

Audit of the General Curia



Br. Pio Murat, General Councilor OFM Cap

During the last session of the General Council, Fr. James Grummer, SJ, came to the General Curia to meet the fraternity and to present his report after the audit; it was him, in fact, who was charged by the General Minister to make an audit of the General Curia. A General Councilor of the Society of Jesus, Fr. Grummer had the competencies to help in an evaluation of the life and work of the brothers and to put forth proposals for a more a better and more effective service to our Order.

Last February, Fr. Grummer met the friars personally, beginning with questions that allowed him to situate the place and task of each brother. The report of the audit that he presented was received with satisfaction and gratitude on the part of all the broth-

ers. With the perspective of someone looking in from without, Fr. Grummer emphasized, above all, the joy and fraternal harmony that he had observed during his visitation: "The joy of the friars has been infectious for me."

Starting from this decidedly positive perspective, the audit has allowed certain specific tensions to emerge for a fraternity such as ours; among them was noted the challenge of cul-

tural diversity, the periods in which all the brothers are present and those in which there remains only a small group, the fact that the workplace is the same as where we live. After the description, the report offered proposals for reaching set objectives. I cite some of these proposals: To have for each service a clear description of the work to be done, the job description. To guarantee an adequate formation for the services given. To care for information. To take time for an exchange between the various services. The emphases of Fr. Grummer were also accompanied by concrete proposals such as having a common and accessible calendar for each brother, to give more space for the expression of each culture, and to have an external pastoral ministry.

It is particularly worth noting that the audit of Fr. Grummer noted strongly the necessity of maintaining a close connection between the fraternal life and the technical work of each brother. The Curia is not some business; it is a fraternity at the service of the Order. Recalling a spiritual understanding of our work, Fr. Grummer said: "Personal reflection and dialogue in common on the connection between

INDEX

- 01 Audit of the General Curia
- 02 Why "Laudato si"
- 03 Ordinary Meeting of the General Council
Over Rivers and Mountains, like the Good Shepherd
Meeting of the New Ministers
- 04 St. Francis Twelve Times
New Bursar of the International College San Lorenzo da Brindisi



the world of daily work and the sources of our spirituality can help the friars to advance even more in what they already doing.

Grateful for the willingness and the effectiveness of Fr. Grummer, the General Council has given itself a moment to follow the paths opened by the report for a greater efficiency and competence in our service to the Order.

Why Laudato si'

Christian faith and Franciscanism in the new Encyclical of Pope Francis
Br. Benedict Ayodi, JPIC Office OFM Cap



The Church offers a moral guide, rooted in the Catholic tradition

- Climate change is a moral problem.
- ☐ The Pope speaks as Pastor, not as a scientist or a politician. He means to help Catholics see the opportunity and the need to take care of the creation, as also for our brothers and sisters.
- ☐ To take care of the creation is an ancient biblical teaching. The Church has expressed herself many times on this topic. As science has become more attentive to the impact of humanity on the natural world, so also the voice of the Church has become clearer and more decisive.
- Recent Pontiffs have noted the urgency of dealing with problem of climate change and care for creation:

- St. John Paul II and the Pope Emeritus, Benedict XVI, have connected care for the environment to the need for solidarity between human beings and with God's creation.

- Both the Popes made themselves ambassadors of the troubling involvement of humanity in the greenhouse effect and of climate changes.

Resolving climate change protects the people of God.

☐ Dealing with and intervening in climate changes means protecting the family. Whether it's about someone in Chicago suffering from asthma or someone in the Philippines suffering because of floods, climate change means damage for humanity. To intervene in these changes of climate is a moral action.

• We are called to love our neighbor, protecting them from the impact of the climate and its adverse manifestations, which multiply

in sicknesses and lack of food. We must speak of climate change in order to protect the people of God.

☐ We are called to take care of the poorest and most vulnerable among us. The poorest are the least responsible for climate change but suffer the worst of its consequences.

☐ As Franciscans, we are called not only to be instruments of peace and justice, but also the true and real guardians of our mother nature.

☐ We are called to not forget what is our true place in the creation. We have, in a certain way, lorded it over nature, over Sister Earth (Pope Francis, January 15, 2015). Our right place in the creation respects and protects the broad fabric of life.

It is the time for common action.

☐ Our actions count. Franciscans, working together, can help to resolve climate change.

☐ There are better ways to act in our communities and our nations. From substituting a lamp to intensifying the illumination of politics by faith, each can do something to resolve climate change, beginning even from our Capuchin fraternities.

☐ To take measures on climate change is an opportunity to manifest our faith and our charism as Franciscans. To act on climate change will demand humility, intelligence, committed work, and moral clarity.

• We must be guided by just relationships among ourselves, as also with the creation. We are called to work on climate change, seeking the common good, in love.

Ordinary Meeting of the General Council

ROME, Italy – The ordinary meeting of the General Council was held at our General Curia from June 8 to 18, 2015. Among other things that were treated, various types of requests and dispensations were evaluated, and reports were discussed from pastoral visits and in medietate triennii, of the General Bursar, circumscriptions, fraternal visits to the missions, provincial chapters, meetings of conferences, and JPIC. A reflection was begun from the study of the statistical report of the Order for the year

2014; the program was set up for the meeting of the General Council with CCMSI in January 2016 (in India). The Council also took time to reflect on the audit made of the Curia. There were also announced the following APPOINTMENTS: Secretary of International Solidarity: Br. James Donegan (PR New York-New England); General Archives: Br. David Basil Acharuparambil (PR St. Francis, Kerala); new Commissary of the Holy See for the Franciscans of the Immaculate: Br. Carlo Calloni, General Postulator (PR Lombardy).



James Donegan



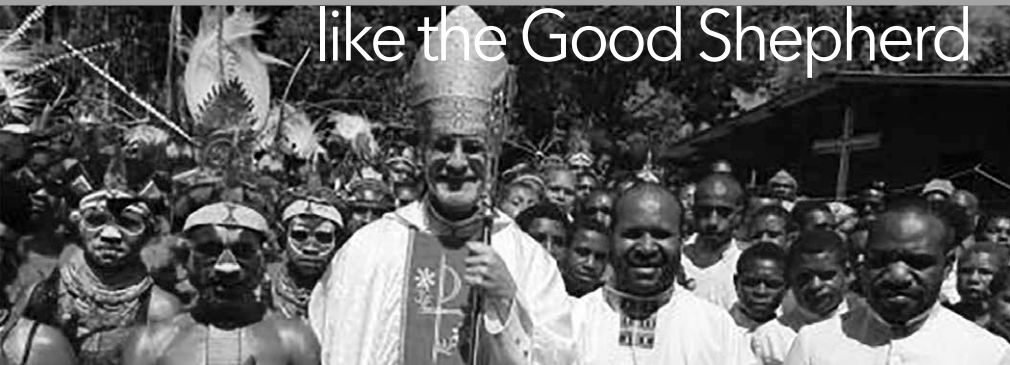
David Basil Acharuparambil



Carlo Calloni



Over Rivers and Mountains, like the Good Shepherd



MENDI, Papua New Guinea – Before complaining about the traffic on the ride home, you should consider the commute of Bishop Donald Lippert in Papua New Guinea, near Australia. Recently, those that follow him on Twitter accompanied the trekking of the Capuchin Bishop over a fragile foot bridge in the mountains of the diocese of Mendi. You have to hang on cords and narrow boards if you want to reach the chapel of St. Michael in Kurumb, on a steep and high mountain, impossible to get to by car, but only after an hour and a half on the path. The effort, taken on with a group from the diocese of Mendi, was made to celebrate the Confirma-

tion of about 200 young people (and some adults), on the occasion of the feast of the Body and Blood of Christ 2015. The group started by car. “After about an hour and a half on the mountain roads and beautiful vistas, we got as far as we could with the car. We left the car and began to walk. [...] Before beginning our path on the mountain we had to cross the river Lai on a rather shaky foot bridge. I tried not to look down, because the water running underneath left me a little dazed; but because there were big holes in the boards of the bridge, you couldn’t avoid it. Naturally, the people of the place cross easily – and so they gave me the courage to cross securely. At

the arrival of the group, we were welcomed with drums and songs. Many of the parishioners had put on the traditional garments. [One of them (Raffaello) gave me a hat, decorated in the traditional way with feathers, because I was the ‘head’ of the Catholic people of the area. I felt honored by the gift. This trek of Corpus Christi brought to mind a homily on the Eucharist as food for our journey and the Holy Spirit as the fire for our mission to bring the good news to all people,] writes the Bishop. [Some were visibly moved by this important moment in their lives. Their eyes full of hope and the promise of a life lived in the Lord – despite many challenges and difficulties,” he said. After the ceremony and a fraternal gathering, [we began our voyage of descending the mountain] continues the Bishop. “I must confess that, as on many similar occasions, I felt a little like Peter, James, and John while they walked with Jesus coming down from Mt. Tabor, after having experienced the glory of the Transfiguration.”

**New Bursar of the International College
San Lorenzo da Brindisi**

ROME, Italy Br. Maximino Brancalione Tessaro, of the Province of Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil) is the new bursar of the San Lorenzo da Brindisi International College. Already arrived in Rome in order to learn Italian, he awaits the opportune moment to begin his service in the largest fraternity of the Order. To Br. Luca Piantanida, who has carried out this mission brilliantly up to now, we give our sincerest gratitude as well as best wishes of peace and success for his new service. To Br. Maximino we wish every good for his new commitment.



I. “Laudato si’, mi’ Signore” – Praise be to you, my Lord In the words of this beautiful canticle, Saint Francis of Assisi reminds us that our common home is like a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us. Praise be to you, my Lord, through our Sister, Mother Earth, who sustains and governs us, and who produces various fruit with coloured flowers and herbs.”(1)

2. I do not want to write this Encyclical without turning to that attractive and compelling figure, whose name I took as my guide and inspiration when I was elected Bishop of Rome. I believe that Saint Francis is the example par excellence of care for the vulnerable and of an integral ecology lived out joyfully and authentically. (10)

3. Just as happens when we fall in love with someone, whenever [Saint Francis] would gaze at the

sun, the moon or the smallest of animals, he burst into song, drawing all other creatures into his praise. (11)

4. The poverty and austerity of Saint Francis were no mere veneer of asceticism, but something much more radical: a refusal to turn reality into an object simply to be used and controlled. (11)

5. What is more, Saint Francis, faithful to Scripture, invites us to see nature as a magnificent book in which God speaks to us and grants us a glimpse of his infinite beauty and goodness. Through the greatness and the beauty of creatures one comes to know by analogy their maker” (Wis 13:5); indeed, His eternal power and divinity have been made known through his works since the creation of the world” (Rom 1:20). (12)

6. It is significant that the harmony which Saint Francis of Assisi experienced with all creatures was

St. Francis Twelve Times

The explicit references to the Poverello in the Encyclical of Pope Francis

seen as a healing of that rupture. (66)

7. Saint Bonaventure held that, through universal reconciliation with every creature, Saint Francis in some way returned to the state of original innocence. (66)

8. When we can see God reflected in all that exists, our hearts are moved to praise the Lord for all his creatures and to worship him in union with them. This sentiment finds magnificent expression in the hymn of Saint Francis of Assisi: Praise be you, my Lord, with all your creatures, especially Sir Brother Sun, who is the day and through whom you give us light. And he is beautiful and radiant with great splendour; and bears a likeness of you, Most High. Praise be you, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars, in heaven you formed them clear and precious and beautiful.” (87)

9. This comprises the very meaning of our struggle for the sake of the environment. It is no coincidence that, in the canticle in which Saint Francis praises God for his creatures, he goes on to say: Praise be you my Lord, through

those who give pardon for your love Everything is connected. Concern for the environment thus needs to be joined to a sincere love for our fellow human beings and an unwavering commitment to resolving the problems of society. (91)

10. Together with the awe-filled contemplation of creation which we find in Saint Francis of Assisi, the Christian spiritual tradition has also developed a rich and balanced understanding of the meaning of work, as, for example, in the life of Blessed Charles de Foucauld and his followers. (125)

11. In calling to mind the figure of Saint Francis of Assisi, we come to realize that a healthy relationship with creation is one dimension of overall personal conversion, which entails the recognition of our errors, sins, faults and failures, and leads to heartfelt repentance and desire to change. (218)

12. I ask all Christians to recognize and to live fully this dimension of their conversion. May the power and the light of the grace we have received also be evident in our relationship to other creatures and to the world around us. In this way, we will help nurture that sublime fraternity with all creation which Saint Francis of Assisi so radiantly embodied. (221)

(sanfrancescopatronoditalia.it)

