

Brother, layman, for the love of God



Br. Joaquim José Hangalo, OFM Cap - reflection on the letter of the General Minister: "The Indispensable gift of Lay Brothers for our Order"

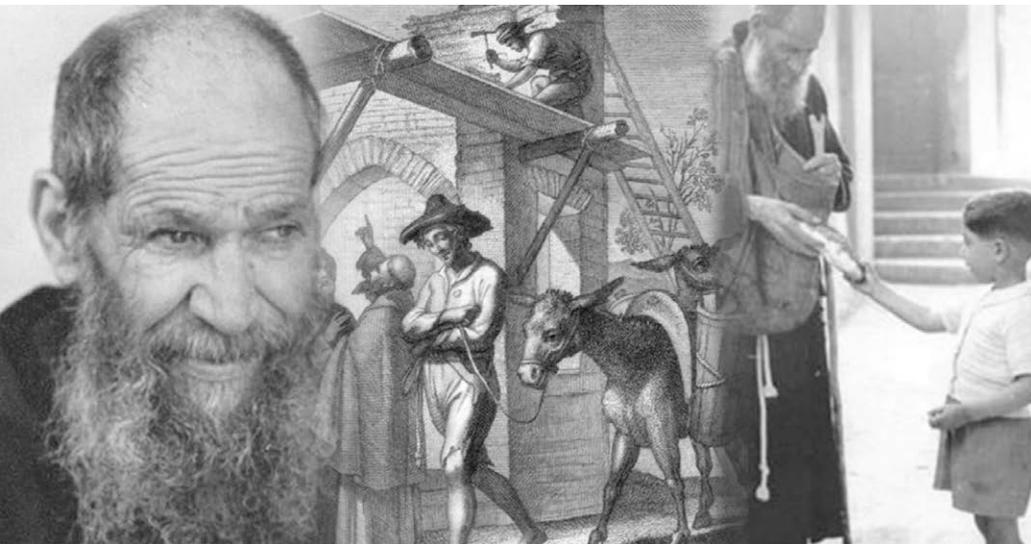
The letter of the General Minister takes up the concern and worry that the lay brothers should decrease, even to an extinction of a species. An old life lesson teaches us to look at the attitude of the people in a group, like a community or fraternity as in our case, as the spokes on the wheel of a bicycle working together. When the wheel of the bicycle has all the spokes, you can say: "They are so many for no reason." But if a spoke breaks, even just one, the troubles start: equilibrium can no longer be guaranteed. Life is the same. A small change makes a big change. If today we find ourselves, with wor-

What does it mean to be brother?

The big difference the answer can be right here.

Francis of Assisi helped the Church to meet people and all of creation in a universal embrace in the sign of the cross of Christ, dead and risen, announcing the Gospel in simplicity and humility.

At the time of Francis, as today, there were clerics and monks: Clerics responsible for parishes and monks gathered, by their vocation, in the monasteries. Clerics and monks, to which the people turned and went to



ry, before the problem of the diminishment of non-clerical brothers, the question must be faced starting from the fundamentals. We are an order of brothers; this is our ideal. What do we ourselves communicate and transmit to others? By profession, everyone takes the title, new and humble, of Brother. Without other qualifying adjectives. And so it is every day. The problem comes up right here. Between the title and being in fact, a brother.

see.

Francis, on the other hand, without losing anything of the beauty of the life of clerics or of monks, invented a 'novelty.' To go and find people. To speak, smile, and cry with them. Francis did not have a dignity; he cried and sang like people sing. Francis was life. Like a monk, he escaped to pray and contemplate; he worked with his own hands. He was not a priest, he did not

INDEX

- 01 Brother, layman, for the love of God
- 02 Research, teach, evangelize!
- 03 Project Europe: a Working Group is Created
Our Presence in Algeria
General Custodies of Sibolga and of the Islands of Nias (Indonesia) - Appointments
- 04 Jerusalem: I am the Light of the World: Spiritual Center
Franciscans in the midst of Refugees in Iraq

celebrate the Mass, but he adored the Lord in the Eucharist. This was the 'mountain of the Transfiguration' from which Francis always descended to find people and bring them to Christ. The friars whose centenaries we are celebrating, Felix of Cantalice and Felix of Nicosia, are friars of the mountain and the street. They prayed and descended to find people. They knew the people and the people knew them. The grace of the priesthood is a service to the People of God that some friars must fulfill with all dignity, without compromising their proper identity. To be a Brother like Francis is to set one's sights on the path to Christ. The Gospel, the Rule, and the Constitutions must be at the center of our construction of opinions. To be a friar is simply to be brother; seeking every day to place a stone in the construction of a more fraternal, more human, world. It is important to be brother and to seek to leave the world better than we found it.



Research, teach, evangelize!



Interview with Br. Tom Weinandy (PR Pennsylvania), member of the International Theological Commission and visiting professor at the Pontifical Gregorian University, Rome

How would you present yourself and your work?

Most of my life as a Capuchin over the past forty-five years—I've been a Capuchin longer—but for the past forty-five years I've been a teacher. I look upon myself as being a Capuchin, a priest, and a teacher. And from the perspective of being a Capuchin I look back over the history of our Order both as Capuchins and Franciscans, and I would like to think and I do think of myself very much following in the tradition of St. Anthony. It was our Father Francis who authorized St. Anthony—we even have his little letter, note, giving St. Anthony permission to be a teacher—he said that he didn't want academics just to be something in the head but something that was truly, by learning everything, that it would move our hearts to love Jesus, to love the mysteries of the faith, and to love the Church, and I think our Franciscan tradition has done that over the years. We see that not only in St. Anthony but in St. Bonaventure, and in St. Duns Scotus, Lawrence of Brindisi, the one doctor of the Church within the Capuchin Order.

I'm also a Capuchin priest and I see it as part of my priesthood as well; priests are ordained to be ministers of the Word and to be ministers of the Sacraments and I see my ministry as a Capuchin priest as being part of the ministry of the Word, being able to teach people the great truths of our Catholic faith, the great mysteries of the faith, the doctrines of the faith. I'm a teacher and I think it's part of being who I am; the combination is the coming together of nature and grace.

The Lord has given me natural talents to learn but it's the grace that has formed my nature, my Capuchin vocation that has formed who I am as a teacher and so I see who I am, as one whole Tom Weinandy as a Capuchin priest who has the vocation of being a

teacher.

You are a teacher, you teach and write. How would you characterize such work done by a Capuchin friar?

I've always looked upon my time in the classroom, and also in writing, as a way of evangelization and catechesis. I've never done academics just for the sake doing academics, writing scholarly articles, or books, or being learned in the classroom. I've always tried to use the classroom as a means of evangelization and as a means of catechesis. I've always tried to turn the scholarly podium into a pulpit. And recently now that we have a great stress on the new evangelization and I think that the classroom is a marvelous place, and writing too, of evangelizing people.

There are fewer friars who dedicate themselves to scholarship. What could be the reasons for this? What would you suggest?

I think one of the reasons that fewer friars are going into teaching is that we have fewer friars, especially in the West, in Europe [and North America].

I also think that one of the other reasons is that so often, more in Europe and the United States, the friars that have come to us have been older. I went to the seminary when I was fourteen. But so many of our friars today are older, they're in their late twenties sometimes, or thirties even or forties. So even if you have a good, bright young man coming to us, he's not young enough to do all the study it takes to become an academic.

But I see now especially in my own Province, that we have two or three friars now that I know of at Capuchin College who are bright young men who are interested in further study and to go into teaching, again, in very much a Franciscan spirit; they want to bring the gospel to young people, to students, and they see that being a teacher, being an academic, is a

Franciscan way of life; it's a Franciscan way of proclaiming the gospel, it's a way of working with young people, it's a way of working to bring the gospel to others.

Another thing too—so often in our Order we have rightly stressed the need to work with the poor. But I sometimes think that we forget that there are the materially poor, but there are also the intellectually poor, the poverty of ignorance. Young people, even older people, can be poor in their lack of understanding, of not knowing what the Church teaches, what the Fathers have taught, what the great Scholastics have taught, and so there's a poverty there.

In light of preparations for PCO VIII on the Grace of Working, what do you think about this topic?

It takes a lot of work to write; you can't write a book or an article in an afternoon. I've written quite a few books, and when I undertake the writing of a book I know I'm taking up a labor that's going to take, often, two or three years. And so it takes fortitude, it takes discipline. It also takes a lot of prayer, because, in one sense, you can read a lot, you can learn a lot, you can write a lot, but again going back to my original understanding of what it means to be a Capuchin teacher, a Franciscan academic, you have to pray, because it's only in prayer that your teaching and your writing become evangelistic. Unless you're alive with the faith, unless you're alive with Jesus, unless you love the Trinity, unless you love the Eucharist, you're not going to convey that love and enthusiasm and excitement to your students or your readers. You might be able to communicate some knowledge, but you're not going to engender love. Prayer allows the teacher, the work of teaching, to engender love of what one comes to know. It engenders love for Jesus, the Incarnation, all the things that we believe as Catholics, a love for the Church.

?Project Europe? a Working Group is Created



ROME, Italy – During the March session, the General Council established a Working Group to follow up on the Fatima meeting, looking to the future of our presences in Europe. The president of this group will be Br. Pio Murat, General Councilor, and the other members will be brothers Tomasz Żak (Province of Krakow), Eric Bidot (Provincial of France), Gaetano la Speme (Provincial of Syracuse), and Eduard Rey (Provincial Vicar of Catalonia). The Working Group will meet soon to carry out the objectives indicated by the General Minister.

General Custodies of Sibolga and of the Islands of Nias (Indonesia) - Appointments

On this past April 10, the Province of Sibolga, Indonesia, was suppressed and



in its place two new circumscriptions were erected: the General Custody of Sibolga and the General Custody of the Islands of Nias.

GENERAL CUSTODY OF SIBOLGA (Indonesia), appointments:

Joseph Sinaga - custos; Elias Dion Tinambunan and Sebastian Sihombing - councilors

GENERAL CUSTODY OF THE ISLANDS OF NIAS (Indonesia), appointments:

Methodius Sarumaha - custos, Gregorius Fau e Alexius Telaumbanua - councilors.

Our Presence in Algeria

TIARET, Algeria - There has existed a fraternity of Friars Minor Capuchin in Algeria since 2006. Founded by the Province of France and Cracow (Poland) – from the beginning as an international fraternity – currently it counts four friars, three of whom are French and one Polish. The Capuchin fraternity of Tiaret is the nucleus of the parish of St. Mary Magdalene, to which come as many as eighty Christian students, half of them from different Protestant churches and from about ten African countries. Here ‘ecumenism’ alongside ‘interreligious dialogue’ is a necessary aspect of our parish life. Some European workers who are building a railroad nearby also come to the parish. Our pastoral care toward the students consists above all in the celebration of the Sunday Eucharist (celebrated on Saturday afternoon), meetings of ‘PCB’ (petites communautés de base), Bible groups, meetings of the ‘schola’ for singing and a group of catechumens who are preparing for the sacraments (currently five for baptism and two

for confirmation). Beyond this, the students come to us every day, often emphasizing that the parish is ‘their community,’ a second family, which allows them to face a difficult challenge, namely their stay in Algeria and studies. The friars commit themselves to the parish and diocesan life. Domenico is the guardian of the fraternity and animator and consultant for various activities at the level of the whole Church in Algeria. Hubert serves in the diocese above all as vicar of the bishop and chaplain of the various prisons. (Every town has the ‘ambition’ of having one). René is chaplain of the community of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary sisters in the area of Ain Sefra. Mariusz is pastor and chaplain of the students. The life of each day, beyond the normal rhythm of the fraternity (prayer, work, preparation of meals, study) is marked in a particular way by hospitality, which is part of this culture, a by a patient creation of bonds with those who come to visit us and those whom we meet. The friars, in all these years of their stay in Tiaret, have



won over a great many benevolent people among the Muslims. Many of them come to visit them regularly to talk about different topics, even difficult ones, surrounding religion. In this way our house is a place of meeting in many dimensions: students from different Sub-Saharan African countries, different Christian confessions, Europeans, Algerians, Christians, and Muslims. Keeping our identity, at the same time we go to meet the other who comes to us by Providence. Next time, perhaps, it will be you, dear Brother! You are welcome!

Franciscans in the midst of Refugees in Iraq

ERBIL, Iraq □ A mission of peace in the capital of Iraqi Kurdistan and in the refugee camps of the area, of the Franciscans of the Sacro Convento of Assisi. A voyage of sharing and brotherhood for the population of these lands struck by wars and persecutions. But not just this; the Conventual friars of Assisi will lay the foundation for the construction of a hospital with first aid for the war wounded and with a pediatric center in Erbil. The visit is a gesture of peace, of brotherhood and of help for the populations suffering in Kurdistan, among which there are thousands of Christians persecuted by terrorism that have found refuge in the area. In the refugee camps, one of the strongest and most touching moments of the trip to Kurdistan was the visit to the first camp, where the Franciscans met, among others, two elderly Christian women who had survived for ten days in the hands of the terrorists of ISIS. One of the two, called Victoria, told with trembling voice and tears of pain of the threats she had endured, knowing that she would never forget the atrocities she was made to suffer. □ They also tried to make me convert to Islam with violence, but I did not concede. □ Nevertheless, she assured with firmness that "our Christian faith will never be abandoned, at any price. □ There are many Christians, who, like Victoria, are taken from their land by the hands of the ISIS extremists, such that the whole population of the area, Christian and Muslim, lives in suffering. However, despite having been forced to leave their lands and despite living in fear of more violence, the Christians □ do not want to succumb □ even those who have suffered grave violence such as the kidnapping of family members and children. A mother asked the Franciscans for help in finding her daughter whom she had not heard from in days. (sanfrancesco.org)

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Jerusalem: □ am the Light of the World □ Spiritual Center



JERUSALEM, Israel - The presence of a Capuchin friary in Jerusalem was initiated in the early 1930s in response to an invitation from the Latin Patriarch, Archbishop Luigi Barlassina. The fact that our friars □ went up to Jerusalem □ and moved into the Talbiye neighborhood southwest of the Old City is noted explicitly at the end of a letter sent to the whole Order at Easter of 1933 by the Minister General, Father Vigilio da Valstagna. The original goals which motivated acceptance of this missions were multiple: Performing pastoral work among the several thousand Christians then residing in the vicinity. The original plans called for the construction of a church, but the outbreak of the Second World War. Formative, for the sake of your brothers in the area of the Middle East. Logistical, providing hospitality and lodging for Capuchin friars coming to Jerusalem from various geographical areas of the Order in connection with pilgrimages to biblical sites in the Holy Land.

and can welcome up to twenty-five people.

1 The house, launched in September 2010, rises in the new part of Jerusalem, just by the western walls, in a residential neighborhood of new Jerusalem (Talbiya), with an open view of the western walls of the Old City, with the Abbey of the Dormition of Mary on Mt. Zion right in front of the second floor, the bell tower of the Russian church on the Mount of Olives in the background, and the mountains of Jordan on the horizon. The property also includes a beautiful and spacious garden with cliffs planted with olives. One can reach the Holy Sepulchre by foot in twenty minutes ("The distance of a rosary," says Fr. Pasquale Rota) by way of the municipal gardens, entering the Old City by the Jaffa Gate. The House has single and double rooms, all with a bathroom,

2 The Community offers a fraternal welcome, participation in prayer and sharing of meals and some service in the house. The friars of the Community are available to guests, friars and pilgrims, for various needs.

3 It's possible to celebrate Mass privately, given a reservation, at the Holy Sepulchre/Calvary, and at the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, etc.

4 The friars of the Community are available for personalized accompaniment to the Holy Places in Jerusalem and nearby (Bethlehem, Ein Karem, Emmaus, Jericho, etc.), according to the wishes and time that guests have available. It is possible to organize, on request, a trip of one or more days to Galilee (Nazareth, Mt. Tabor, the Mount of the Beatitudes, Tabgha, Capernaum, Magdala, etc.) (For trips by car for groups of more than six people, you will have to hire a bus and a driver.)

5 Gatherings for study (personalized by topic and time available) on Sacred Scripture/archaeology, are possible with requests made ahead of time.

6 There are many opportunities to participate in the daily and festive liturgies according to the calendar and the various events promoted by the Patriarchate, the Custody of the Holy Land, and by the individual religious communities present in Jerusalem.

7 There are possibilities to visit Christian social services (Caritas Baby Hospital, the Crèche of Bethlehem, etc.)

INFO: framcap@netvision.net.il