

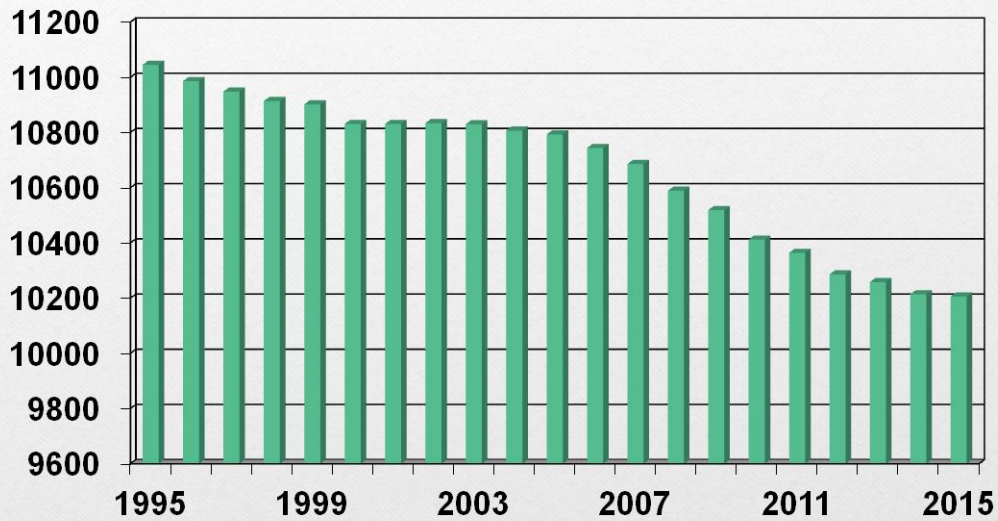
Meeting of the Presidents of the Conferences

14-16 September 2016

Toward the General Chapter 2018

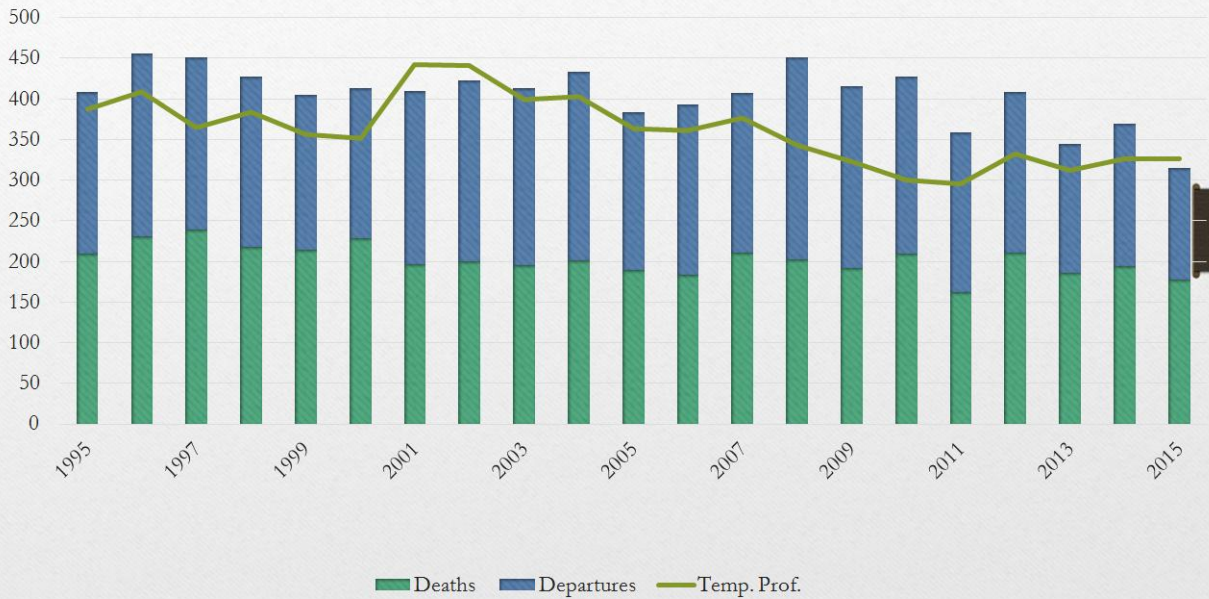
As with any living organism, the Order changes continuously. Statistics can sometimes help us to measure and study these changes. With that in mind, we offer this statistical look at some trends in the Order. Hopefully, you will understand some of the situations that influence the decisions of the general council.

The Order is becoming smaller



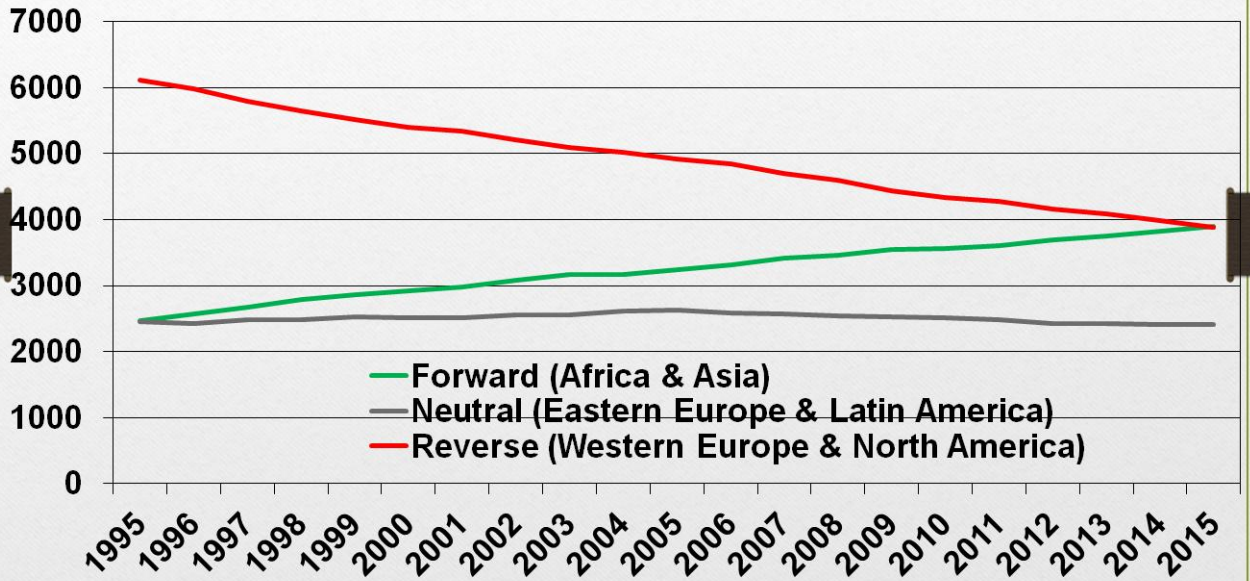
The first thing we must note is that the number of friars in the Order has been decreasing since 1965. The decrease in recent years has amounted to less than .5% per year, but in twenty years this results in about 1000 fewer friars.

Deaths and departures exceed professions



In this graph, the dark line represents the number of temporary professions in the Order. In the last 20 years the Order has averaged about 400 professions a year, but the trend is slightly negative. The dark red bars represent the number of deaths and the lighter bars the number of departures from the Order. Each of these is around 200, and both have been slightly decreasing in recent years. The overall result of these figures, as we saw in the last slide, is a small annual decrease in the number of friars in the Order. In 2015, it appears that the number of professions was actually slightly higher than the number of deaths and departures, but this may be a statistical anomaly.

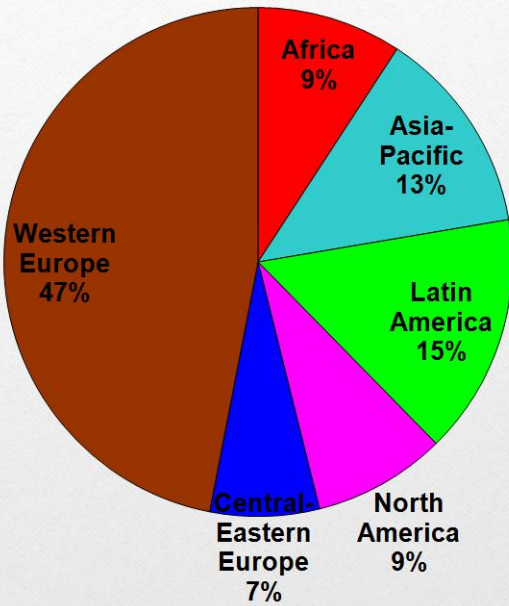
A “three-speed” Order



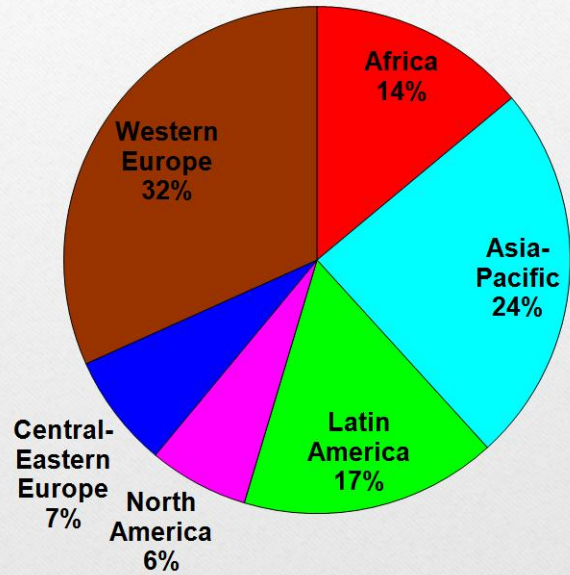
The overall numerical stability of the Order hides significant changes at the regional level. One can say that the Order is operating at three speeds. It is growing in the Asia and Africa (the green line), in Central-Eastern Europe and Latin America it is in neutral (the gray line), and it is in sharp decline in Western Europe and North America (the red line). In 2015, for the first time in history, the number of friars in Africa and Asia exceeded the number of friars in Europe and North America.

Capuchins by region

1995

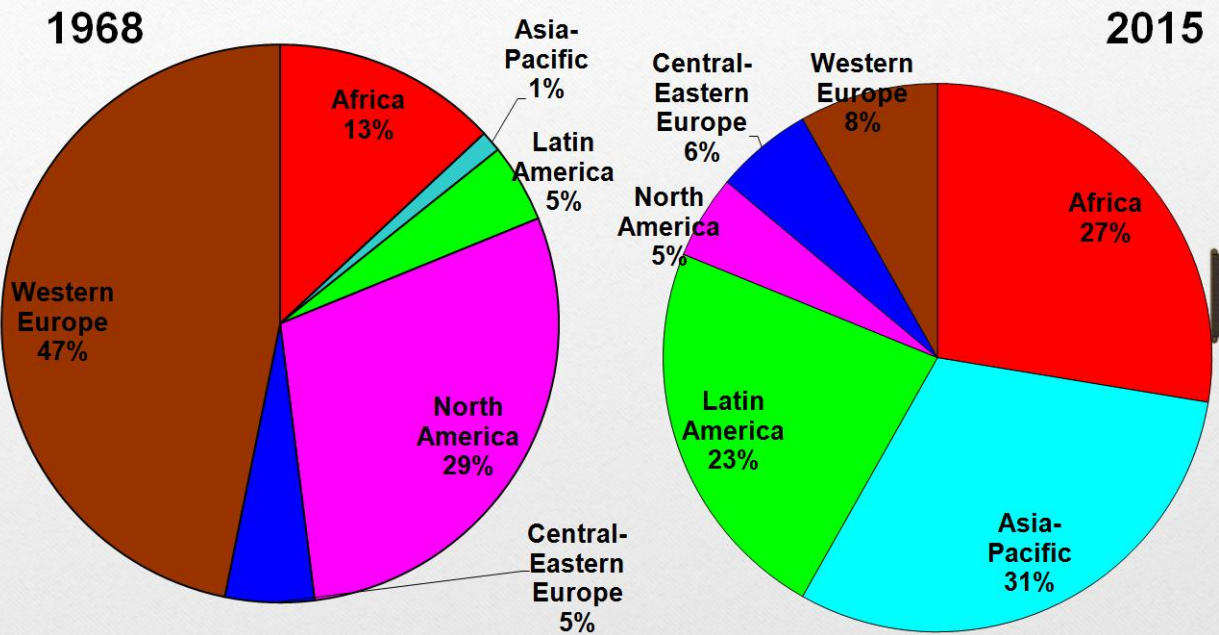


2015



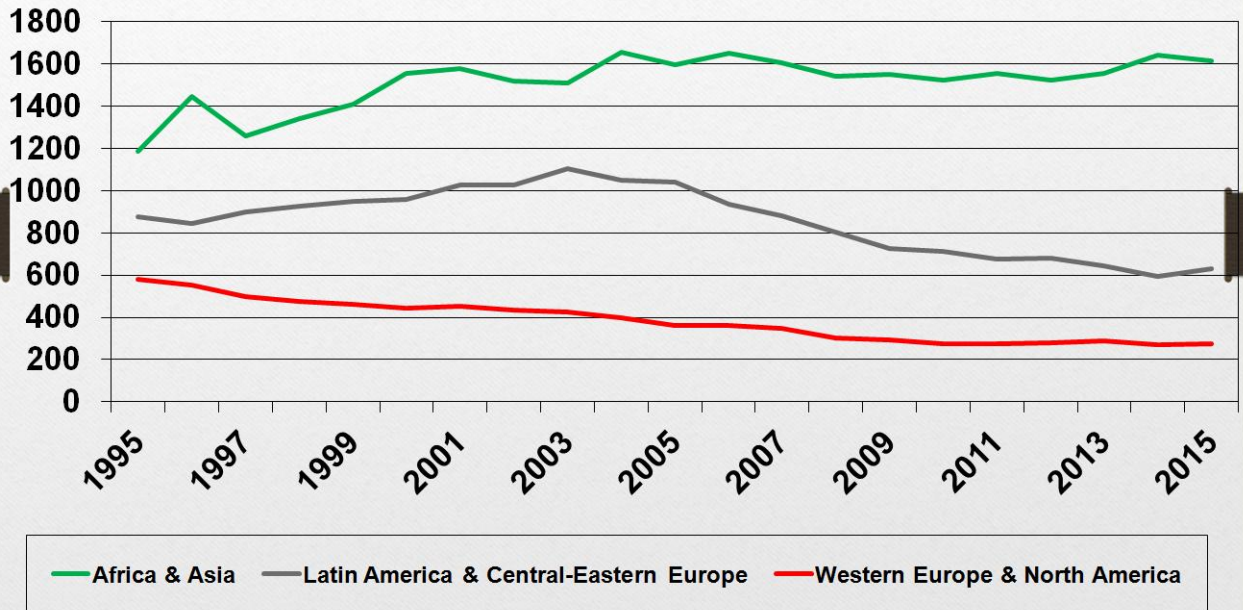
Looking at this in another way, in 1995 almost half – 47% -- of the Order's friars were in Western Europe, 9% were in Africa and 13% were in the Asia-Pacific region. By the end of 2015, Western Europe accounted for less than one-third of the Order's friars, while Asia-Pacific grew to almost one-fourth of the Order and Africa grew to 14%.

Novices



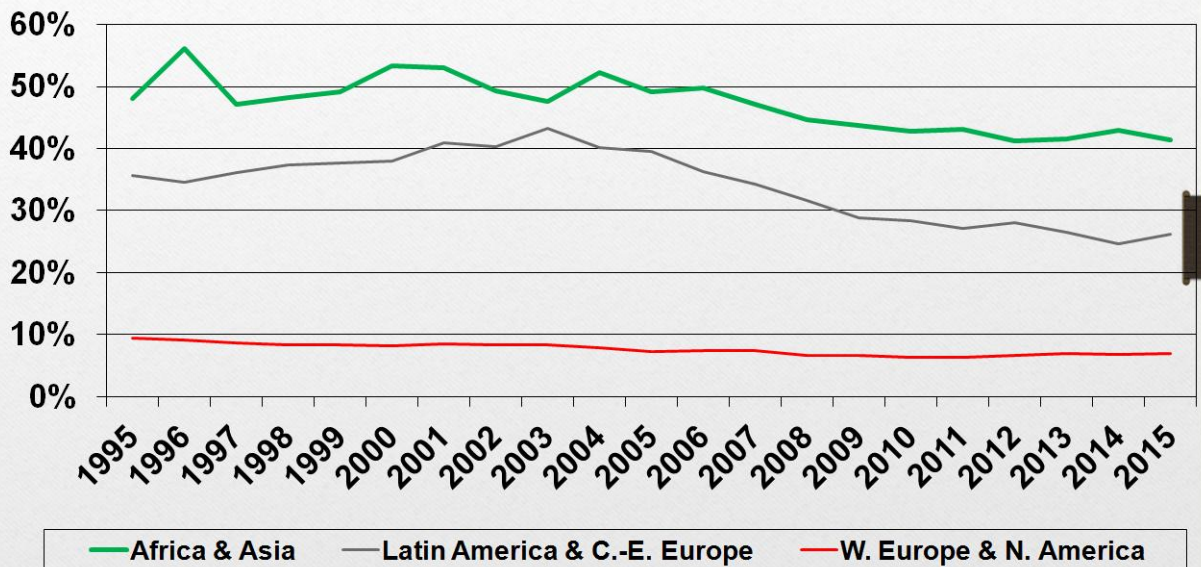
One aspect of our life that has become particularly challenging is formation. A look at the trend in vocations would seem to suggest that the movement from north to south and from west to east will continue for the near future. In 1968, for instance, 76% of the Order's novices were in Western Europe and North America. Today, they make up only 13%. Africa and the Asia-Pacific region, on the other hand, went from having 14% of the novices in 1968 to 58% of them today.

Numbers of *formandi* by region



Again, we see a three-speed Order. The number of *formandi* (postulants, novices and temporarily professed friars) is highest (and still growing) in Africa and Asia-Pacific, Western Europe and North America have the lowest numbers (and still shrinking), while Latin America and Central-Eastern Europe have numbers in between the other two regions (and their numbers have been shrinking for the past ten years).

Formandi as a percentage of friars



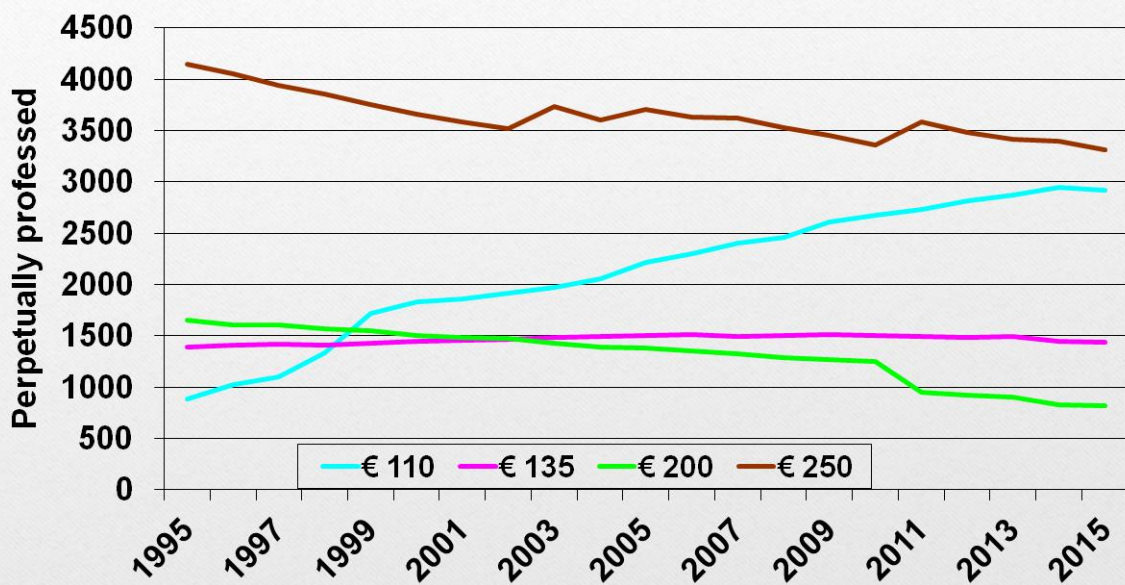
This chart shows the number of formandi (postulants, novices and post-novices) compared to the number of professed friars. Due to the increasing numbers of formandi, their numbers as a percentage of all the friars in the region is very high in Africa and the Asia-Pacific region – almost one person in formation for every two friars --, which creates difficulties for finding a sufficient number of adequately prepared formation directors and for meeting the expenses of formation programs. The percentage of formandi in Western Europe and North America is much lower, but the cost of formation there is quite a bit higher so even they find the expense burdensome at times.

Economic consequences of changes in the Order



It should be quite apparent that as the number of formandi increases, economic needs will also increase. It is equally true, although maybe not quite as apparent, that with the decreasing number of friars in Western Europe and North America, the Order's revenues are decreasing.

Number of friars by contribution group



Among other things, these changes affect the finances of the Order. The ministry of the general council and the general curia is supported by contributions from the circumscriptions. Each circumscription is assigned to one of four groups – A to D – with group D paying the highest contribution per capita and group A paying the lowest contribution per capita.

Compared with 1994, the number of friars in circumscriptions belonging to groups C and D, that is, the groups that contribute the highest amount, has declined by more than 1500 perpetually professed friars. In that same time period, the jurisdictions in Group A, that is, the group that contributes at the lowest rate, have added over 2100 perpetually professed friars to their rolls (Group B stayed about the same). Since the per capita contribution of group D is more than twice the per capita contribution of group A, the net result is negative. As a result, the average per capita contribution to the Order decreases each year.

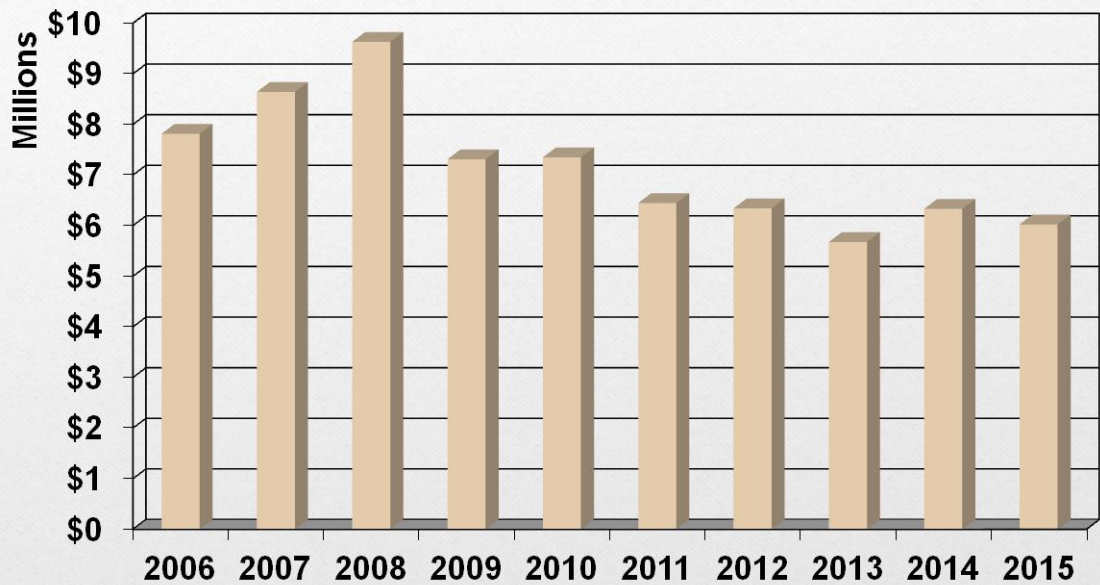
Contributions to the General Curia



Theoretically, the net effect of the changes in the Order's population would look like this – a decrease of almost €140,000 in the last 20 years. In fact, the decline has not been quite so dramatic, probably for three reasons: a few circumscriptions were moved into a higher contribution category, greater diligence on the part of the general bursar to make sure that every circumscription contributes something, and the fact that some brothers of India and Africa are working in circumscriptions in Europe and America.

This decrease in revenues would be even more dramatic, if not for the periodic increase in the tax rate. In other words, it is as though the General Curia receives €45,000 less from the Order's jurisdictions each year.

Decreasing contributions to Solidarity



This same phenomenon can be seen in the contributions to the Order's Solidarity Fund. As a result of increasing secularism in the West, the decreasing number of friars and an increasing average age, fundraising for the missions is becoming increasingly challenging. This graph shows how contributions to Solidarity are in a downward trend, and this trend is expected to continue, to a greater or lesser extent, for some time.

Challenges for the Order

- Maintaining commitments to its missions
- Maintaining its essential institutions
- Supporting the formation needs of young circumscriptions
- Supporting the personnel needs of older circumscriptions

What do these numbers mean for us?

In Europe and North America, the decline in vocations is tied to rising secularism, and this translates into fewer donations and less paid ministry. There are more elderly brothers and fewer young brothers to care for them, which means that many provinces must rely on hired professionals to care for their elderly brothers. The older provinces in the Europe are faced with the problem of having to maintain old friaries that were built for a larger number of friars.