

The Joy and Beauty of Consecration

2014 - The Year of Consecrated Life - 2015



Rejoice - Circular Letter from the teachings of Pope Francis to consecrated men and women

This is the beauty of consecration: it is joy, joy... The joy of bringing God's consolation to all. These are the words spoken by Pope Francis during his meeting with seminarians and novices. There is no holiness in sadness, the Holy Father continued. Do not grieve like others who have no hope, wrote St. Paul (1Thess 4:13). Joy is not a useless ornament. It is a necessity, the foundation of human life. In their daily struggles, every man and woman tries to attain joy and abide in it with the totality of their being. In the world there is often a lack of joy. We are not called to accomplish epic feats or to proclaim high-sounding words, but to give witness to the joy that arises from the certainty of knowing we are loved, from

[...] Every Christian, and especially you and I, we are called to be bearers of this message of hope giving serenity and joy, God's consolation, his tenderness towards all. But if we first experience the joy of being consoled by him, of being loved by him, then we can bring that joy to others. [...] I have occasionally met consecrated persons who are afraid of the consolations of God. They were tormented, because they were afraid of this divine tenderness. But be not afraid. Do not be afraid, because the Lord is the Lord of consolation, the Lord of tenderness. The Lord is a Father and he says that he will be for us like a mother with her baby, with a mother's tenderness. Do not be afraid of the consolations of the Lord. In calling you God



the confidence that we are saved. Our short memories and flimsy experiences often prevent us from searching for the lands of joy where we can relish God's reflection. We have a thousand reasons for remaining in joy. Its roots are nourished by listening with faith and perseverance to the Word of God. In the school of the Master we hear: may my joy be in you and may your joy be complete (Jn 15:11) and we are taught how to practice perfect joy. Sadness and fear must give way to joy: Rejoice... be glad... rejoice with her in joy, says the prophet (Is 66:10). It is a great invitation to joy:

says to you: You are important to me, I love you, I am counting on you'. Jesus says this to each one of us! Joy is born from that! The joy of the moment in which Jesus looked at me. Understanding and hearing this is the secret of our joy. Feeling loved by God, feeling that for him we are not numbers but people; and we know that it is he who is calling us. The Pope invites us on a pilgrimage in reverse, a pathway of knowledge to discover ourselves on the streets of Palestine or near the boat of the humble fisherman of Galilee. He invites us to contemplate the beginnings of a jour-



ney or rather, of an event initiated by Christ, when the nets were left on the lake shore, the tax collector's desk by the side of the road, the ambitions of the zealot among discarded plans. All are inappropriate means for staying with him. He invites us to remain for a long time, on an interior pilgrimage, before the dawn, when, in a warm environment of friendly relationships, the intellect is led to open itself to mystery, the decision is made that it is good to set out to follow this Master who alone has the words of eternal life (cf. Jn 6:68). He invites us to make our whole life a pilgrimage of loving transformation.

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Justice and peace shall embrace (Ps 85)

Interview with Br. Benedict Ayodi - Director of the OFM Cap. JPIC Office



Brother Benedict, you belong to the Custody of Kenya and have been responsible for Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation for the Capuchins for two years. Before coming to Rome, what were your activities at the level of JPIC?

For six years I worked for the Damietta Peace Initiative. I also studied in New York in the area of International Relations. And during this period of three years I also worked at Franciscans International at the United Nations.

Can you remind us what the Damietta Peace Initiative is all about?

This initiative, inspired by the meeting of St. Francis with the Sultan, was founded in 2004 by the Capuchin friar Donal Francis O'Mahoney in Pretoria, South Africa. Moved by the violence that was devastating the country, the objective was to establish peace by means of non-violence among religions, ethnic groups, and the various classes of society. The initiative was then developed in Congo, Niger, Kenya, Zambia, and Tanzania.

What sort of action does the DPI propose?

The DPI promotes PACTs - 'Pan African Conciliation Teams' - that consist in a meeting of base groups of members of different religions, ethnicities, and social levels with

the end of seeking paths of reconciliation and peace in places where there are conflicts. The Capuchins, along with other members of the Franciscan Family, promote the formation of PACTs by putting themselves in contact with the religious leaders and elders of the villages. The friars then animate the meetings. In Kenya, the PACTs that have been created contributed in an effective way to the pacification of the violence that occurred after the elections. Seeing the positive results, The United Nations and the government invited us to further develop our efforts.

What is your mission as JPIC Secretary at the level of the Capuchin Order?

It's above all to help the General Minister and his Council in the area of JPIC. This consists in animating and informing the circumscriptions of the Order in JPIC material and in establishing relationships between them. These relationships are also cultivated with other bodies, such as the Franciscan Family, Franciscans International, the Damietta Peace Initiative, NGOs, as also with other Catholic and ecumenical organizations.

In this work you are helped by other friars. What are the themes to which you giving greater attention?

The International JPIC Commis-

sion is composed of six friars who come from the six continents. Our objective is to promote JPIC in the Order, seeking to reestablish good relationships with ourselves, with others, with creation, and with God. Looking to identify and respond to the signs of the times by means of a preferential option for the poor. It's about facing the causes of injustice and not just its consequences. To sensitize to the problems of ecology.

Can you give me a concrete example from among these objectives?

We are working to establish a database of the social projects promoted by the circumscriptions. What is gathered of what is done in the Order could be a source of inspiration for the friars and as a whole a tool of animation and coordination of JPIC initiatives.

What do you hope for in the animation of JPIC?

I indicate my two desires: To collaborate with the General Secretariat of Formation in order to integrate JPIC into the Ratio Formationis, and to work in such a way that PCO VIII encourages the friars to embrace the grace of working in social projects and in other initiatives linked to JPIC, beyond the parish or traditional ministry.

Ordinary Meeting of the General Council

ROME, Italy - The General Council had its ordinary meeting at the General Curia from November 17-21, 2014, and treated the following topics:

Requests: Evaluations were made of various requests for dispensation from temporary and perpetual vows; indulgences of excommunication, dispensations from the obligations of priesthood, for dismissal from the Order, nulla osta for alienation, permissions to convoke chapters, approval of statutes of conferences,

agreements between circumscriptions for fraternal collaboration.

Reports: There was discussion of reports on pastoral and fraternal visitations, of ordinary and extraordinary chapters, reports in medietate triennii; requests for subsidies coming from Economic Solidarity were approved for the missions, formation, and for projects. There was a presentation of a description of the responses to the questionnaire for PCO VIII, which will help in arriving at the Instrumen-

tum Laboris.

Appointments: Spiritual Father for the International College: Br. Josef Timko (PR Slovakia) beginning January 15, 2015. Commission for the General Archives: The resignation of Br. Mario Caruso (PR Syracuse) was accepted. Appointed: Br. Luciano Lotti (PR Foggia)

General Bursar: Updates were made to the Economic Statutes of the General Curia and the economic report of the expenses for the renovation of the General Curia was presented.

Meeting of the Preparatory Commission for PCO VIII

ROME, Italy – The General Curia was the place for the second meeting of the Preparatory Commission for the VIII Plenary Council of the Order, held from November 10 to 15, 2014. All the members of the Commission were present to treat the essential topics for the preparation and celebration of the PCO, which will be held next year in Rome at the International College ‘San Lorenzo da Brindisi.’ The larger part of the time was given to the analysis of the responses to the questionnaire sent to the Order and their implications for the elaboration of the Instrumentum Laboris, to which we look forward to sending after Easter next year. Another important topic was the first de-

sign of the program of the PCO, with suggestions for speakers, the themes to be developed, and the personnel and services necessary for carrying out such an important event for the whole Order. A look was also given to the proposals for the Logo; this gave the Commission an idea of what will be, then, for the General Council to decide in their next meeting in January, to see which proposal corresponds to the essence of the next PCO. The Minister General also participated for a brief moment, encouraging the members to follow the path of helping the Order to reflect on the Grace of Working. The Commission will meet again at the beginning of April 2015.



Farewell to the Delegate for the Capuchin Poor Clares

ROME, Italy – On November 19, during the week of the General Council meeting, the fraternity of the General Curia gave thanks in a fraternal way for the service carried out by Br. Juan Maria Castro, who for a good eight years has been the Delegate of the General Minister for the Capuchin Poor Clare nuns. Celebrating him during lunch and with words of recognition from the General Minister for all that Br. Juan Maria has done - especially in the field of formation of the Capuchin Poor Clares - our brother was wished well by the community of the General Curia as he returns to his Province of Spain. We wish him every good in his new ministry.



Shower and raffle in Vatican

Vatican City – Here no one dies of hunger; a sandwich remedies this every day. But there aren't places where one can go to the bathroom or wash, affirms Archbishop Konrad Krajewski, the Almoner of Pope Francis. The message was immediately received: On Monday, November 17 there began the work to make three showers inside the bathrooms for pilgrims under the colonnade of St. Peter's. They will be dedicated to the homeless who hang out around the Basilica. They will be able to wash and change their clothes by the apostolic palace. And taking up the invitation of the Papal Almoner, already about ten Roman parishes in the neighborhoods most frequented by the homeless have set up showers to make available to them.

Pope Francis wishes also to finance the projects for the homeless with a raffle which will have as prizes the gifts given to the Pope. For some days in the Vatican offices open to the public there has been a singular poster: "Raffle of goods for the works of charity of the Holy Father." The Papal raffle. Beyond the Tiber they explain that winter is knocking at the door and Pope Francis cannot but think of the poor, of those dozens of people, usually the same, that every night, wandering, find temporary shelter around St. Peter's, under the colonnade, on the steps of the church of Santa Maria in Traspontina, in front of the press room. The initiative will serve to gather funds to finance projects for the homeless. The first prize up for grabs is a Fiat Panda 4x4, euro 5+, full optional. Naturally it's white, because the car, as all the other prizes, are the gifts that the Pontiff has received in the course of the year and which he has decided to use to gather money useful for these initiatives of a social nature. The second prize, however, is a blue bicycle; the third prize is another bicycle, but this time orange with baskets; the fourth prize is yet another bicycle but for traveling and gray in color. The fifth prize is a tandem and the sixth is a high-definition digital video camera of a Japanese brand. Then follow watches, silver picture frames, fine pens, briefcases, wireless devices for iPod and iPhone, and an Illy coffee machine. There is even a white Panama hat, from the best known Ecuadorian company, Homero Ortega. To these objects are added others. Consolation prizes: umbrellas, perfumes, scarves, books, belts. Everything is being raffled for make these concrete gestures of love and charity. Of course anyone can participate and help Papa Bergoglio in his mission: "We help the poor." Just buy a ticket for 10 euro in the offices of the Vatican, in the places where coins and

stamps are sold, in the Vatican Post Office, the Pharmacy, in the Museum, and even in the Office for Pilgrims and Tourists where every day there are miles of lines of foreign tourists. The drawing will take place on January 8, 2015, under the watchful eye of a notary and of Cardinal Giuseppe Bertello, President of the Governorate of Vatican City.

SPECIAL

☐The Grace of Working☐
Towards PCO VIII

Capuchin Service Helps Immigrants to Cultivate Unused Land

SPAIN - Looking for a formula of management that could make real the dreams of work of many immigrants in Spain, the social works of the Capuchins (Servicio Capucino para el Desarrollo- SERCADE) has reflected on how to put a Franciscan name on their works: ☐How do we set up our projects with an identity such that we don't become simple social workers?☐ Without an adequate response there is the risk of substituting the state in the responses to poverty. But these don't touch our Capuchin identity if we don't bring a certain ☐meaning☐ to our works for social minorities. Thus was born the project Huerto Hermana Terra (Sister Earth Garden) in which different realities come together: First, that of giving a social function to the unused spaces in each fraternity; second, to bring together the associations and groups close to the Capuchins in social work; and third, the most important, to give a creative and effective response to the weakest of the needy who are at risk for social exclusion.



Bread and Formation in Haiti

BERAUD, Haiti – The Capuchin Friars of the Delegation of Haiti, thanks to the help of benefactors and the work of the local community, have reconstructed an oven and the structure of a bakery that was destroyed by the last earthquake that struck the country. With this important initiative, people are able not only to

find this essential food more easily, but are also learning to make the bread, such that in this place, even in precarious conditions, there is an effort at an educating and formative work in order to bring out hope for the people in a concrete way by means of this important project.



CCB Works on Communication and Cultural Goods

SÃO PAULO, Brazil – The Capuchin Conference of Brazil (CCB), gathered the 12 circumscriptions in São Paulo to work on two very important projects in the field of new forms of work in view of the announcement of the Gospel. The first group of friars worked in the field of communication, seeking to put in place a true and proper 'Capuchin Web of Communication' with a platform to be working starting in 2015, where it will be possible to access all the websites of the circumscriptions and connect to all the resources such as radio, periodicals, web radio, applications, Facebook, Twitter, blogs, etc. The second and no less important initiative, regarded the cultural goods of the Order in Brazil, with the establishment of a Commission for



the Cultural Goods and the History of the Capuchins, beginning from the work already carried out in the Provinces of Bahia, Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, and Rio Grande do Sul, where activities like museums, archives, and cultural centers of the Capuchins already produce abundant fruit. Soon these and other initiatives of the friars will be accessible on the website of the CCB: www.capuchinhos.org.br

OFS: XIV
GENERAL
CHAPTER

ASSISI, Italy – During the elective Chapter celebrated in Assisi (November 1-9, 2014), Tibor Kausar (Hungary) was elected the new General Minister of the OFS. Chelito de Núñez (Venezuela) was elected Vice General Minister. The other councilors elected for the next sexennium (2014-2020): Ana Fruk, Attilio Galimberti, Ana María Raffo, Silvia Diana, Jenny Harrington, Augustine Young, Michel Ja-

nian and Andrea Odak. The new Council of the Presidency officially assumed its charge during a votive Mass celebrated in the upper basilica of St. Francis by the General Minister of the TOR, Br. Nicholas Polichnowski, who had presided at the elective Chapter of the International Fraternity. Our brother Francis Dor, Delegate of the General Minister for the OFS, also participated in the Chapter.