

Fraternal Visitations in Africa

Between January and February, the general Minister visited several Circumscriptions of the Order in Africa :

The Custody of Cameroon and the Custody of Ivory Coast where, besides other activities, the Brothers coordinate the hospital centre for the cure of the Buruli sickness.

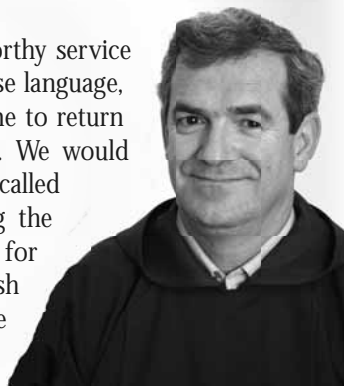
The general Viceprovince of Ciad-CAR where the general Minister presided over the Chapter of the Viceprovince.

In these first Visitations on African soil, the general Minister was accompanied by Bro Vicente C. Kiaziku, general Definitor for Africa. Bro Mauro and Bro Vicente who were greeted everywhere with great joy met the Brothers both individually and in groups. Everywhere one could see enthusiasm in works of apostolate and, generally, good hopes of growth.



Thank you, Juarez!

Rome - After a year of valid and praiseworthy service in the Curia as secretary for the Portuguese language, Bro Juarez De Bono on February 24 left Rome to return to his home Province of Paranà-S. Caterina. We would like to remind everyone that Bro Juarez was called to substitute Bro Antonio Castagnera during the period of his sickness. We thank you, Juarez, for your joyful availability amongst us! We wish you God's blessings in your new service in the Province.



Rome - Two new brothers were given a warm welcome in the Curia fraternity. The first one is Bro Hermínio Bezerra de Oliveira from the Province of Ceará e Piauí, Brazil. In his own Province he worked mostly in formation and from 2001 to 2003 he was also provincial Minister. He collaborated with several newspapers in Brazil where he has a regular column on the greek and latin origins of portuguese words. Bro Herminio will take the place of Bro Juarez De Bono in the Secretary's Office for the Portuguese language. The other Brother is Guido Sitomurang from the

Province of Medan in Indonesia. Before joining the general Curia on February 18, 2007, he has been Vicar Provincial. He will be the Director of the Justice, Peace and Ecology general Office instead of Bro Tewelde Beyene. BICI welcomes these two new Brothers and wish them all blessings in their new responsibilities.



New faces in the Curia



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150 years of the Province of St. Joseph

Detroit (United States) - The Capuchin Province of St Joseph is celebrating the 150th anniversary since its foundation; it is the first permanent foundation in the Americas. The celebrations started on September 2, 2006, in New York, to recall the arrival of the founders who arrived in the USA from Switzerland. Other celebrations will take place in Detroit where the Province of St Joseph has several fraternities and numerous commitments. These include the Capuchin Soup Kitchen and the Solanus Center. Originally, the Capuchin province of St Joseph extended from New York to Montana. In 1952, The increasing number of

brothers and the logistic demands to serve such a vast area presented evident difficulties. So the Province gave birth to another new Province : that of the Capuchin Province of St Mary. Later, other Provinces were established by the Capuchins of Bavaria, Italy and Ireland. Today in the United States there are eight Provinces with about 1000 capuchins. The brothers of St. Joseph's Province serve in many and various ministries; these include social services, schools, chaplaincies, retreat houses and parishes in Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, Montana, Minnesota, New Mexico, Arizona, California, Nicaragua and Panama. In the Province alone, today there are 180 brothers.



Reykjavik (Iceland) - Our presence in Iceland started only a short time ago. It was in November 2004 that our Brothers from the Slovak Province arrived on the Island of Iceland which is almost located in the polar arctic circle. The Bishop of Reykjavik entrusted to our Brothers the parish of Saint Thorlaco which includes all the eastern coast of the Island, almost 400 kms long. The glacier of Vatnajokull, the greatest in all Europe, is part of our parish and measures more than 8,300 sq kms. At present there are two Brothers, Anton and David; but another one is expected to join next summer. There is already a local postulant who at present is in Italy (L'Aquila)

to learn the language and to continue his initial formation in the Capuchin fraternity.

Br. David states : I believe I can assert in all serenity that the prospects for the future are very positive; the people are most welcoming. One of the difficulties can be the dark polar night which lasts about three months : in December the day is only four hours long while in June the sun sets for only four hours but without getting dark. The other may be that as catholics we are living in a total diaspora, because 90% are lutherans. The official language is Icelandic; but English is very common as a second language. Since the majority of our catholics are of foreign origin, In church celebrations we use both Italian and Polish given the fact that many understand one of these languages.



60 years of Capuchin service in Capo Verde

Praia (Capo Verde) : The Capuchin fraternity of Capo Verde is preparing to celebrate its 60 years of presence in the West African Archipelago. During all these years since 1947 more than 80 missionaries worked there. This presence was marked by different and numerous works : the first school for hotel workers at Praia, a second one in Fogo, a hospital where doctors and local nurses work side by side with italian health workers. The Capuchins have also "Radio Nova" which is heard all over the archipelago. The christian community in Capo verde is found everywhere and is very active. The economic situation is marked by lack of rain and thus agriculture presents numerous problems and cannot be fully developed. Among the initiatives undertaken by the Capuchins, there is also that taken to promote a certain kind of tourism which favours justice and solidarity, open to the local situations. This is done also through the active copntribution of a well-known organisation in the sector. The Capuchins in the Viceprovince of Capo Verde depend on the Piemonte Province

“Declaration of Cooperation between the Antonianum and the Institute of Munster



Rome - On February 20, 2007, at the Pontifical University Antonianum (PUA), in Rome, was signed a “Declaration of Cooperation between the same University and the Philosophisch-Theologische Hochschule (PTH) of Münster. This Declaration provides for a plan of common effort mainly with regards to the teachings and the theological and spiritual activities especially after the establishment of an Institute of Spirituality both in the Antonianum University and in the PTH of Munster. At present, the PTH is directed by the Capuchins of the Rhine-Westphalian Province. Both Institutes envisage the participation of many religious and lay people belonging to the various Institutes. This includes the exchange of students and professors, common symposia and other initiatives of high academic level with special reference to the reality of European spiritual theology.

At the ceremony of the signing of the Declaration there were present our general Minister, Bro Mauro Jöhri and the provincial Minister of Rhine-Westphalian Province. On the same occasion Bro Francesco Iglesias, lecturer at the IFS, was honoured with the title of Professor Emeritus.



Possible Advocacy Office in Washington

United States :- The Franciscan Family in the United States is examining the possibility to create an advocacy office in Washinton D.C. This is the result of long years of reflection together with a brief experience lived some years back and new discussions. All these have disclosed a strong interest to go ahead with such a project. The office will be the answer for the requests coming from Franciscan Brothers and Sisters who live outside the United States. They have insisted also that the Franciscans living in the United States should have a more active and effective role in the formation of American policy which exercises its influence on the life of so many people in the world. This would help the Franciscans to be close to decision makers in Washington whether they are NGO’s or politicians. But the opening of such an Office is also the result of a survey within the Franciscan Family in the United States which shows that there is a clear need of a catholic voice, more sharp and active, on the formation of political policies. The organisational process will continue with a meeting to be held between March 7 and 9, 2007 in Baltimore, MD. All the Franciscan organisations of the United States have been invited to send representatives of their leadership and services of JPIC in order to decide which direction such a process should take.

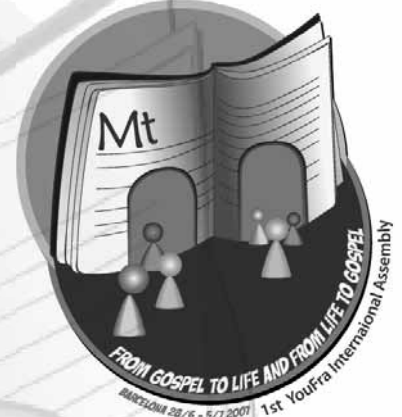
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First International Assembly of the Franciscan Youth (GiFra)

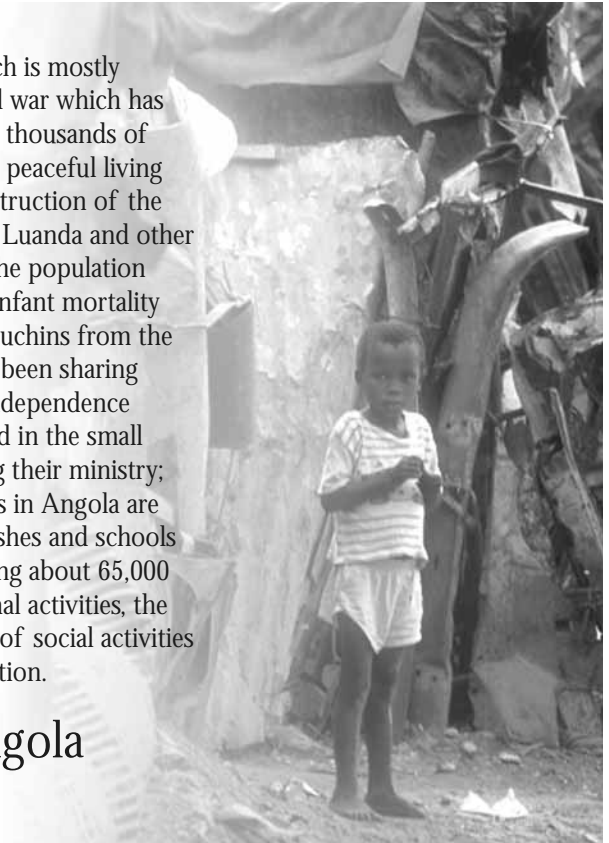
Rome - The first International Assembly of the Franciscan Youth (GiFra) will be held near the town of Barcellona in Spain from June 28 to July 5, 2007. It is intended to be an answer to :

- The 8th Centenary Celebrations on the occasion of the Birth of St Elizabeth of Hungary, a most worthy member of the Franciscan Family and young Patron of the GiFra. She was strongly committed in following Christ in the footsteps and examples of St Francis.
- The celebrations of the start of the Franciscan Charism as a preparation for the commemoration of the 8th Centenary of the approval of the First Rule.
- The interest shown by the Youth themselves in their various international meetings, especially those held in Vossenack (Germany) in 2005 during the World Youth Day. This Assembly will help unite the efforts in the formation and organisation of the GiFra and define its journey.

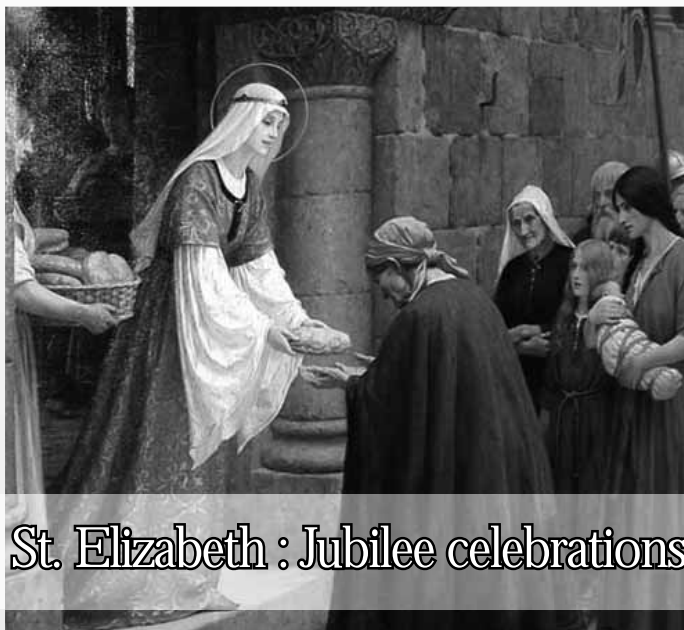


Luanda (Angola) : Angola is one of the African countries which is mostly forgotten. In 2002, the country came out of 27 years of civil war which has devastated it, provoked a million deaths, five million refugees and thousands of orphans. Angola started slowly its journey of reconstruction and peaceful living confronting the numerous problems left over by the war : the destruction of the infrastructure, the return of the refugees who reached the capital Luanda and other cities and the assistance of the children left all alone. A third of the population live in slums without any hygienic amenities and drinking water. Infant mortality is very high; cholera epidemics are the order of the day. The Capuchins from the Province of Venice are present in Angola since 1948. They have been sharing the dramatic experiences and the sufferings of the struggle for Independence and, later, those of the civil war with the people in the villages and in the small centres. Five Brothers have been killed while they were exercising their ministry; another four have died in car accidents. At present the Capuchins in Angola are 89 : 16 of them are Italians and 37 Angolans. They serve 13 parishes and schools mainly in the Northern central area. They work in an area covering about 65,000 sq kms with a population over one million. But besides the normal activities, the Brothers are engaged in three local religious Institutes, in a series of social activities addressed mainly to youth and the most needy among the population.

The Work of the Capuchins in Angola



Rome - In occasion of the 8th Centenary from the birth of St Elizabeth of Hungary, the Interfranciscan Commission organised a series of events. A Study Convention was held on February 23, 2007, at the Antonianum Pontifical University. It was presided over by Lino Temperini TOR and Lori Pieper SFO and was attended by several scholars. Besides that, from February 24 to March 31, 2007, an iconographic exhibition is being organised by Maria Prokopp SFO at the cloister of the Basilica of Saints Cosmas and Damian in Rome.



St. Elizabeth : Jubilee celebrations

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