

Salsburg : All the Capuchin Brothers of Austria met in Salsburg on May 29-31 for their provincial Chapter during which the new “Capuchin Province of Austria” was established. The foundation of the new Province was the last stage in a process that was started by the general Definitory and was decided by the two Chapters of the Provinces of Vienna and North Tyrol. The Chapter had two very important moments. The first was the celebration of the union of the two provinces during which the Brothers entrusted to God’s mercy their own personal and communitarian history. The second moment was the proclamation of the new Province on May 30, 2007 by the general Minister, Bro Mauro Jöhri (Rome) by means of the Decree of Establishment. The Chapter of the newly-established Province reached its climax and its conclusion in the eucharistic celebration of Thursday May 31 which took place in Mönchsberg. There were representatives of the Archdiocese and of the city of Salsburg, brothers from the various Franciscan Institutes of Austria, brothers from the Capuchin Conference of North-Western Europe, from Italy, Poland and Madagascar. There were also some other collaborators and friends from various friaries. The Provincial House of the new Province will be seated in the friary of Innsbruck.

The journey for the set up of the new Province was prepared by general Visitations and an enquiry among the brothers. From the very start there was a mixture of openness and scepticism among the brothers. But as time passed on, openness gained more ground and became the majority. The process was accompanied by a working group representing the two Provinces which studied in detail the different existing problems and the fields of work. The Province will be facing a big challenge in the coming ten years: it has to assure the normal fraternity life and at the same time take initiatives for the future. At present it is important to strengthen the existing initiatives like vocational pastoral work and the commitment to contemplative life together with the formation of a Franciscan-capuchin profile of the future Province. An important step in this direction will be the question of ongoing formation.

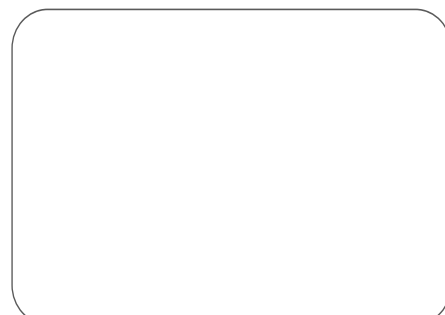
An important initiative for formation will be the “Seminar of the Future” to be held in Autumn 2007. This will be organised jointly with the development office of the Order in Vienna. Another important aspect of the new Capuchin Province of Austria will be to strengthen the solidarity of personnel with the Province of Cracow and study those steps which have to be made for the unification with the Province of South Tyrol.

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General Minister in Slovenia

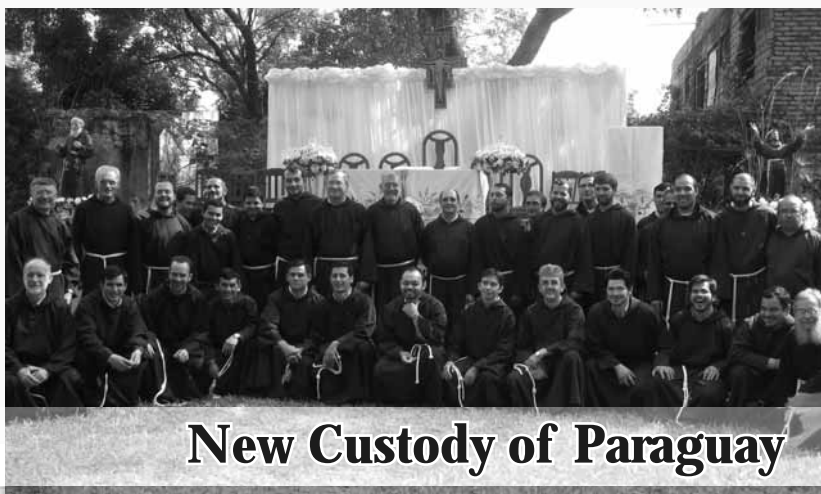
Slovenia: Bro Mauro Jöhri, general Minister, accompanied by Bro Jure Šarčević, general Definitor, visited the Province of Slovenia on May 21 – 26. This visit was inserted in a series of events which the Province was organising to celebrate the 400th anniversary from the arrival of the first Capuchins in Slovenia in 1606.

Asunción: The celebration of the establishment of the new Custody was fixed for the morning of May 12, 2007, in the friary of Lambaré, in Asunción. But the preparations had already started 19 years ago when the first group of Capuchin Brothers arrived from the Province of Paraná-Santa Catarina full of courage and determination. Two of those first pioneers are still there. The first stage of that Capuchin presence was well known for the missionary zeal and their determination to remain close to the most poor. It was the time of unconditional heroism and commitment.

After some time elapsed and with the arrival of new Brothers, new discernment was made and it was understood that if there was to be a positive future they had to commit themselves and give priority to vocational pastoral work and the implantation of the Order. In this enterprise, the Brothers gave themselves fully and God who is never overcome in generosity started calling the first young men from Paraguay to the Capuchin family. At present, only some years along this second stage in Paraguay, we can see a very good number of young men in formation; they are about thirty. These are discovering day after day the beauty of the Capuchin vocation and are striving to give concrete proofs how to incarnate this in their own culture. The date of May 12 was purposely chosen: the feast of St Leopold Mandić, who will be the patron Saint of the new Custody of the Capuchin Friars Minor in Paraguay. The half cloudy sky spared us the scorching sun which as a rule shines brightly here at this time of the year. The people gathered from all over the place where the Brothers work in four different corners. They were the most eloquent witness of all

that our Brothers have done during these few years and how much they have penetrated deep down in the heart and soul of these people. A very beautiful expression of this was when a group of youngsters, dressed in their traditional colours, came forward dancing in a solemn way to the rhythm of the harp, carrying shoulder high the Gospel saying: We are witnesses of the Word of God! The provincial Definitory of Paraná-Santa Catarina was fully present and this shows the commitment of all the Mother-Province to help this new baby grow. The general Minister who presided over the Eucharist stated how important it was for the Brothers to witness to God's love and goodness and to bring in concrete and simple forms the Gospel; he encouraged everyone to be committed to the most poor and be signs of the mercy of God who as such was lavishly shown by the Patron Saint of this new Custody. Both of us, we general Definitors: José Gíslon e Carlos Novoa accompanied in silence and with a generous heart all the good that has been done here. We were unworthy witnesses of God's work. May He continue to render more fruitful the Capuchin Charism in the countries of Latin America.

(Bro Carlos Novoa, general Definitor)



New Custody of Paraguay

Religious life and today's cultures

Rome: "Religious Life- Prophecy in today's cultures?". This was the title of the convention organised by the Union of General Superiors and which was held between 23 and 25 May at "Fraterna Domus" in Sacrofano, Rome. Bro Felice Cangelosi, general Vicar, represented Bro General and took part in the discussions.

Meeting of CECOC in Bulgaria

Sophia: The Custody of Bulgaria welcomed for the first time the 17 brothers who were participating in the annual meeting of the Capuchin Conference of Central-Eastern Europe. The meeting was held between June 5 and 7 in the Catholic Cathedral of Sophia where our Brothers offer their regular service. During these days, the main points of discussion were the Constitutions-Statutes and the new framework of the general Office of Formation. Then the discussion turned on the spreading of news from Rome, whether to continue to send the BICI in paper form or to use much more the potentialities of the web site and electronic post. Bro Helmut Rakowski, the promoter of Solidarity, was also present.



Altötting: The provincial Ministers of the Capuchins in North-Western Europe (CENOC) met between May 9 and 13 in Altötting which is well-known as a centre of pilgrimages. Since the general Chapter of 2006, the Conference started a journey to strengthen the collaboration among all its members. This includes mainly three aspects: Facing the problem of secularization and migration; exchange in the framework of initial formation; development of collaboration within the Franciscan Family. The next meeting of the Conference will be held in Austria on October 17-21, 2007.



Padre Pio "Actor Dei" - musical

San Giovanni Rotondo: The aim of this new musical is to narrate by means of music and images the message of an extraordinary man, a mystic and a saint, who has been always close to the people and who was able to transmit a message to contemporary man, full of strength and hope. Padre Pio is the protagonist in Actor Dei, the musical which was first performed on May 5 in San Giovanni Rotondo. It is called the "The actor of God" because Padre Pio succeeded to interpret perfectly the part which God, the foremost director, had assigned to the poor friar. The most difficult part, tragic perhaps, was that which made him crucified with Christ while at the same time having the duty to continue to remain a poor and simple brother in prayer". Actor Dei is divided in three great moments: Padre Pio's youth, the spiritual maturity of Padre Pio and the building of the hospital The Home for the Relief of Suffering. The musical was under the historical and critical supervision of the Capuchin Brothers Massimo Montagano and Luciano Lotti.

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Meeting of the Interfranciscan Commission

Rome: Five members of "Romans VI" of the JPIC (the Interfranciscan JPIC Commission) met on April 21 at the general Curia OFM in Rome. There were present the general animators of JPIC of the Capuchins, Conventuals, TOR, SFO and OFM. This was the first meeting of the group since two years ago. Each animator explained the work that is being done with regards to JPIC in its own respective family. This was followed by a general meeting and discussion on how to collaborate in the activities of JPIC. Special attention was given to problems relating to the environment and climatic changes. All the members agreed to list all

that is being done by the other Brothers in their own franciscan family. This information will be discussed in the forthcoming meeting of the group which is to be held at the end of June. In that meeting the group will take into consideration what concrete ways of collaboration to adopt in such important fields. The animators have also talked about some resources which are already available or are on the way to become within reach of all and then how to share them among all. All those present agreed that this was a positive meeting and that such sharing and communication should be strengthened and continued.



Election of new general Minister of the Third Order Regular

Loreto (USA) On May 27, 2007, Michael J. Higgins of the American province of the Sacred Heart was elected to succeed Fr Ilija Zivkovic as general Minister of the Franciscan Friars of the Third Order Regular (TOR). He is 56 years old and was elected during the general Chapter held on the campus of St Francis University of Loretto, Pennsylvania. Fr Ilija of the Province of Croatia served as general Minister for the past six years.

Assisi: About 100 brothers of the Friars Minor Conventuals, hailing from 34 nations spread on the five continents, met in Assisi up to June 20 to analyse the journey and the pastoral work completed during the past six years and to elect the 119th general Minister. The Chapter serves also to programme conventual and fraternity life for the coming years. Special attention will be given to the continuous changes in our society and the innumerable challenges which the world is offering. The full day of May 15 was completely dedicated for prayer and reflection; Bro Felice Cangelosi, general Vicar OFM Cap gave two meditations (one in the morning and the other in the early afternoon) based on the Testament of the Seraphic Father. On May 26, Bro Mario Tasca, provincial Minister of the Province of St Anthony (Padova-Italy) was elected the new general Minister of the Conventual Franciscan Friars.

New general Superior of the Capuchin Tertiaries

Valencia: Ignacio Calle Ramírez from Colombia has been elected general Superior of the Capuchin Tertiaries – of Mons Amigó – during the XX general Chapter which was held in Valencia. The election was held on April 30. During the same Chapter were elected also the general Councillors who will help him in the government and animation of the Congregation. For this general Chapter 19 religious and 4 laymen took part.

Catholic Church in Antioch on the web

Antioch: The mission of the Catholic Church in Antioch, the city on the south-east of Turkey, now is on the web. The new site on the Internet has been launched from the church of Saints Peter and Paul: www.anadolukatolikkilisesi.org/antakya. It narrates the history, the activities and the spirit of the small local christian community. The site shows the architecture of the church and above all allows the visitor to “enter” into the fraternity of the Capuchin Brothers who live there giving to everyone the chronicle, day by day, month after month, of the daily life of the local community.



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