ORNELLI, from the Province of St. Nicholas and St. Angelo in Italy (Puglia), led the course. Other course leaders included the rector of the Custody’s formation house, Friar Carlos Ramón ORTÍZ ROJAS; the Formation Assistant for the Federación Conventuales America Latina (FALC), Friar Franklin Antonio DURÁN ZAMBRANO; and the Custos, Friar José Luis AVENDAÑO MONSALVE.

The themes addressed during the formation course were the following: “Franciscan Prayer: The Hermitic Experience”; “The Experience of Consecration in Franciscan Life” (“Reality and Mystery”); and “The Charism of the Friars Minor Conventual”. These themes were addressed in keeping with the Franciscan vision, but without losing sight of the socio-political reality in Venezuela. The aim was to stay focused the challenge of being hopeful during this complex situation in the country.

This experiential formation event was not limited to intellectual pursuits. Rather, it provided a wonderful opportunity to share the gift of fraternity through various activities: prayer, fraternal discussion, reflection, relationships, and contact with different people who have welcomed us at various places: Pueblo Liano (former novitiate in the State of Merida), the post-novitiate house and the retreat center of the Carmelite Sisters in the State of Táchira and the Hermitage of Divine Mercy in the State of Barinas.

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The participating friars thank the Order and the Custody of Venezuela for this beautiful formative experience that has allowed us to grow humanly, spiritually and fraternally as consecrated men, according to the Franciscan charism and identity we have received as a gift.



The participants

Chile: Formation Week

■ Friar Jack GINTING

On September 4-8, 2017, the friars from the three communities of the Provincial Delegation in Chile (Copiapó, Santiago and Curico) gathered for a week of formation.

The event was held at the friary of the Immaculate Conception in Santiago, Chile, and was animated by Friar Carlos TROVARELLI, the Assistant General for the Federación Conventuales America Latina (FALC).

During the week, various activities took place and themes were presented: *Lectio Divina*, a presentation on the vision of mission in the Order and mission in Latin America; personal reflection and group work. Above all, the event was characterized by a friendly, fraternal atmosphere.

During the course of the formation week, the friars were able to clarify their dreams and wishes for the next four years—to lead a more evangelical lifestyle and be closer to the poor and those who live in the “existential outskirts.”

The presence of Friar Carlos was a great help in the work of further studying these dreams and in setting up guidelines for the next Four-Year Plan of the Delegation (2018-2021).

During the week, the friars celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of religious profession for Friars Enrico BROCCHI, Fabio MAZZINI and Jack GINTING, and there were additional festivities for friars celebrating birthdays in September.

At the end of the formation week, the friars thanked Friar Carlos for his significant contribution and for his cordial, fraternal presence.



The participants

Mexico: Powerful Earthquake

■ Friar Alejandro PALACIOS VÁZQUEZ

On September 19, 1985, thirty-two years ago, Mexico was struck by an earthquake. On the same day, September 19, 2017, the nation was struck by another earthquake.

“We’re fine, it was just scary.” This was the kind of comment I had been hoping to hear from the friars and my relatives and acquaintances in Mexico. Unfortunately, not all Mexicans were able to hear the same after Tuesday’s massive earthquake, which registered magnitude 7.1 on the Richter scale. The quake occurred at 1:14 p.m. in Mexico (8:14 p.m. Italian time).

We thank God that all the friars from the Province of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico are well and that the event had only been “very scary” for them. The greatest damage occurred at the San Guillermo novitiate in Totolapan, Morelos State, located a few kilometers from the epicenter of the earthquake. The church and friary date back to 1545. The Novice Master, Friar Guillermo AGUILAR ALAMMILLA, sent his ten novices to stay temporarily at the postulancy house in Valle de Aragón, Mexico City.

The San Juan de los lagos friary (we call it “San Juanita”) is located in Mexico City, near the areas that were most damaged by the earthquake. I am told both the friary and the parish have suffered damage and that the damage will need to be evaluated.

Let us pray for our friars in Mexico City, and throughout the country, so that, with God’s help, and with solidarity, love and hope, they may move forward in unity.



The novices



After the earthquake

FEDERATION OF ASIAN MINOR CONVENTUALS

Friar Benedict Seung Jae BAEK
Assistant General for the FAMC



The Philippines: Solemn Profession and Diaconal Ordination

■ Friar Emmanuel L. GIVA Jr., Custodial Secretary

On July 15, 2017, the feast of St. Bonaventure of Bagnoregio, the Provincial Custody of the Immaculate Conception and Blessed Bonaventure of Potenza in the Philippines gathered together at the church at the St. Joseph Friary in Tagaytay City for the solemn profession of vows and diaconal ordination of two friars.

Friar Francis MATEO DIMAANGAY, the Custos, received the solemn vows of Friars Miguel SUMAGAYSAY and Andrew DATOY.

Friar Jeremiah ARGUELLES, a deacon, gave a homily that posed a challenge to the whole congregation to respond to Jesus' call to be the light of the world and the salt of the earth, by following the example of the Seraphic Doctor who was a lover of wisdom and a great teacher of Christian virtues.

The Most Reverend Reynaldo EVANGELISTA, Bishop of the Diocese of Imus and also a member of the Secular Franciscan Order (OFS), ordained Friar Andrew DATOY to the diaconate. In his homily, he emphasized the role and ministry of a deacon in the Church according to the wisdom of the Church documents.

The two events were well-attended by the families of the friars who made their solemn profession, the friars of the Custody, students in formation, many local consecrated men and women, representatives of the Militia of the Immaculate (M.I.) and OFS and the lay collaborators of the Custody.



The newly professed

Indonesia: Formation Meeting for Guardians

■ Friar Maximilian SEMBIRING, Provincial Custos

The new guardians who were elected at the Ordinary Custodial Chapter of the Provincial Custody of the Immaculate Conception of the B.V.M. in Indonesia met August 24-26, 2017, in the village of the “Salak Plantation Project” at Marjandi Tongah; an area about 20 km (12 miles) from the friary of Santa Katarina dari Siena in Tiga Juhar.

The meeting was hosted by the Custodial Commission for Ongoing Formation in order to learn more about the Four-Year Plan of the Custody and identify some operational guidelines for each community.

The Provincial Custos, Friar Maximilian SEMBIRING, gave an opening presentation on the theme of the Authority, Obedience and Role of the Guardian according to the Constitutions and General Statutes of the Order.

All the guardians of the Custody attended the meeting.



The participants

The Philippines: Ordination to the Priesthood

■ Friar Emmanuel L. GIVA Jr., OFM Conv., Custodial Secretary

On September 14, 2017, the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross, the friars of the Provincial Custody of the Immaculate Conception and Blessed Bonaventure of Potenza in the Philippines gathered together for the presbyteral ordination of Friars Jeremiah ARGUELLES and Joachim PAZ. The ordination was held at St. Joseph’s Church in Tagaytay City.

The ordaining bishop, the Most Reverend Teodoro J. BUHAIN Jr., DD, Auxiliary Bishop Emeritus of Manila, highlighted three points during his homily: When preparing a homily for any Mass, the presider must always make sure his homily is reverent and relevant to the needs of the congregation. In the same manner, as a pastor, he must use proper discernment in order to lead the community toward making wise and prudent decisions in life. Furthermore, as a dispenser of God’s grace, the priest is a living witness of the great mercy and compassion to be found in the sacrament of penance and reconciliation.

The event was attended by the families of the friars being ordained, along with friends, benefactors, parish volunteers, students in formation, and local consecrated men and women. Also in attendance was Friar Benedict BAEK, the Assistant General for the Federation of Asian Minors Conventual (FAMC), who was in the Philippines to conduct a canonical visitation.

FEDERATIO EUROPAE MEDIAE ET ORIENTALIS

Friar Jacek CIUPIŃSKI
Assistant General for the FEMO



Bulgaria: Entrusted to Mary

■ Friar Jarosław M. BARTKIEWICZ

The 100th anniversary of the apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima has prompted numerous celebrations, including one by the Friars Minor Conventual of Bulgaria.

On July 1, 2017, the Bulgarian people were entrusted to the Immaculate Heart of Mary at the diocesan Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima in Pleven. The Shrine is held by the friars of the Provincial Delegation of the Province of the Immaculate Mother of God in Poland (Warsaw)

The celebration was presided over by His Eminence Leonardo Cardinal Sandri, Prefect of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches. Others present included the Most Reverend Anselm G. PECORARI, Apostolic Nuncio to Bulgaria and Macedonia, all of the members of the Bishops' Conference of Bulgaria, the Minister Provincial of the Province of Warsaw, Friar Wiesław PYZIO, OFM Conv., plus many priests, religious and faithful from all over the country.

In his homily, Cardinal SANDRI emphasized that the Franciscan Shrine at Pleven—the first and only one in the Balkans dedicated to Our Lady of Fatima—is “the beating heart” from which resonate the invitation to conversion and sanctification. He encouraged everyone to build bridges of unity and solidarity and at the same time, be bearers of God in a world torn by wars and fratricidal struggles, misery and other tragedies.

After the liturgical celebration, a meeting of the bishops of the Church in Bulgaria was held and a private meeting took place between Cardinal SANDRI and the friars carrying out pastoral ministry in Bulgaria. The Cardinal, in the presence of the Apostolic Nuncio and the local bishop of the diocese, expressed his gratitude to the friars for their commitment and service benefiting the Church in this country and once again mentioned the most important purpose of their mission: conversion and sanctification.

The Minister Provincial thanked the Cardinal for taking part in the celebrations and for the words he addressed to the friars. He presented the Cardinal with an icon of St. Francis of Assisi to commemorate the meeting.



A moment during the festivities

Bulgaria: Youth Meeting

■ Friar Jarosław M. BARTKIEWICZ

On July 5-8, 2017, the National Youth Meeting of Bulgaria took place.

This is an initiative of the Bulgarian Bishops' Conference. The Conference holds an annual youth meeting in a different place each year. The Episcopate entrusted the responsibility for this initiative to Friar Ventsislav NIKOLOV, OFM Conv.

This year, the youth meeting was convened in Belene, a city in northern Bulgaria and the birthplace of Blessed Eugene BOSSILKOV, a martyr for the faith. Blessed Eugene BOSSILKOV, Saint Francis and Jacinta of Fatima were chosen as the meeting's Patron Saints. The theme for this year's youth meeting was "The Almighty Has Done Great Things for Me" (Luke 1:49).

More than 200 young people from all over Bulgaria participated. They came to meditate on the Word of God, enjoy each other's company and spend time together in prayer. Much thought and preparation went into the meeting so that the young people might, first and foremost, be spiritually enriched.

Spiritual lectures were presented by the Most Reverend Christo PROYKOV, Apostolic Exarchate of Sofia (Bulgarian). The young people also got a chance to interact by asking questions.

The most important moment during the program was the pilgrimage to Persin Island on the Danube. During the Communist era, the island was home to a prison for political dissidents and Catholic clergy. At the site commonly referred to as the "Vtori Obekt" memorial, the young people prayed the *Via Crucis*, in remembrance of all the victims of the Communist regime.



Greeting from the young people

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Lithuania: Franciscans Return to Their Historic Friary

■ Friar Mateusz STACHOWSKI

At 3:00 p.m., on August 27, 2017, the Most Reverend Gintaras GRUŠAS, Archbishop of Vilnius, Lithuania, celebrated a solemn Mass at the Franciscan Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Vilnius to mark the return of the friars to their historic friary at that location.

The Order of Friars Minor Conventual was represented by its Minister General, Friar Marco TASCA. Others present included the Assistant General, Friar Jacek CIUPIŃSKI; the Minister Provincial of the Province of St. Maximilian M. Kolbe in Poland, Friar Jan MACIEJOWSKI; and the Provincial Delegate for Lithuania, Friar Piotr STROCEŃ.

Among the invited guests were the first President of the Republic of Lithuania (1990-1992), Vytautas LANDSBERGIS; representatives of the Lithuanian government; representatives of the embassies; and people who were actively engaged over the last few years in helping the friars to regain the property of the friary.

In his homily, Archbishop GRUŠAS recalled the history of the Franciscans in Lithuania and in Vilnius in particular.

At the end of the liturgy, Friar Marco TASCA addressed those present. He thanked the friars for their presence and service in Lithuania. He stressed that the history of the Church in Lithuania had always been linked to the Franciscans, and the friars now ministering in Vilnius, and elsewhere, belong to an Order that has spread around the world. "We have a history we can tell and write, but we also have a history that we must create as we announce the good news of the Gospel under conditions that are completely different from those of the past."

At the end of the Mass, the participants went to the friary complex which was then blessed by Archbishop GRUŠAS, while the Minister General blessed the part reserved for the dwelling of the friars.

After the official meetings, the Franciscans visited the interior of the friary, most of which shall require general restoration.



The participants

Niepokalnów-Lasek: Meeting of Guardians and Directors

■ Friar Jacek CIUPIŃSKI

On September 25-26, 2017,
the Province of the Immaculate Mother of God in Poland (Warsaw)
held its annual meeting for guardians and directors of provincial works.
The meeting took place in Niepokalanów-Lasek, Poland.

Those attending the meeting included the Assistant General for the Federatio Europae Mediae et Orientalis (FEMO), Friar Jacek CIUPIŃSKI and Friar Rafał ZARZYCKI from the Province of St. Maximilian M. Kolbe in Poland (Gdańsk). Friar Rafał is the formator for the common postulancy program shared by both Provinces.

On the afternoon of the first day, the participants got to watch a new film about the life and work of St. Maximilian M. Kolbe entitled *Two Crowns*. They also got to speak to the filmmaker about his work.

The official part of the meeting began with a spiritual introduction by the Minister Provincial of Warsaw, Friar Wiesław PYZIO.

The informational part of the meeting featured reports on the current status the Provincial Custody of Tanzania and the Provincial Delegations of Burkina Faso and Belarus. There were also reports on the work being done at the friaries in Zamość and Kaliszand, and at the postulancy house in Gniezno. Information was also provided on the finances of the Province.

The formational part of the meeting featured a lecture by Professor Marek SAJ, CSSR, on "The Prevention of Sexual Abuse against Minors in Pastoral Work in Poland".

After the meeting, the participants stayed on in Niepokalanów-Lasek to attend their annual spiritual retreat.



The participants

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Poland: Confrere Appointed Professor

■ Friar Marek Wódka, OFM Conv. Photo: www.kul.pl:

On September 23, 2017, the President of the Republic of Poland, Andrzej DUDA, conferred the title of Professor of Humanistic Studies upon Friar Marcin TKACZYK, OFM Conv., of the John Paul II Catholic University in Lublin, Poland (abbreviated KUL).

This scientific title is always bestowed for life and is given by the President of the Polish Republic.

Friar Marcin TKACZYK was born on May 19, 1976, in Świdnica, Poland. In 1994, he joined the Order of Friars Minor Conventual through the Province of the Immaculate Mother of God in Poland (Warsaw). After his ordination to the priesthood in 2001, he studied at the Catholic University of Lublin. He is a philosopher specializing in logic. In 2005, he graduated from the KUL Faculty of Philosophy and in 2010 was habilitated to independent professorship. He is the current Chair of the Department of Logic in the Faculty of Philosophy and is the KUL Prorector for Science and International Relations. Previously, he was Vice Dean, and then Dean, of the KUL Faculty of Philosophy.



Friar Marcin TKACZYK

Smardzewice: Profession of Vows, Start of Novitiate

■ Friar Jacek CIUPIŃSKI

On September 16, 2017, seven novices
—four from the Province of the Immaculate Mother of God in Poland (Warsaw)
and three from the Province of St. Maximilian M. Kolbe in Poland (Gdansk)
—professed their temporary vows.

The ceremony took place in Smardzewice, Poland.

Mass was presided over by the Minister Provincial of Warsaw, Friar Wiesław PYZIO. The Minister Provincial of Gdańsk, Friar Jan MACIEJOWSKI, concelebrated, along with several friars from both Provinces. The homily was delivered by the Assistant General for the Federatio Europae Mediae et Orientalis (FEMO), Friar Jacek CIUPIŃSKI.

On the afternoon of the same day, eight novices—seven from the Warsaw Province and one from the Gdańsk Province—began their canonical period of novitiate. The novitiate celebration was presided over by the Minister Provincial of Warsaw, Friar Wiesław PYZIO.

May the Lord bless the new novices and newly professed friars on their formative journey.



The participants

The Czech Republic: Fraternal and Formational Meeting

■ Friar Piotr PAWLIK, Vicar Provincial

**From September 17-22, 2017,
the Province of Sts. Cyril and Methodius in the Czech Republic
held its annual fraternal and formational meeting.**

The friars met at the St. Joseph Retreat House in the village of Staré Hamry in the Beskid Mountains.

Both solemnly and temporarily professed friars participated.

The meeting began in the evening with some common recreation, during which the friars talked about the joys and the daily life in their local Conventual communities.

The next day, all of the friars went on a pilgrimage to the shrine of Turzovka, in Slovakia, where they entrusted their personal intentions, and the works of the Province, to the Blessed Virgin.

The day's program alternated between moments of community prayer (the Conventual Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours) and periods of formation—by way of conferences of a spiritual nature. There were three lecturers: Friar Paweł SOLECKI, OFM Conv., presented the path to holiness of Servant of God Friar Venanzio KATARZYNIĘC, OFM Conv. Friar Bonaventura ŠTIVAR, OFM Cap., Minister Provincial of the Capuchins in the Czech Republic, talked about the works of St. Bonaventure on the occasion of the 800th anniversary of his birth. Friar Piotr PAWLIK, OFM Conv., addressed the theme of the consecrated life after the Second Vatican Council.

The meeting ended with a Mass which was presided-over by our newly ordained priest, Friar Vladimír HUBALOVSKÝ. He conferred his first blessing upon all of the confreres.

Lithuania: New Friary Blessed

■ Friar Wojciech KULIG, General Exactor

**On September 23, 2017, the blessing of a newly constructed friary
took place in Klaipėda, Lithuania.**

Since the friary encompasses spaces used by the local parish, the blessing was given by the Ordinary of the area, the Most Reverend Kęstutis KĖVALAS, Bishop of Telšiai. He took office in his Diocese only a few days ago.

The Bishop was accompanied by Friar Jacek CIUPIŃSKI, the Assistant General for the *Federatio Europae Mediae et Orientalis* (FEMO). Also present was Friar Jan MACIEJOWSKI, the Minister Provincial of the Province of St. Maximilian M. Kolbe in Poland (Gdańsk) and Friar Piotr STROCEŃ, the Province of Gdańsk's Delegate for its Provincial Delegation in Lithuania. Others attending included Friar Nicola ROSA, the General Econom; Friar Wojciech KULIG, the General Exactor; and friars from various communities in Lithuania, Poland, Germany and Russia.

Parishioners, benefactors and other associates of the friars who contributed to the building of the new friary were also present at the ceremony.

The friary is now the second structure to be built for a planned, larger complex which will include the Klaipėda church. The church's chapel and bell tower have already been built. Construction of the church itself will start at a later date.

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FEDERAZIONE INTER-MEDITERRANEA MINISTRI PROVINCIALI

Friar Joaquín Ángel AGESTA CUEVAS
Assistant General for the FIMP



Beirut: Priestly Ordination

■ Friar Lucian ABALINTOAI EI

On Saturday, July 1, 2017, Friar Elias Paolo MARSWANIAN was ordained a priest in the Armenian Catholic Cathedral of St. Elias and St. Gregory the Illuminator in Beirut, Lebanon.

Coming from an Armenian-Catholic family, Friar Elias Paolo had the joy of being ordained by the imposition of the hands of His Beatitude Gregory Petros XX GABROYAN, Armenian Catholic Patriarch of Cilicia.

Those concelebrating included the Most Reverend Cesar ESSAYAN, OFM Conv., Latin Bishop of Beirut, who gave the homily; the Most Reverend Georges ASSADURIAN, Auxiliary Bishop of the Patriarchal Eparchy of Beirut of the Armenians; and Conventual Franciscan friars from the Provincial Custody of the Orient and the Holy Land. Also present were members of the Secular Franciscans in Zahle, (Lebanon) and many friends and family who fervently participated in the Armenian Rite of the Eucharist and the priestly ordination.

On Sunday, July 2, Friar Elias Paolo celebrated his first Mass at the friary of St. Anthony in Sin-el-Fil (Beirut).

Friar Elias Paul was born in Beirut and began his vocational journey at the Armenian Seminary in Bzommar (Lebanon). After discovering the figure of St. Francis of Assisi, he entered the Provincial Custody of the Orient and the Holy Land of the Minor Friars Conventual. He studied theology at the Seraphicum International College in Rome and made his solemn profession on September 18, 2016, in Beirut.



The new priest

Rome: On the Banks of the Tiber

■ Friar Paolo FIASCONARO, Director of the Missionary Center

From June 9 to September 3, 2017,
the Federazione Inter-mediterranea Ministri Provinciali (FIMP)
operated its summertime Franciscan Missionary Center on the banks of Rome's Tiber River.

For four consecutive years (2014-2017) this unique "street evangelization" initiative has taken place in a picturesque and fascinating setting, known for its natural and monumental beauty. Each year the Missionary Center has served as a meeting place for thousands of tourists and Romans (almost two million) who come to enjoy a few hours of relaxation and leisure.

The Missionary Center's booth is set up among sixty other exhibition venues and fifteen restaurants. It is the only religious venue present and transmits the Franciscan message to people passing by in the evening. The character of those passersby is typically "secular". People often wander back and forth searching for something ephemeral for which they find no answer. They bring up many stories, anecdotes and problems in their conversations with the Franciscan friars.

Novelties this year included missionary animation by the "Victory of God" community, performances by folklore groups representing the various ethnicities present in Rome, and meetings with various artists and groups, especially Muslims.

It is worth noting the great interest of the media who have responded to the Franciscan presence at this event with articles and interviews in national and international newspapers.

It has gotten coverage from *L'Osservatore Romano*, *Avvenire*, *La Repubblica*, the *St. Anthony Messenger*, *RAI* and *TV 2000*, and now *Vatican Radio* has come down to the bankside get a closer look at the Center's exhibition booth. It is set up between sixty other exhibition booths and fifteen restaurants. During the three summer months, two million people, a mix of tourists and locals, pass by to enjoy a moment of healthy relaxation in the coolness near the waters of the Tiber.

During the radio interview, the goals and inspirational motives of the Center were highlighted. The Center began three years ago, mostly due to the urging of Pope Francis who invited even us Franciscans "to go forth from our own comfort zone in order to reach all the peripheries."



The friars with visitors

fimp@ofmconv.net

Assisi: Temporary Vows

■ Friar Andrea VAONA, Provincial Secretary

At 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, August 26, 2017, the rite of temporary profession was held for twelve novices of the FIMP at the end of their yearlong novitiate.

The ceremony took place in Assisi at the Papal Basilica of St. Francis and was presided over by the Custos of the Sacro Convento, assisted by the Ministers Provincial.

Those professing their temporary vows were: Friar Alejandro María ALDAVERO ROMERO from the Province of Our Lady of Montserrat in Spain; Friar Andraž ČEBULAR from the Province of St. Joseph in Slovenia; Friar Roberto Maria DI GENNARO from the Province of Our Seraphic Father St. Francis in Italy (Naples); Friars Robert CALLEJA and Michael GRECH, from the Province of St. Paul the Apostle in Malta; Friars Flavio César LAURA CHARCA and Bernardo Maria VANNINI from The Italian Province of St. Francis of Assisi (Central Italy); Friars Paride AMMIRATI and Giovanni Maria GIUSTINIANI, from the Province of St. Bernardine and St. Angelo in Italy (Abruzzo); Friars Francesco Antonio COSMA, Luca Maria RANOCCHINI, and Emanuele ZULIAN from The Italian Province of St. Anthony of Padua (Northern Italy)

We give thanks to the Lord for this gift made to the fraternity of our Order and to the Provinces to which these young religious belong.

Rivotorto: Second Novitiate

■ From the friars of the second novitiate

It was a precious month, spent in fraternity, in the footsteps of St. Francis, to discover of the face of God that Jesus reveals to us and who calls us to commit our life to following him!

This sums up, in a nutshell, the time we spent at Rivotorto from July 20 to August 19, 2017: it was our Second Novitiate!

The friars came from several Provinces of the FIMP Federation [Romania-Friars Felix-Marian BLAJ, Alexandru DÂNCĂ, Gabriel-Mihai JITARU and Ionuț TOTU); Central Italy (Friars Daniele GIOMBINI and Luca MARCATTILI) Northern Italy (Friar Massimiliano PATASSINI), Italy-Sicily (Friars Rosario Maria TERRANOVA and Massimiliano Benedetto Maria VOLANTE); the Custodies of France (Friar Benoît Marie COUSIN) and Assisi (Friar Frank-Ignatius HEBESTREIT)]. Together we shared together part of our journey as “new” brothers: it was an opportunity to recognize the diversity and riches that are in this part of the Order! There were convivial moments experienced together, seasoned with a good dose of irony and sympathy, which undoubtedly contributed to the creation of a relaxed and serene atmosphere!



The participants

CONFERENCES / FEDERATIONES – [FIMP]

The spiritual conferences we received were occasions for meditation and prayer so as to deepen our relationship of friendship with the Lord Jesus; this also thanks to the large amount of personal time, moments of joy, and also times of trial and fatigue; something typical of every good journey!

Deepening this relationship also involved remembering our personal experience with the Lord, what He has accomplished and continues to accomplish in our lives. “Guard yourself from being forgetful,” says the Lord in Deuteronomy: memories thus transformed become gratefulness and recognition!

During this time we also enjoyed the richness of God’s Word in Scripture, especially the Gospel, which showed us a little bit of God’s face in Jesus every day! It was a fascinating quest, in which we are helped by St. Francis, who meditated “above all on the humility of the Incarnation and the charity of the Passion” (FF 467, 1C 84). Therefore, there were pilgrimages to various Franciscan places—among them Assisi, Foligno, Cortona, Montefalco, the valley of Rieti, Monte Casale, La Verna, Osimo and Loreto. It was an occasion to retrace the footsteps of our Seraphic Father and renew our desire to continue on this path!

To the formation team was composed of Friars Roberto TAMANTI, Massimo RUGGIERO, Giancarlo CORSINI and Ioan LUPU. There was valuable collaboration with some external guests: Friars Gianni CAPPELLETTO, Joaquín AGESTA, Louis PANTHIRUVELIL, and Maurizio ERASMI, also Simona SEGOLONI and Father Andrea ANDREOZZI, who brought their experience and shared with us their passion for the Church and for the Gospel.

Let us offer a word of thanksgiving here, expressing our gratitude to the Lord and to those who made this time possible, beginning with the formators and the hospitable community of Rivotorto! May the Lord fill all with His blessings and accompany us on the path that leads to full joy!

Portugal: Franciscan Youth Pilgrimage

■ Friar Francesco RAVAIOLI, Friar Juan Luis CORMENZANA CARPIO

In the summer of 2017, a forty-member group of young people and friars from Spain and Italy took part in a Franciscan pilgrimage to Portugal, following in the footsteps of St. Anthony and the Virgin Mary, in Fatima, in celebration of the 100th anniversary of the apparitions.

This beautiful faith experience for young people was made possible thanks to the collaboration of friars doing vocation and youth ministry in the Province of Our Lady of Montserrat in Spain and the Italian Province of St. Anthony. Friars from the Provincial Delegation of Portugal also provided valuable assistance.



A moment of joy

CONFERENCES / FEDERATIONES – [FIMP]

On July 23-30, thirty-four young people, accompanied by four friars from Spain and two from Italy, met in Madrid and went on to complete their pilgrimage in Portugal.

In Lisbon, they visited sites that marked the birth, baptism and first vocation journey of Fernando MARTINS DE BULHÕES. Our friars at the friary of Santa Clara offered hospitality and provided opportunities to meet and pray with other youth in the area, with members of the local parish social centers, and with the Missionary of Charity Sisters of Mother Teresa.

In Coimbra, with assistance from the Portuguese friars, the pilgrims visited that city and also Santa Cruz, where the testimony of the Franciscan Protomartyrs inspired Fernando to transition to the life of a Minor and led him to become Friar Anthony at the chapel of San António dos Olivais.

After enjoying the beauty of the various locations and natural environments in Portugal, the pilgrims arrived in Fatima where they experienced some intense, faith-filled days at the School of the Holy Little Shepherds and the Virgin. The pilgrimage concluded with an international Mass on Sunday, July 30.

Each day of the youth pilgrimage also included common prayer (Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer and daily Mass) and other moments of catechesis and prayer aimed at fostering further knowledge and a lived experience of Saint Anthony of Padua (and Lisbon), Mary's Fatima message and the testimony of the holy "pastorinhos".

We thank the Lord for this experience of international fraternity, which has allowed us friars and our young people to enrich each other in faith and "in the spirit of holy prayer and devotion."

Assisi: 121st FIMP Assembly

■ Friar Marco BELLACHIOMA, FIMP Secretary

On September 6-8, 2017, the 121st Ordinary General Assembly of the Federazione Inter-mediterranea Ministri Provinciali (FIMP) was held at the Franciscanum friary in Assisi.

Sixteen Ministers Provincial and Custodes came from their respective Jurisdictions of the Federation to this first Assembly of the new four-year term (2017-2021) to elect the new Presidency Council. The election results are as follows: President—Friar Mauro GAMBETTI, Custos of the General Custody of the Sacro Convento of Assisi. Vice President—Friar Gaspare LA BARBERA, Minister Provincial of the Province of St. Agatha and St. Lucy in Italy (Sicily). Council Members—Friar Teofil PETRIȘOR, Minister Provincial of the Province of St. Joseph, Spouse of the B.V.M. in Romania; Friar Vincenzo GIANNELLI, Minister Provincial of the Province of St. Nicholas and St. Angelo in Italy (Puglia); and Friar Franco BUONAMANO, Minister Provincial of the Italian Province of St. Francis of Assisi (Central Italy). Secretary and Econom—Friar Marco BELLACHIOMA, also from the Italian Province of St. Francis of Assisi (Central Italy).

The Assembly, in addition to having completed its revision of the General Statutes, also confirmed or appointed some directors for the works of the Federation with a view toward renewed animation of the Jurisdictions over the next four years.



The participants

Pescara: Formation of Young Friars

■ Friar Giuseppe ALTIZII

From August 27 to September 2, 2017, twenty-three friars residing within the Federazione Inter-mediterranea Ministri Provinciali (FIMP) gathered in Pescara, Italy, for a formation meeting for friars who have been solemnly professed for five years or less.

The friars originated from a variety of nations: Italy, Indonesia, China, and Romania. They were welcomed by the fraternity of the Province of St. Bernardine and St. Angelo in Italy (Abruzzo).

The meeting was characterized by times of reflection and fraternity. It was organized by Friar Gianni CAPPELLETTO. The formative aspect of the meeting was presented by Friars Andrea MASSARIN and Alessandro RATTI on the theme "From Hearing the Word to Proclaiming It".

The young friars also visited some of Abruzzo's shrines and places of spirituality, including the Shrine of the Eucharistic Miracle of Lanciano, the tomb of St. Thomas the Apostle at Ortona, the Shrine of the Holy Face of Manoppello, the body of Thomas of Celano in Tagliacozzo and the body of St. Bernardine of Siena in Aquila.

The event was also shaped by the visits the young friars made to our fraternities. There, they experienced the spirit of fraternity and hospitality shown by the local friars who live at each of these places and who testify to the Franciscan charism.

At the end of the event, Friar Mirko MONTAGUTI indicated that next year's pilgrimage for young friars will take place in the Holy Land.



The participants

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Malta: Province Assembly

■ Friar Andrew GALEA

On September 11-13, 2017, the friars of the Province of St. Paul the Apostle in Malta met to evaluate the first half of the Province four-year term.

Each morning, the friars met for *Lectio Divina* conducted by two Maltese diocesan priests. The themes of the *Lectio* were connected with issues being faced in the work of the Assembly: fraternity and vocations, with a special focus on prayer life.

The work of the Assembly began with a presentation by Friar Joaquín Angel AGESTA CUEVAS, the Assistant General for the Federazione Inter-mediterranea Ministri Provinciali (FIMP). He illustrated the path the Order is taking to realize its 2013–2019 Six-Year Plan. The Plan's priority is "To Live the Gospel as Friars Minor Conventual and Thus Contribute to Our Commitment to the New Evangelization". Friar Joaquín also talked about the need to return to Franciscan Discipleship. The Minister Provincial, Friar George ZAMMIT, made an introductory speech about the gift of one's vocation and the joy of seeking God's will in all that one does. Mass followed the introductory remarks.

An essential objective of this assembly was to evaluate how the friars are living their vocation and fraternity. One month before this meeting, a questionnaire was sent out to the friars with open and closed questions on these two main themes. The friars also interviewed some lay people who are close to them. A sociologist, working in confidence, summarized the questionnaires and presented the results to the Assembly. Both friars and lay people are of the opinion that friars give true witness when they act as brothers in the community, children of God in prayer and companions of the men and women of our time who are searching for God.

The work of the Assembly continued with presentations reporting on various ministries and works of the Province; the mission in England working with Maltese needing assistance in London; vocational work; the joint mission between the Province of Malta and India, founded in northern India; the presentation of Provincial Commission responsible for the preservation of the cultural assets and friaries in the Province of Malta, always mindful of what has already been done and looking ahead to the future.

The friars had an opportunity to share their thoughts and opinions in both small groups and in the larger Assembly.

The evaluation ended with presentations by the Minister Provincial and the Assistant General who offered words of encouragement for the future: in a quickly changing society, one commitment remains the same—to meet Jesus Christ and to proclaim the Gospel to the men and women of today—to build upon the written history and accomplishments of their predecessors. Now it is up to the friars to continue writing that story, with God's help.



Presentation
in the lecture room

Thanks to all the friars who participated in the Assembly, and to the friars of India who were present: Friar Leo PAYYAPILLY, the Minister Provincial of the Province of St. Maximilian M. Kolbe in India and Friar Manuel MANICOMPEL, the guardian of the friary in northern India. Cordial thanks to Friar Joaquín Angel AGESTA CUEVAS, for his presence and guidance during this evaluation.

Lebanon: Chapel of the “Flying Saint”

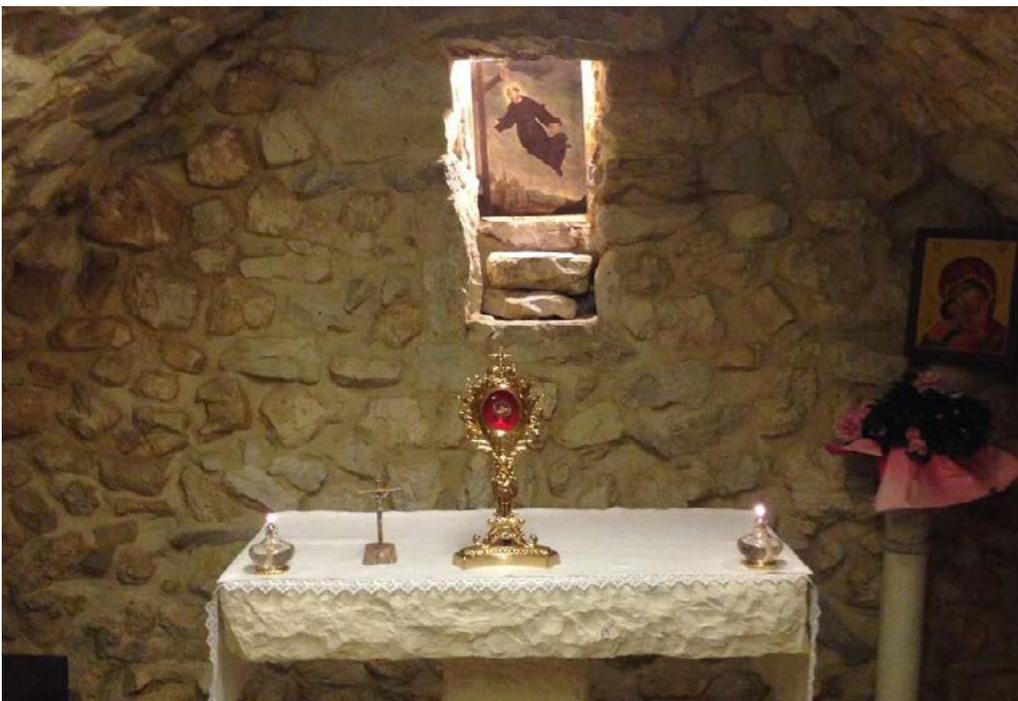
■ Friar Roger KOUYOUMDJI

On September 26, 2017, the Order of Friars Minor in Lebanon dedicated a chapel to the “Flying Saint,” St. Joseph of Cupertino. The chapel is located in the garden of their St. Anthony of Padua friary in Harissa.

On the evening of September 26, as Our Lady of Lebanon looked on, a considerable crowd of faithful gathered outside the small chapel for the blessing rite. It was presided over by Friar Francesco PATTON, the Custos of the Holy Land of the Friars Minor. Others attending the dedication included the Most Reverend Gabriele CACCIA, Apostolic Nuncio to Lebanon; the Most Reverend César ESSAYAN, OFM Conv., Vicar Apostolic of Beirut; and Father Ivan SANTUS, Secretary to the Nuncio. There was also a sizeable group of Friars Minor from the Holy Land and Lebanon as well as various representatives of our own Order: Friar Martin KMETEC, OFM Conv, Vicar Custos; Friar Agnello STOIA, OFM Conv., Pastor of the Basilica of the Twelve Holy Apostles in Rome (who was passing through Lebanon); and Friar Roger KOUYOUMDJI, OFM Conv., a representative of the Provincial Custody of the Orient and the Holy Land in Lebanon. In addition, there was a large group of Franciscan Missionary Sisters of Mary.

Before the blessing, Friar Francis PATTON made a brief speech about the meaning of the chapel in this Jubilee Year of the 800th anniversary of the arrival of the first Friars to the Orient (1217-2017) and of the 500th anniversary of the infamous splitting up of the Seraphic Order (1517-2017). Our saints remain beacons of light in our search for communion within the same Franciscan calling and charism. Friar Francis mentioned three aspects of the spirituality of St. Joseph of Cupertino: loving God with all one’s heart and strength, praising God with one’s life, and loving one’s neighbor. At the end of the liturgy, the Custos gave a blessing featuring the relics of St. Joseph of Cupertino. They had been given to him by the General Postulator of the Conventual Franciscans.

At the end, everyone present took part in a fraternal agape meal.



In the new chapel

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Definitory of the Province of Naples

■ The General Secretariat

On July 1, 2017, members of the new Provincial Definitory of the Province of Our Seraphic Father St. Francis in Italy (Naples) were sworn in before the presence of the Minister General, Friar Marco TASCA and some friars of the Province.

The new Definitors were recently appointed by the Minister General with his Definitory. The swearing-in took place at the Basilica of San Lorenzo Maggiore in Naples.

The new Definitors are: Friar Paolo GALANTE, Definitor and Vicar Provincial; Friar Giorgio TUFANO, Definitor and Provincial Secretary; Friar Claudio IORIS, Definitor and Provincial Econom; Friar Ireneo DAEP III, Definitor; and Friar Cyrille KPALAFIO, Definitor.

Others present at the ceremony included the Secretary General, Friar Vincenzo MARCOLI; the Assistant General for the Federazione Intermediterranea Ministri Provinciali (FIMP), Friar Joaquín AGESTA; the Assistant General for the Federation of Asian Minors Conventual (FAMC), Friar Benedict BAEK; and the previous Minister Provincial, Friar Edoardo SCOGNAMIGLIO.

The new Minister Provincial, Friar Cosimo ANTONINO, was sworn in on June 21, 2017, at the tomb of St. Francis in Assisi.



The new Minister Provincial with the General Definitory

Austria-Switzerland: Extraordinary Chapter

■ Friar Miljenko HONTIĆ

On July 3-6, 2017, the Extraordinary Chapter of the Provincial Custody of St. Leopold and St. Nicolas of Flüe in Austria and Switzerland took place at the "Bethanien" friary in St. Niklausen, near Flüeli-Ranft (Switzerland).

Nearly all the Capitulars of the Custody participated with the exception of a few who were absent with justification. The Custos, Friar Daniele BROCCA was present along with the Minister Provincial of Germany, Friar Bernhardin SEITHER and the Assistant General for the Centralis Europae Foederatio (CEF), Friar Miljenko HONTIĆ.

The Chapter began with a pilgrimage to the Shrine of St. Nicholas of Flüe, Patron of Switzerland and one of the Custodes of the Custody, whose 600th birthday was celebrated this year.

At 2.00 p.m. on the first day, the capitulars attended a conference presented by Dr. Guido

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ESTERMAN on their patron saint and his relevance today. Then, at 5 p.m. the work of the Chapter began. The future of some communities was discussed, the Custodial Statutes were worked on and some restoration projects in the near future were planned.

After the Chapter, the Minister Provincial of Germany and the Assistant General took part in the meeting of the Custody Definitory presided over by the Custos.



The Capitulars

Northern Italy: Provincial Chapter - Part II

■ Friar Andrea VAONA, Chapter Press Officer

On July 5, 2017, the Italian Province of St. Anthony of Padua completed the work of the second part of its Ordinary Provincial Chapter. The Chapter took place at the House of Spirituality of the Antonian Shrines in Camposampiero, Italy.

The work led to a detailed examination of the Province's Conventual and pastoral status and prospects which will actively guide the friars of the 32 communities which make up the Province. This includes presences in Italy, Portugal and Chile. The work of the Chapter also produced an important charismatic-spiritual document (the Province Four-Year Plan entitled, "Give Thanks and Serve with Great Humility": Between Reality and Prophecy) and eight specific projects related to various Franciscan-pastoral settings.



A moment of prayer

CHAPTERS

In the light of these new shared perspectives, new assignments and requests for Franciscan itinerancy have also emerged. The Chapter elected seventeen friars to their first terms as guardians and another fifteen will continue on in the service they have been performing for the last four years. Much attention was focused on the communities of Portugal and Chile. They will see the arrival of new friars ready to serve in these “missionary” settings. In the Antonian area, Friar Fernando SPIMPOLO was confirmed as the guardian of the religious community of the Shrine of the Arcellas and Friar Valentino MARAGNO was confirmed as the guardian of the religious community of the Antonian Shrines of Camposampiero. The guardian and Rector of the Basilica of St. Anthony had already been elected “outside of Chapter” in October of 2016. He was chosen by Pope Francis to replace the late Friar Enzo POIANA.

A number of other assignments entrusted by the Capitulars involved reconfirmation: Friar Giancarlo ZAMENGO is reconfirmed for another four years as the General Director of the “Messenger of St. Anthony”; Friar Tarcisio CENTIS shall continue as the Delegate for the Marian apostolate and the Militia of the Immaculate; Friar Mario PERUZZO continues as the Regional Assistant of the Militia of the Immaculate for the Italian province of Emilia Romagna; and Friar Valerio FOLLI continues as the Secretary of the Provincial Missionary Center.

Mexico: Provincial Chapter - Part II

■ Friar Carlos TROVARELLI, Assistant General for the FALC

On July 3-7, 2017, the second part of the Ordinary Provincial Chapter of the Province of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico was celebrated at the Maria Inmaculada friary in Cuautitlan Izcalli (State of Mexico).

The Chapter was presided over by the Minister Provincial, Friar Mario CASTRO, with the participation of the Assistant General for the Federación Conventuales America Latina (FALC), Friar Carlos TROVARELLI.

The fifty-one Capitulars worked on the Province Four-Year Plan (PPQ) and also took into account motions concerning particular issues and problems. In addition, following the agenda, guardians, rectors of the formation houses, and the heads of other offices and positions were chosen.

The Mexican Province is young and full of life, and is also varied in its presences, social work and evangelization. It has four formation houses: a postulancy house, a novitiate and two houses for temporarily professed student-friars (one for philosophy and the other for theology).

The Capitulars faced some important decisions regarding the Province mission in the state of Guerrero; pastoral ministry in nearby Texas (USA) and the Franciscan Cultural Project.



Some of the Capitulars

Indonesia: Ordinary Chapter - Part I

■ Friar Giovanni VOLTAN, Minister Provincial

On July 17-21, 2017, the Provincial Custody of the Immaculate Conception of the B.V.M. in Indonesia held the first part of its Ordinary Custodial Chapter at the St. Bonaventure friary in Pematangsiantar (North Sumatra).

The Chapter was presided over by Friar Giovanni VOLTAN, Minister Provincial of the Italian Province of St. Anthony of Padua. It began with Friar Maximilianus Kalef SEMBIRING being presented to the Capitulars. Friar Maximilianus had been re-confirmed as Provincial Custos on July 4, 2017, during the Second Part of the Ordinary Chapter of the Italian Province of St. Anthony of Padua, according to no. 47 §1 of the Custodial Statutes of Indonesia, and no. 135 of the General Statutes.

At the end of voting on Thursday afternoon, July 20, the following friars were elected:

- Friar Tarsisius Robert Zompiter SIHOTANG, Definitor and Vicar Custos (first term);
- Friar Cornelius Try Chandra FAJARYANTO, Definitor and Custodial Secretary. He is presently a professor at the Faculty of Philosophy and Theology in Pematangsiantar, he was born in Jakarta (Java), in 1978, and has been a friar since 2000);
- Friar Simon KEMIT, Definitor (second term) he is the current Custodial Secretary finishing his first term;
- Friar Thomas Natalisa TARIGAN, Definitor (second term);
- Friar Antonius Arifintus TPOE, Definitor (first term).

The second session of the Chapter is scheduled for July 31 to August 4, 2017 during which the friars will work on the Custodial Four-Year Plan and will choose the guardians for the communities of the Custody.



Friar Maximilianus Kalef SEMBIRING, Custos



The Definitors with the Minister Provincial



The Capitulars

Tanzania: Ordinary Custodial Chapter

■ Friar Tadeusz ŚWIĄTKOWSKI, Assistant General for the AFCOF

On September 4-8, 2017, the first part of the 3rd Ordinary Custodial Chapter of the Provincial Custody of St. Maximilian M. Kolbe, in Tanzania, was celebrated at the friary in Dar es Salaam.

The Minister Provincial, Friar Wiesław PYZIO, presided over the Chapter. Others present included the Assistant General for the African Federation of Conventual Franciscans (AFCOF) Friar Tadeusz ŚWIĄTKOWSKI; and the Secretary General for Education, Friar Louis PANTHIRUVELIL, who led the spiritual conference before the Chapter.

From September 7-8, the new Custodial Government was formed, consisting of Custos, Friar Dariusz SZYMBORSKI (first four-year term); the Vicar Custos and Custodial Secretary, Friar Benson MAPUNDA (first four-year term); the Custodial Econom, Friar Mieczysław BEDNARCZYK (first four-year term); the Custodial Exactor, Friar Jerome MUNISHI (second four-year term); and Custodial Definitor, Friar Laurian LASWAY (first four-year term).

Part two of the Chapter will begin September 11, 2017.

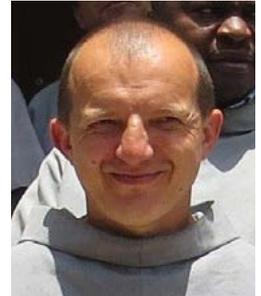
At that time, the Capitulars will discuss and make needed decisions about the life and apostolate of the Custody by developing a "priorities plan" for the next four years.

Before the opening ceremony, a Tanzanian, Friar Francis Daniel HIZA, professed his solemn vows into the hands of the Minister Provincial. Many faithful attended the celebration.

The mission in Tanzania was founded in 1988 by the friars of the Province of the Immaculate Mother of God in Poland (Warsaw), as a gesture of gratitude to God and the Church for the canonization of Father Maximilian Kolbe.

The Custody currently has thirty-three friars distributed among four friaries. It has seventeen friars in solemn vows, (ten of whom are Tanzanians), sixteen friars in temporary vows, three novices and ten postulants.

The apostolate of the friars in Tanzania is expressed through the following activities: the promotion and formation of local vocations, novice formation (the AFCOF novitiate in Arusha), spiritual assistance to local religious congregations, parish ministry (five parishes), publishing activities, education and teaching ministry (grade school and university), humanitarian assistance and social development of local communities.



Friar Dariusz SZYMBORSKI
Custos



The Capitulars

Great Britain-Ireland: Custodial Chapter Parts I and II

■ Friar Jude WINKLER, Assistant General for the CFF

On September 4-8, 2017, the friars of the Provincial Custody of Blessed Agnellus of Pisa in Great Britain-Ireland celebrated the first part of their Ordinary Custodial Chapter at the Hayes Conference Centre in Alfreton, England.

Twenty-six friars were present including Friar James MCCURRY, the Minister Provincial of the Mother Province of Our Lady of the Angels (USA), and Friar Jude WINKLER, the Assistant General for the CFF.

During the first part of the Chapter, the following friars were elected: Friar Ciprian BUDĂU, Custos; Friar Maximilian McKEOWN, Vicar Custos; Friar Jesmond PAWLEY, Custodial Secretary and Friars Dariusz DAWIDOWSKI and James Mary McINERNEY, Custodial Definitors. Friar Rory DOYLE was chosen as the Custodial Econom and Friar Giles ZAKOWICZ as the Formation Director at the friary in Oxford.

From September 18-21, 2017, the friars of the Provincial Custody of Blessed Agnellus of Pisa in Great Britain-Ireland held the second part of their Ordinary Custodial Chapter at the Hayes Conference Centre in Alfreton, England.

Friar Ciprian BUDĂU, the new Custos, presided over the Chapter and Friar Jude WINKLER, the Assistant General for CFF, was again present.

The friars of the Custody have been given a five-year program which includes a study to redefine its presences and apostolate. The Capitulars decided to open a new presence of the friars at the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham, an ancient and esteemed shrine to Our Lady in East Anglia. The Custodial Curia will continue to be located at the friary in Waterloo, London.



Friar Ciprian BUDĂU
Custos



The Capitulars

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Friar Ryszard Adam WRÓBEL
General Delegate for Communications



Professiones temporaneae

Prov. Hispaniae

ALDAVERO ROMERO Alejandro María (26.08.2017)

Prov. Aprutinae

AMMIRATI Paride, GIUSTINIANI Giovanni Maria (26.08.2017)

Prov. Romaniaae

ANTONICĂ Iosif-Ionuț, BÂRSAN Iosif-Alexandru, BEJAN Andrei, BLAJ Claudiu, BLĂJUȚ Mihai-Andrei, FRÂNCU Claudiu, IȘTOC Cristian, SANDU Cristian-Ciprian, SARANCI Daniel-Antonio (02.09.2017)

Prov. Polonicae B.M.V. Imm.

BIELAK Szymon (20.09.2017), GRABOWSKI Mariusz, JANISZEWSKI Marcin, SMUTEK Paweł (17.09.2017)

Prov. Americanae Cons. Affl.

BRAVO Alberto, VIDAURRI Calin Edelmiro (21.07.2017)

Prov. Melitensis

CALLEJA Robert, GRECH Michael (26.08.2017)

Prov. Sloveniae

ČEBULAR Andraž (26.08.2017)

Prov. Zambiae

KESSY Simon Daniel, KUNAMBI Denis Dominick (2017-05-20) CHEWE Muma, MUTALE Daniel Kapya, SILUYELE Mesa Mushota, SIMBUZA Mathews Mankwa, SIMUKWANYA Kamyalile Chawe (06.08.2017)

Prov. Italicae S. Antonii Patavini

COSMA Francesco Antonio, RANOCCHINI Luca Maria, ZULIAN Emanuele (26.08.2017)

Prov. Neapolitanae

DI GENNARO Roberto Maria (26.08.2017)

Prov. Americanae S. Ioseph a Cup.

GARCIA Christopher Douglas, GARCIA RODAS Angel Oswaldo (02.08.2017)

Prov. Italicae S. Francisci

LAURA CHARCA Flavio César, VANNINI Bernardo Maria (26.08.2017)

Cust. prov. Kenianae

MUKHWANA Remmy Simiyu, MUVEA Samuel Ndunda, WEKESA Samuel Masinde (26.07.2017)

Professiones perpetuae

Prov. Romaniaae

BLAJ Felix-Marian, DÂNCĂ Alexandru, JITARU Mihai-Gabriel, TOTU Ionuț (03.09.2017)

Prov. Zambiae

CHAMA Kasonde Mushimwa, FUNDANGA Gordon Bwalya, KADYATA Pythias, KASONDE Barnabas, KATUTA Francis, MULENGA Emmanuel, NKHOMA Patson (29.07.2017)

Prov. Brasiliensis S. Max. Kolbe

CRUZ Décio Sousa, JÚNIOR Adailton Borges Gomes (08.07.2017)

Prov. Americanae S. Ioseph a Cup.

GIA HOANG Joseph Martin (02.08.2017)

Cust. Prov. Tanzaniensis

HIZA Francis Daniel (03.09.2017)

Prov. Indiae

ILLINIKLUMTHADATHIL Prince, KANJIRAPARAMBIL Senet (13.08.2017)

Cust. prov. Philippinae

SUMAGAYSAY Miguel (15.07.2017)

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Ordinationes diaconales

Cust. prov. Philippinae

DATOY Andrew (15.07.2017)

Cust. prov. Ghanensis

AMO Stephen Nyenyi, OCRAN Emmanuel Kofi (31.08.2017)

Cust. prov. Keniana

AUSTIN Andrew Muendo, KALOKI Paul Nyoka, NZYOKA Francis Muthoka (20.07.2017)

Ordinationes sacerdotales

Cust. prov. Philippinae

ARGUELLES Jeremiah, PAZ Joachim (14.09.2017)

Prov. Zambiae

BANDA Severiano Joseph, CHAFWA Emmanuel, CHANDA William, KALWIJI Joseph,

MILANZI Peter Cliff, NYIRENDA Joseph Trywell (22.07.2017)

RESTING IN GOD

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