L-AĦBAR

PROVINĊJA FRANĠISKANA TA' SAN PAWL APPOSTLU, MALTA. No. 132 5. 3. 2008

60 sena presbiteri

Guido Schembri, OFM

Arthur Azzopardi, OFM

B'salibek inti fdejtna

Ritratt tal-kurċifiss li hemm fil-knisja ta' San Franġisk il-Ħamrun, waqt li bħalissa għaddej ix-xogħol taż-żebgħa..

Iċ-Ċelebrazzjonijiet Liturġiċi tal-Ġimgħa Mqaddsa

Anton Farrugia ,OFM

Introduzzjoni

Biex niccelebraw tajjeb il-Gimgha Mqaddsa ahna u niehdu sehem fic-celebrazzjonijiet solenni li jikkaratterizaw din il-gimgha, rridu nifmhu l-ghana bla qies tal-fidi li tesprimi l-Liturgija ta' dawn il-granet gheziez. L-Ghid tal-Mulej infatti huwa l-qofol tal-fidi taghna ghax kieku Kristu ma qamx mill-imwiet, il-fidi taghna hija fiergha (*cf 1 Kor 15, 17*).

Il-Koncilju Vatikan II u r-Riforma liturgika li gab mieghu gibed l-attenzjoni taghna fuq ic-centralità li ghandu jkollu fuq kollox il-Misteru ta'l-Ghid. Ghalhekk kif il-gimgha tilhaq il-qofol taghha ta' kull nhar ta' Hadd, il-jum li fih niccelebraw gimgha wara l-ohra l-Ghid tal-Mulej, il-qofol tas-sena liturgika jintlahaq fic-celebrazzjoni tat-Tridu Mqaddes ta' l-Ghid ippreparat mill-40 jum tar-Randan li jigu qabel u mtawwal mill-50 jum ta'ferh li jigu wara sa *Pentecoste* meta jintemm iz-zmien ta' l-Ghid.

Hadd il-Palm u l-Passjoni tal-Mulej

Il-Gimgha l-Kbira tibda' *Hadd il-Palm u l-Passjoni tal-Mulej*. Interessanti li dan huwa l-uniku Hadd fis-sena liturgika li fih tigi celebrata il-Passjoni madankollu f'rabta shiha mal-Qawmien ta' Kristu mill-imwiet. Ghaldaqstant id-dhul solenni ta' Gesù f'Gerusalemm jhabbar minn gimgha qabel ir-rebha ta'Kristu fuq il-mewt, filwaqt li r-rakkont tal-Passjoni jffakkarna fil-helsien taghna mid-dnub.

Ftit granet qabel il-Passjoni tieghu, Gesù jidhol Gerusalemm milqugh b'ghajjat ta'ferh. Il-purcissjoni li ghamilna dalghodu bil-frieghi tal-palm u z-zebbug f'idejna f'gieh Kristu Sultan, ghamlet prezenti l-laqgha taghna mieghu illum, hawnhekk fit-triq taghna. Wara kollox dan hu li taghmel il-liturgija, mhux semplicement tifkira ta' grajja li ghaddiet imma attwalizzazzjoni tal-misteru permezz tac-celebrazzjoni.

Il-purcissjoni bil-frieghi tal-palm jew taz-zebbug hija sinjal li jidher ta' l-ghaqda taghna ma' Kristu fil-mixja tieghu lejn il-kalvarju. Dan hu li jghinna nkomplu nifmhu l-qari tar-rakkont tal-Passjoni. Barra dan il-kuntest celebrattiv, il-frieghi jirriducu ruhhom biss f'superstizzjoni li m'ghandha x'taqsam xejn mal-fidi taghna fi Kristu!

Hamis ix-Xirka

Hamis ix-Xirka hu l-ahhar jum tar-Randan u antikament filghodu kienet issir ir-Rikonciljazzjoni pubblika tal-penitenti li dakinnhar kienu jtemmu z-zmien taghhom ta' penitenza.

Anke illum irridu naghmlu mezz li niccelebraw flimkien bhala komunità nisranija s-sagrament tal-Mahfra, ezempju it-Tnejn, it-Tlieta jew l-Erbgha tal-Gimgha Mqaddsa.

Il-Quddiesa tal-Grizma

Wahda mic-celebrazzjonijiet l-aktar solenni u sinifikattivi tal-Gimgha Mqaddsa hija bla dubbju ta' xejn il-Quddiesa hekk imsejha *"tal-Grizma"*, li l-Isqof jikkoncelebra fil-knisja kattedrali flimkien mas-sacerdoti, d-djakni u l-poplu t'Alla. Normalment din il-Quddiesa issir il-Hamis filghodu imma tista' tigi anticipata fil-granet l-ohra ta' qabel.

Din il-quddiesa tissejjah *tal-Grizma* ghax fiha l-Isqof ibierek sollenement iz-zejt tal-Grizma li jintuza fis-sagramenti tal-Grizma u ta' l-Ordni kif ukoll fil-konsagrazzjoni ta' xi knisja gdida jew artal.

Barra miz-zejt tal-Grizma li jigi mhallat b'tahlita ta' fwejjah, jigi mbierek ukoll iz-zejt tal-katekumeni li jigu midluka bih dawk li jkunu sejrin jitghamdu u z-zejt tal-morda.

Il-Riforma liturgika bidlet din il-Quddiesa f'festa tas-sacerdozju. Dakinnhar infatti kull sacerdot iggedded quddiem l-Isqof u l-poplu l-weghdiet li jkun ghamel fl-Ordinazzjoni sacerdotali.

Din il-Quddiesa hija manifestazzjoni mill-isbah li fihom tidher il-Knisja fil-milja kollha taghha, strutturata f'diversi karizmi u ministeri f'ghaqda shiha ma' l-Isqof, il-

raghaj u l-qassis il-kbir tal-merhla.

Il-Quddiesa "in Coena Domini"

Nhar Hamis ix-Xirka, l-unika quddiesa li kull komunità tista' ticcelebra hija dik ta' filghaxija msejha *in Coena Domini.* Din il-quddiesa solenni taghti bidu ghat-Tridu mqaddes ta' l-Ghid e tfakkar it-twaqqif ta' l-Ewkaristija u tas-Sacerdozju.

Fiha jista' jsir il-hasil tar-riglejn ta' xi whud fost dawk prezenti b'tifkira ta' dak li ghamel Gesù fl-ahhar ikla mad-dixxipli tieghu. Ir-rit tal-hasil tar-riglejn mhuiex xi *pageant* imma sinjal ta' qadi u mhabba li wriena Gesù stess bl-ezempju tieghu biex kif ghamel hu hekk naghmlu ahna ukoll (*cf Gw 13, 12-15).*

Ic-celebrazzjoni tal-quddiesa ghandha ssir f'ambjent liturgiku mill-isbah li jfakkar dik il-kamra kbira bit-tapiti li ried il-Mulej Gesù ghall-ahhar ikla mad-dixxipli tieghu (*cf Mk 14, 15 ; Lk 22, 12*).

Fil-bidu tal-quddiesa il-komunità tilqa' z-zjut mqaddsa, mberkin mill-Isqof fil-quddiesa ta' filghodu, li jigu incensati flimkien ma' l-altar u mqieghda f'post xieraq fil-knisja.

Tkun haga sabieha jekk bhal lum it-tqarbin isir biz-zewg speci jigifieri bil-hobz u l-inbid. Fl-ahhar tal-quddiesa, l-Ewkaristija tigi mehuda b'purcissjoni solenni lejn il-post li jkun thejja apposta ghall-adorazzjoni li tibqa' sejra sa nofs il-lejl meta tintemm t-tikira solenni ta'l-Ewkaristija u tibda' t-tifkira tal-Passjoni u l-Mewt tal-Mulej li trid tidher anke b'sinjali minn barra bhat-tifi tad-dwal tal-knisja u t-tneziegh ta'l-artal li ghandhom isiru wara nofs il-lejl. L-altar mnezza huwa s-sinjal liturgiku tipiku tal-Gimgha l-Kbira li jfakkarna fi Kristu (fil-Knisja l-altar huwa Kristu) li jbati u jmut.

L-adorazzjoni ewkaristika tista' tkompli ukoll wara nofs il-lejl u l-gimgha filghodu imma fis-skiet u minghajr solennità. Ahna drajna nsejhu l-post fejn tigi mizmuma l-Ewkaristija *sepulkru,* kelma li tfisser *qabar,* forsi minhabba l-fatt li fl-Art Imqaddsa l-Ewkaristija tigi mqieghda propju fil-qabar ta' Kristu. Madankollu tajjeb niftakru li l-kelma ezatta hija *altar tar-reposizzjoni* mhejji biex jilqa' fih l-Ewkaristija ghall-adorazzjoni taghna.

Il-Gimgha l-Kbira

F'dan il-jum il-Knisja ticcelebra l-Passjoni u l-Mewt tal-Mulej. Il-liturgija ma tharisx lejn il-Gimgha l-kbira bhala gurnata ta' luttu u ta' niket imma bhala jum ta'kontemplazzjoni kollha mhabba tas-sagrificcju ta'Kristu.

Fil-Gimgha l-kbira, l-Knisja ma taghmilx funeral lil Kristu mejjet, imma ticcelebra l-mewt rebbieha ta' Kristu. Ghalhekk issejjah il-Passjoni tal-Mulej *mbierka* u *glorjuza* u t-testi tal-liturgija jaghqdu l-umiljazzjoni tal-mewt mal-glorifikazzjoni tal-Qawmien b'sinjali li jghinuna nifmhu li l-Knisja ticcelebra l-Passjoni u l-Mewt tal-Mulej fid-dawl tal-Qawmnien tieghu mill-imwiet.

Il-Qari tar-rakkont tal-Passjoni skond San Gwann jurina lil Kristu Rè, digà rebbieh minn fuq is-salib u l-kulur ahmar flok l-iswed huwa sinjal ta' din ir-regalità ta' Kristu u tar-rebha tieghu bis-salib. L-adorazzjoni tas-Salib glorjuz tal-Mulej hija sinjal iehor ta' rebha, ahna u nharsu lejn dak li nifdu, illi merfugh mill-art jigbed lejh il-bnedmin kollha (*cf Gw 12, 32*).

Nhar il-Gimgha l-Kbira, l-Knisja ma ticcelebrax l-Ewkaristija. Fil-fatt l-Ewkaristija hija l-festa tal-Knisja li ticcelebra l-Ghid kif nistqarru f'kull quddiesa: *inhabbru l-mewt tieghek Mulej, inxandru bil-ferh il-qawmien tieghek, nistennewk sa ma tigi fil-glorja!*

Sabiex il-hajja ta'Gesù tkun tidher ukoll fil-gisem taghna li jmut (*cf 2 Kor 4, 11*) u bhala sinjal li wasal iz-zmien li fih l-gharus ikun gie mehud minn maghna (*cf Lk 5, 33-35*); il-Gimgha l-kbira huwa jum ta' sawm. Dan is-sawm huwa msejjah *ta'l-Ghid* ghaliex jghinna nghixu it-*transitus* mill-Passjoni u l-Mewt tal-Mulej ghall-Qawmien u l-Knisja tistiedina ntawluh sal-Vgili solenni ta'l-Ghid.

Sibt il-Ghid

Anke illum il-Knisja ma ticcelebrax l-Ewkaristija. Il-misteru ta' Kristu fil-qabar jigi mfakkar biss bit-talba tal-liturgia tas-Sighat. Dan il-jum huwa karatterizzat mill-penitenza, espresjoni ta' fidi u ta' tama:

Hekk tifrah qalbi u tithenna ruhi, u gismi wkoll jistrieh fil-kwiet.
Ghax int ma titlaqniex fl-imwiet,

ma thallix il-mahbub tieghek jara l-qabar.

Dawn il-versi mehudin mis-salm 15 li jigi kantat fl-Ufficcju tal-Qari jesprimu l-atteggjament tal-Knisja li taghmel taghha t-talba profetika applikata ghal Kristu fl-istennija tal-qawmien tieghu mill-imwiet.

Il-Knisja tghix din l-istennija flimkien ma' Marija, dik li emmnet u li meta kienet wieqfa taht is-salib, qatt ma waqfet tittama li l-weghdiet ta' Alla kienu se jsehhu. Dan jaghmel minn sibt il-Ghid, il-jum tal-Madonna, bhas-sibtijiet l-ohra li fihom il-liturgija tal-Knisja tfakkar lil Marija qabel jibda' jum il-Mulej.

L-Ghid tal-Mulej

Wara gurnata shiha ta' stennija, kemm il-darba mghijxa b'mod awtentiku, wiehed jasal jifhem ahjar il valur tas-sahra fil-lejl ta' l-Ghid li rridu nghidu mill-ewwel li mhiex xi velja ta' preparazzjoni ghall-Ghid imma l-istess Ghid celebrat fis-sahra. Infatti f'din il-velja, l -Knisja tibqa' mqajjma tistenna l-qawmien mill-imwiet tal-Mulej. Madankollu l-Knisja ma ticcelebrax dan il-lejl tistenna l-qawmien mill-mewt ta' Gesù bhalikieku qatt ma rxoxta, il-liturgija tghinna nghixu fit-tama, il-migja tal-Mulej fil-glorja fl-ahhar taz-zminijet meta l-Ghid fis-sens ta'mghodija jilhaq il-qofol tieghu u anke il-gisem taghna jiehu s-sura tal-gisem glorjuz ta' Kristu.

Dan il-lejl qaddis huwa l-quccatta u l-ghajn ta' kull liturgia u mod uniku li jghinna nifmhu sewwa l-istruttura liturgika ta' kif ghandhom ikunu l-knejjes taghna. Irridu nharsu lejn il-liturgija solenni tal-lejl qaddis ta' l-Ghid bhala celebrazzjoni shiha li ticcelebra l-Misteru tal-qawmien tal-Mulej permezz tat-thabbira tal-Kelma li tiehu l-hajja fis-sagramenti tal-Maghmudija u ta' l-Ewkaristija.

Fil-fatt il-Vgili solenni ta'l-Ghid jibda' bil-liturgija tad-dawl u t-thabbira ta' l-Ghid, u jkompli bil-liturgija tal-Maghmudija u l-liturgia Ewkaristika. Wara t-thabbira solenni ta' l-Ghid bil-kant ta' l-Exultet, il-Knisja timmedita, permezz tal-qari tal-Kelma t'Alla, l-ghemejjel kbar li ghamel il-Mulej mill-holqien tad-dinja sal-qawmien ta' Gesù mill-imwiet.

It-thabbira tal-Kelma t'Alla hija dejjem thabbira tal-misteru ta' l-Ghid. F'kull silta li tinqara mill-Kotba mqaddsa, jixxandar Kristu u l-misteru ta' l-Ghid tieghu. Ghalhekk l-ambone, aktar milli semplici post, irid ikun sinjal sieket, imma li jidher tat-thabbira ta' l-Ghid. Kristu wara li qam mill-mewt u deher lill-Appostli tieghu u fakkarhom illi kien mehtieg isehh kull ma kien inkiteb fuqu fil-Ligi ta' Mosè, fil-Profeti u s-Salmi li l-Messija kellu jbati u fit-tielet jum iqum mill-imwiet u lill-gnus kollha tixxandar f'ismu l-indiema ghall-mahfra tad-dnubiet. (Lq 24, 46-47).

L-ambone mela huwa monumentum resurectionis, monument tal-qawmien ta' Kristu mill-imwiet, sinjal tal-qabar vojt li sabu n-nisa twajba tal-Vangelu kmieni mas-sebh ta' l-ewwel jum tal-gimgha. Fil-pjanti u l-fjuri li jzejnu l-ambone, nilmhu l-gnien fejn kien hemm il-qabar ta' Kristu u l-legiju forma ta' ajkla jfakkarna f'San Gwann l-evangelista, dak li gera lejn il-qabar, ra l-faxex ta' l-ghazel imqieghda hemm u emmen li Kristu kien tassew qam mill-imwiet.

Il-hajja titwieled mill-gdid mill-qabar vojt ta' Kristu, d-dawl tad-dinja, dak id-dawl li johrog mid-dlam u li fis-sahra tal-lejl imqaddes ta' l-Ghid, il-Knisja mxerrda mad-dinja kollha ticcelebra b'dik l-ghajta ta' ferh: lumen Christi; d-dawl ta' Kristu. Il-blandun hu simbolu ta' Kristu Rxoxt u x-xemgha li jinxtghelu minnu, huma sinjal tal-hajja gdida taghna fi Kristu li jdawwal id-dinja.

Hdejn l-ambone jitqieghed il-blandun, fil-gholi, ghax kif jistqarr Gesù stess fil-Vangelu: hadd ma jixghel musbieh u jghattih b'ghatu jew iqieghdu taht is-sodda, imma fuq l-imnara, biex kull min jidhol gewwa jara d-dawl. (Lq 8, 16).

Fid-dawl ta' din ix-xemgha ahna nilmhu lil Kristu li qal: Jiena d-dawl tad-dinja, min jigi warajja ma jimxix fid-dlam, izda jkollu d-dawl tal-hajja. (Gw 8, 12). Bhalma l-poplu lhudi mexa wara l-kolonna tan-nar, hekk issa ahna nimxu wara Kristu, t-Triq, il-Verità u l-Hajja taghna.

It-tielet parti tac-celebrazzjoni tal-Vgili solenni ta'l-Ghid hija l-liturgija tal-Maghmudija. Infatti dan huwa l-lejl tat-twelid mill-gdid taghna fi Kristu u kemm il-darba ma jkunx hemm min jitghammed, ilkoll kemm ahna ngeddu il-weghdiet tal-Maghmudija u nroxxu fuqna l-ilma imbierek b'tifkira. Ir-Randan kollu huwa preparazzjoni ghal dan il-waqt importanti, li jhalli fina l-frott, kemm il-darba nifmhu l-importanza tal-Maghmudija li dahlitna fil-misteru tal-mewt u l-qawmien tal-Mulej.

ikompli paġna 8

Cardinal Sandri Sends Letter Leading Up to Good Friday Collection

World's Bishops Hear Appeal for Holy Land

Supporting Christians residing in the Holy Land is a priority for all Catholics, says the prefect of the Congregation for Eastern Churches.

In a letter sent to all the bishops of the world and released today in five languages, including English, Cardinal Leonardo Sandri appealed to the generosity of Christians to support the Holy Land. An annual collection for the Holy Land is taken up on Good Friday.

The cardinal began his letter recalling the attention Benedict XVI has given to the plight of the Middle East on three recent occasions.

"In the name of the Holy Father, I wish to take this opportunity to address myself for the first time to my brothers in the episcopate who serve your respective Churches," Cardinal Sandri said, thus noting that he is new to the Vatican congregation. He was appointed its prefect last June.

"I also desire to emphasize," he continued, "as has the Pontiff, the invitation to you to continue to sustain spiritually and materially those Catholics living in the Holy Land. Pope Benedict's are words which constitute a persuasive and authoritative call to solidarity."

Cardinal Sandri lamented how the absence of peace in the Middle East "exacerbates the many long-standing problems as well as the poverty afflicting the region of the Holy Places. That absence also contributes to the creation of new difficulties. Thus, we must recognize that Christians who reside there are a priority for the attention of the entire Catholic Church, together with that of all other Churches and ecclesial communities. For even in their need, they embody the 'living charism of Christianity's origins.'"

He continued: "The Good Friday Collection has a special relevance. Successive Pontiffs have indicated the appropriateness of this day to attest to our common heritage of that land which, in the course of history, abides as a 'silent witness to the Savior's life upon earth,' to cite an expression preferred by Pope Benedict.

"It is my fervent plea that every local Church shall participate in the effort to further our commitment to charity. The Congregation for Eastern Churches, by virtue of papal directive, coordinates this initiative, and does so with exactitude and fairness. Always, the goal is to assist with the everyday requirements of Christian life."

Use of funds

Cardinal Sandri explained how the collection supports the patriarch of Jerusalem, the Franciscans who are

custodians of the Holy Land, and all those belonging to the Eastern Catholic Churches.

He affirmed that the distribution of the funds is not based upon "religious, cultural or political distinctions."

"Rather," the cardinal said, "it seeks especially to equip the younger generations to take their place in society in a manner which renders them competent and able to transmit the worth of their Catholic education and formation."

The cardinal thanked local Churches that encourage pilgrimages, and assured the bishops of "the deepest gratitude of the Holy Father for your support of this cause which is of such vital importance for the Church and for humanity. I extend thanks also on behalf of this dicastery and of all the Latin and Eastern communities of the Holy Land."

Goals reached

With the letter, the cardinal included an explanation of the use of the funds from the collection, as well as a report from the Franciscan custody of the Holy Land.

The statement explained that the Congregation for Eastern Churches receives from the apostolic nunciatures a part of the collection for the Holy Land. According to a percentage established by pontifical norms, ordinary and extraordinary subsidies are distributed to ecclesiastical districts, religious orders, and other ecclesiastical juridic persons in the following countries: Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Egypt and, in particular, Israel and Palestinian regions.

Special attention is given to scholastic institutions, such as Catholic schools of various levels and Bethlehem University.

Additionally, financial aid is set aside for the Central Office for Foreign Students in Italy, with the goal of helping lay students, along with providing contributions to priests from those same countries who are enrolled in pontifical universities.

During 2007 the sum of $500,000 was allotted for the construction of 10 apartments at Bethlehem University, as well as another $500,000 for the reconstruction of a Melkite-operated school at Maghar.

The statement affirmed that "great care is taken to ensure that funds are distributed according to the purposes determined by the Holy See. There is serious attention to this economic role."

Natural Law

Sebastian Camilleri, OFM

Of recent years the defying criticism of natural law and whether it deserves serious attention in human relations has become a free passtime, The ten commandments are so compeling to the rights of personhood in the scenario of civilazation and of eternal salvation that they are absolutes in life.

We are credited to live in an enlighted era of history and still we seem to fail to realise that by denying natural law, secularism is underming the very foundation of democratic society and causing a crisis for civilasation and religion.

All people of good will, with or without faith, must reclaim a common moral tradition and an ethical code of social justice. Knowing about and believing in the tenents of faith is not good enough but fulfilling the christian and social obligations that counts. Selfishness, ambition and greed play havoc in the pursiut of personal and common good.

The natural law makes it clear that the ethical content of faith is not imposed from outside man's conscience but it is a norm with its basis in human nature itself (cf. Cicero); it is there, to protect all creatures, irrispective of age, colour or creed; it is accessible to all rational creatures and must therefore form the basis for dialogue in civil society for reaching a consensus on fundamental moral questions, particularly for the right to live for the unborn and the aged. "We are all humans by nature and not by function. We are human from conception and not from birth. We are all human until our death and this does not change if we are unable to function... This is the truth of global abortion trade that turns over countless millions of blood dollars in profits annually." Paul Vincenti, Mosta, The Times, Wednesday, February 20, 2006, p.11.

Without the shared recognition of natural law ther is no means of resolving public debates other than by a contest of political strenghts. Then the process of legislation becomes, not a search for truth and the good, but the search for the balance of power - might is right.

Ethical relativisim is based on the mistaken notion that relativisim guarantees tolerance and mutual respect. Certainly we must not tolerate people in their mistakes to some extent, but not where self-destructive ideas and behaviour are involved, such as the gay rights agenda, pro-choice women lib. etc.

We must restore full appreciation for the natural moral law in conformity with right reason and conscience.

ACTA

Ordinis Fratrum Minorum

FASCICULUS

An CXXVI

SEPTEMBRIS -DECEMBRIS 2007 FASC. 3

598 - 599

Fr. Joseph Benedictus Xuereb

Gharghur, Malta, 01.07.1935
Birkirkara, Malta, 11.10.2007

Morte fratris Joseph Benedicti, quae die 11 octobris 2007 in "Christus Sacerdos Home" Fleur-de-Lys, Birkirkara in Insula Melita, occurrit, non solum provincia religiosa trumMinorum, verum etiam ecclesia localis fratre authentice franciscano, sacerdote exemplari ac viro integro orbatae sunt.....

FR. IVO TONNA

informazzjoni

Laqgħa ma' Mons. Arċisqof

Nhar it-Tnejn, 3 ta' Marzu, il-Viżitatur Ġenerali Austin McCormak, OFM għamel żjara lil Mons. Pawlu Cremona, O.P. fil-Kurja ta' l-Arċisqof il-Floriana.

Għal din il-żjara huwa kien akkumpanjat minn Norbert Ellul Vincenti, OFM.

Riċentement il-Visitatur Ġenerali żar liż-żewġ fraternitajiet li hemm il-Libja, jiġifieri kemm il-komunita' ta' Benghazi u anke dik ta' Tripli. Huwa seta' jisma' u jara b'għajnejh il-ħidma pastorali tal-patrijiet qed iwettqu mal-ħaddiema barranin li qed jaħdmu fil-Libja u anke l-impenn sħiħ ta' diversi kongregazzjonijiet reliġjużi f'ħidmiet soċjali li qed iwettqu mal-poplu tal-Libja.

Kapitlu Provinċjali

12 - 16 ta' Mejju

Porziuncola

Retreat House

Baħar iċ-Ċagħaq

Eżerċizzi Spiritwali minn Mons. Ġużeppi Mercieca

Mons. Ġużeppi Mercieca, Arċisqof Emeritus għamel l-eżerċizzi spiritwali fil-knisja tagħna tal-Ħamrun. Din kienet l-ewwel darba li huwa għamel l-eżerċizzi spiritwali. Imbagħad il-Ħamis, 6 ta' Marzu huwa kiel ma' l-aħwa tal-komunita'. Kien hemm preżenti wkoll il-Ministru Provinċjal Paul Galea, OFM kif ukoll is-Segretarju privat tiegħu, Fr. Etienne. Mons Arċisqof wera l-apprezzament tiegħu għall-akkoljenza li huwa ngħata mill-aħwa.

ikompli minn paġna 4

jilhaq il-qofol tieghu fil-liturgija Ewkaristika: Tifkira tas-sagrificju tas-Salib u Presenża ta' Kristu Rxoxt, li ggib fit-tmiem id-dhul fil-hajja nisranija li ghandu l-bidu tieghu fil-sagramenti tal-Maghmudija u l-Grizma. Din l-Ewkaristija tinawgura il-50 jum ta' l-Ghid, li matulhom, bhallikieku kienu jum wiehed, il-Knisja trodd hajr bla ma tieqaf, lill-Misser flimkien ma' l-Iben ghad-don ta' l-Ispirtu s-Santu. AMEN.

Erba' reliġjużi franġiskani jiċċelebraw

60 sena presbiteri

Nhar il-Ħadd, 2 ta' Marzu Guido Schembri, OFM u Arthur Azzopardi, OFM, kif ukoll żewġ franġiskani Donat Spiteri, OFMCap u Bonaventura Farrugia OFMCap, fakkru s-60 sena mill-ordinazzjoni saċerdotali. Diversi patrijiet ħadu sehem għall-Ewkaristija, b'radd il-ħajr lil 'l Alla għad-don tas-saċerdozju ministerjali, fosthom anke l-Visitatur Ġenerali.

Fl-omelija, il-Ministru Provinċjal Paul Galea, qal: "Il-Kelma tallum tippreżentalna lil Kristu bħala d-dawl għal ħajja tal-bniedem. Fl-istorja tas-salvazzjoni il-qawwa t'Alla u l-qawwa tax-xitan dejjem huma rappreżentati mid-dawl u d-dlam rispettivament. Hekk Kristu jiddikjara lilu n-nifsu bħala d-dawl tad-dinja li jkeċċi d-dlamijiet tal-qawwa tal-ħażen. Hekk permezz tal-misteru tas-salvazzjoni Kristu bħal dawl, idawwal id-dlamijiet tal-ħajja li l-bniedem ikollu jħabbat wiċċu magħhom minħabba d-dnub.

Biex dan id-dawl tas-salvazzjoni jasal lill-bnedmin kollha

ikompli f'paġna 11

Ferah Kristu fil-ħabs

Nhar il-Hadd, 9 ta' Dicembru, 2007, ktibna pagna sabiha fil-ktieb ta' l-istorja tad-Djocesi ta' Olancho fil-Honduras, familja ta' nofs miljun ruh.

Wara 22 xahar ta' xoghol iebes, fieri, tlielaq tazzwiemel u kull xorta ta' gbir u sagrificcji, il-Habs Statali ta' Olancho, bi spazju ghal 800 ruh, kien ser jigi inawgurat mill-President tal-Honduras, Manuel Zelaya, u mbierek mill-Isqof Mauro Mieldoon ofm.

Meta bdejna x-xoghol, kwazi sentejn ilu, ftit stajna noholmu x'kien qed jistenniena. Dak in-nhar kellna f'idejna ftit aktar minn elf dollaru. Fit-triq maghna, mexa San Frangisk, il-benefatturi Maltin u l-Providenza t'Alla. Meta spiccajna konna nfaqna kwazi miljun dollaru.

Gieli hdimna f'xemx tizreg fuq daharna. Drabi ohra messna nahdmu fix-xita u bit-tajn sa rkuptejna. Izda qatt ma qtajna qalbna u naqra naqra, il-holma bdiet issir realta`.

L-ewwel bnejna c-celel normali. Wara tellajna c-celel tal -Maxima Securita`. Imbaghad 25 cella ghal l-ikkastigati. U fl-ahhar 50 cella separati ghan-nisa. Wara, naqra naqra bnejna l-kcina u kamra ta' l-ikel kbira mmens. Workshops ghall-welding, mastrudaxxa, hjata u weaving. Sptar zghir ghal 120 ruh, skola, kappella, librerija, ghaxart ikmamar ghal l-amminastrazzjoni, u fejn jorqdu 40 suldat. U fl-ahhar hsibna wkoll ghall-baskitbol u l-futbol. Madwar il-habs iddubajna wkoll bicca art kbira ghall-agrikultura. Ghalkemm ghaddejna zminijiet iebsin hafna, ix-xoghol QATT ma waqaf u San Frangisk dejjem sema t-talb taghna!

Il-Hadd, 9 ta' Dicembru, 2007, sebah bix-xita. Izda ghal xi t-tmienja harget ix-xemx. Grupp ta' nisa tal-Parrocca zejnu l-post ghall-okkazjoni. L-ewwel wasal l-Isqof Mauro, imbaghad il-landja bil-helikopter, il-President tal-Honduras, Manuel Zelaya, flimkien ma martu u ommu. Wara waslu bil-karozza xi hames Ministri tal-Gvern. Minn Olancho kollu bdew jaslu nies bil-karozza, bir-rota, bil-mixi u anke biz-ziemel. L-ewwel kantajna l-Innu Nazzjonali tal-Honduras li rbombja malmuntanji kollha ta' madwarna. Kien hemm kliem ta' ringrazzjament lil kull min ghen fil-progett. Il-President fahhar ix-xoghol ta' komunita' shiha li mhux biss tara problema izda wkoll tipprova ssib soluzzjoni.

L-Isqof bierek il-bini kollu. Izda dak li laqat il-qalb ta' dawk kollha li konna hemm kienu l-kliem ta' wiehed mill-habsin meta qal: "Nahseb li llum qed niktbu storja gdida fil-kotba tal-habsijiet maddinja kollha. Ma nahsibx li hija haga komuni li l-Knisja Kattolika tibni habs. Izda li kieku ma kienx ghall-Frangiskani ta' Olancho, kieku 427 ragel konna nkomplu nghixu bhal hniezer ghal hafna snin ohra. F'ismi u f'isem shabi, *gracias* lil San Frangisk u lil uliedu ta' dak li ghamlu maghna!" Jien li kont hdejn il-President, rajt demgha shuna niezla ma haddejh. U f'daqqa wahda xi elfejn ruh infexxu f'capcipa ta' ferh.

Minn Olancho, nixtieq nirringrazzja lilkom il-Maltin, benefatturi taghna. Minghajrkom, il-Habs Statali ta' Olancho qatt ma kien seta` jinbena. Nitolbu ghalikom specjalment kull nhar ta' Sibt meta mmur inqaddes il-habs il-gdid.

Pellegrinaġġ mas-Seminarju ta' Għawdex

Wara l-esperjenza posittiva ta' l-ewwel pellegrinaġġ li kien sar fis-sena 2005, ir-Rettur tas-seminarju din is-sena rega talabni biex norganizzaw pellegrinaġġ ieħor. Mal-ħmistax il-seminarist ġew ukoll dawk li jmexxu s-seminarju, xi professuri u l-isqof Mons. Mario Grech. Kienet esperjenza sabiħa u posittiva; iżda kull pellegrinaġġ jkollu *High lights* tiegħu. Bla dubbju l-aktar li spikka kienu il-mumenti ta' talb, li kien uppreparati sew mis-seminaristi, ir-Rettur u l-viċi Rettur. Dawn setgħu jkunu qawwija għax minn qabel il-pellegrinġġ kien hemm preparazzjoni permezz tat-talb. Morna f' mument opportun it-tieni Ħadd tar-Randan; fejn is-sibt wara nofs in-nhar ħadna sehem fil-purċissjoni solenni li ssir fil-bażilika tal-Qabar ta' Kristu; kif ukoll assistejna għal l-Uffiċċju tal-Qari li ssir f'nofs il-lejl ta' bejn is-Sibt u l-Ħadd. Kulħadd baqa' kuntent għal mod solenni u dinjituż li bih isiru l-funzzjonijiet fil-Qabar ta' Kristu. Kienet ħaġa ovvja li lil Isqof Mario Grech jagħtuh preminenza u fil-purċissjoni assista ma' isqof awżiljarju tal-post. Laqgħa differenti li soltu ma nagħmlux fil-pellegrinaġġi tagħna hija mal-Viċi Kustodju Fra Artemio Vitores, OFM; kienet positiva għax segħtu japprezzaw ix-xogħol li twettaq il-Kustodja f'kull qasam; dawn huma il-kappillani u arċiprieti ta' għada. Fil-parti il-kbira tiegħu żorna l-postijiet li nżuru s-soltu barra xi santwarji oħra li żorna bħal ma hu il-monasteru tal-Kwarantena li jfakkar it-tentazjonijiet ta' Ġesu' fid-deżert kif ukoll is-santwarju ta' San Ġwann Battista fid-deżert. Dak li jagħmel dan il-pellegrinaġġ speċjali barra li għax konna kważi kollha saċerdoti, reliġjużi, jew aspiranti għas-saċerdozju (barra tabib missier ta' familja), hija fuq kollox l-enerġija ta' dawn iz-zgħazagħ li imlew bil-ħajja dan il-pellegrinaġġ. Ix-xewqa hija li l-pellegrinaġġ fl-Art Imqaddsa jidħol bħala parti mil-*curriculum* ta' l-istudju fis-seminarju ta' Għawdex.

ikompli minn paġna 9

sa l-aħħar taż-żminijiet, Kristu nnifsu waqqaf il-Knisja tiegħu bħala s-sagrament tas-salvazzjoni u għaniha bis-saċerdozju. Hekk is-saċerdot fi ħdan il-Knisja, hu msejjaħ u kkonsagrat biż-żjut mqaddsa biex ikun strument tad-dawl ta' Kristu fid-dlamijiet tad-dinja ta' madwaru.

Ghalhekk fl-okkazjoni ta' għeluq is-60 sena mill-ordninazjoni saċerdotali ta' dawn ħutna, verament għandna għax nirringrazzjaw u nfaħħru 'l Alla, għax Alla biss jaf kemm dawn ħutna dawlu tant dlamijiet tal-ħajja. Iżda tajjeb li niftakru li dawn ħutna mhux biss huma saċerdoti, iżda fuq kollox huma reliġjużi franġiskani. Hekk bis-sejħa franġiskana huma komplew isaħħu is-sejħa tagħhom li jkunu ta' dawl għad-dinja. Bl-ubbidjenza huma jagħtu xhieda ta' l-umilta' fil-ħajja tal-bniedem. Bil-kastita', huma stedina kontinwa għall-ħajja ta rażan u sagrifiċċju. Bil-vot tal-faqar huma twissija kontinwa quddiem l-idejat materjalisti u konsumisti tal-ħajja.

Ilkoll kemm aħna ngħidu grazzi lil Alla ta' dan id-dawl kollu li qed jagħtina peremezz ta dawn ħutna Fra Bonaventura u Fra Donat, Fra Turu u Fra Gwido. Quddiem l-eżempju ħaj ta dawn ħutna, niftakru li lkoll kemm aħna bħala mgħammdin, bħala membri fis-saċerdozju universali ta' Kristu, aħna lkoll msejħin biex inkunu dawl ta' Kristu quddiem id-dlamijiet fid-dinja ta' madwarna.

Provincial Chapter
Franciscan Province of St. Paul the Apostle - Malta 12 - 16 May
2008

Provincial Chapter
Franciscan Province of St. Paul the Apostle - Malta 12 - 16 May
2008

PASQUETTA FRANĠISKANA GĦAND IL-KLARISSI

L-Erbgħa, 26 ta' Marzu 2008, 10.00 am - 1.00 pm

Inkluż l-ikel

Irtir għand il-Klarissi

Nhar l-Erbgħa, 20 ta' Frar, il-fraternita' tal-Ħamrun għamlet l-irtir tax-xahar għand ħutna l-Klarissi. Kien mument ta' grazzja u ta' barka għall-aħwa kollha, kemm għall-patrijiet u kemm is-sorijiet. Sar mument ta' talb u li fih il-Badessa Rose Therese Ellis għamlet konferenza dwar is-sejħa u l-missjoni tal-franġiskani fid-dinja tallum. Wara l-aħwa kielu kollha flimkien. Kienu tlett siegħat fejn spikka l-ferħ franġiskan.

Dramm ieħor mill-pinna ta' Ġwann Abela, OFM

Inħobbok

F'dawn il-jiem, fit-teatru Metanoia, f'Ħal-Luqa, qed issir r-rappreżentazzjoni tal -passjoni tal-Mulej, permezz ta' dramm oriġinali ta' Ġwann Abela, OFM.

Meta wieħed jieqaf ftit mill-ġirja tal-ħajja u jħares ħarsa madwaru jibda jilmaħ ħafna wċuħ li għalkemm ikun rahom imma ma jkunx jaf min huma. Jibda jħoss li hemm affarijiet f'ħajtu li ma jistax jifhem kif wasal għalihom. Jisma' f'widnejh mistoqsijiet li ma jsibx tweġiba għalihom. Meta jieaf donnu jisma' s-skiet jheddidlu ċ-ċertezzi i fl-għaġġla tal-ħajja ma jkunx intebaħ li qed ikaxkar mill-kurrent ta' madwaru. Il-bniedem tas-sekli tagħna jippreferi l-ħsejjes u l-istorbju u donnu jistmell il-kwiet u s-skiet! F'din il-għaġġla lanqas jintebaħ li maġenbu u madwaru hemm Preżenza qawwija li taħdem bla tidher, li titkellem bla kliem, li twieżen bla tinvadi, li tħobb bla tjassar, li tmexxi bla tobbliga. Hekk tasal għandna wkoll it-tgħanniqa li Ġesu' joffrielna waqt li jtenni f'widnejna l-kelma: "Inħobbok!"

Dan id-dramm ta' Fra Ġwann, mhux dramm tas-suldati, tal-proċessi, tad-dmija... Huwa dramm ta' riflessjoni qawwija bi ġrajja... Huwa dramm ta' riflessjoni u mħallta li taqsam u tkisser il-barrieri taż-żmien u tegħleb il-kunċetti ta' l-ispażju li xi drabi nħossuh jifridna mill-kelma "Inħobbok!"

L-ART IMQADDSA MAL-FRANĠISKANI 2008

Trid tiġi l-Art Imqaddsa?
Ejja mal-Franġiskani. Il-Kustodji tas-Santwarji tal-Fidwa f'isem il-Knisja Kattolika. Ilhom preżenti mill-1217 fl-Art ta' Ġesù.
Il-"patrijiet tal-Ħabel", kif inhuma magħrufin il-Franġiskani fl-Art Imqaddsa, jgħinuk tagħmel pellegrinaġġ li ma tinsiehx. Jgħinuk tgħix il-paġni ta' l-Evanġelju fuq listess postijiet li seħħu, b'differenza. Għax huma dawn il-postijiet jgħixu fihom. Jgħinuk ti(em ġrajjiet ta' storja u monumenti ta' arkeoloġija li huma ħarġuhom għad-dawl.
F'Malta l-Kummissarjat ta' l-Art Imqaddsa joffrilek dan is-servizz professjonali bil-pellegrinaġġi lejn l-Art Qaddisa li l-Papa Pawlu VI sejħilha
"il-Ħames Evanġelju".

25 Mejju - 2 Ġunju
22 Ġunju - 30 Ġunju
13 Lulju - 21 Lulju
17 Awissu - 25 Awissu
31 Awissu - 8 Settembru
10 Settembru - 18 Settembru

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W: www.ofm.org.mt

St. Clare Can Guide TV Watchers

ASSISI, Italy, FEB. 18, 2008 - St. Clare, as patron of television, can help the modern world rediscover the dignity of the human person, says the Pope's secretary of state.

Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone affirmed this when he presided Sunday over a Mass in Assisi marking the 50th anniversary of the proclamation of St. Clare as patron of television.

She was given this title by Pope Pius XII on Feb. 14, 1958. On Christmas night, 1252, the nun received the grace of seeing from her cell the Church's celebration of Christ's birth.

Cardinal Bertone dubbed it "an experience of mystical television," Vatican Radio reported.

"St. Clare is not only the patron of television, but she can also teach us the correct use of this media," the cardinal said.

Citing Benedict XVI's message for World Communications Day, Cardinal Bertone warned about the possibility of communications media manipulating reality, catering to particular interests and seeking an audience at all costs.

"Mass media tend to impose a uniform cultural model, based on the logic of consumerism and relativism," he lamented. "The example of St. Clare, on the other hand, helps us to rediscover the dignity of the person and values such as family, life, education and youth."

Niftakru f'dawk li ħallewna... u qegħdin jistrieħu fis-sliem.

- **Mr. Anthony Azzopardi**, ħu Fra Arturu li ngħaqad mal-Mulej fit-3 ta' Diċembru 2007, fl-isptar Mater Dei, fil-għomor ta' 90 sena. (Niskużaw ruħna li nqabżet f' L-AĦBAR ta' Jannar.

- **Mr. Michael Tonna**, ħu Fra Karlu li ngħaqad mal-Mulej fit-12 ta' Frar 2008, fl-isptar Mater Dei, fl-għomor ta' 79 sena.

Agħtihom, O Mulej il-mistrieħ ta' dejjem.

Let us give everything back to the Lord through words and life! 2008-2009

Living in minority, with nothing of one's own and in solidarity is to make ours the form of life through which Francis lived the option for the Gospel at his time, a form of life which he showed "through word and example" (TestC 5) and which, in the final analysis, consisted of making his own the sentiments of Christ, who, though His state was divine, did not cling to His divine position, but emptied Himself of His rank and lowered Himself by obeying unto death, death of a cross (cf. Phil 2,5-8), of Him who, for our salvation, hides Himself under the appearance of bread (cf. LtOrd 27).

FRATERNITAS

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Felix Alleluia!

Our peace is in the Risen Christ, I wish you a HOLY EASTER!

Assisi - Franciscus et Clara: memoria et prophetia

The meeting of all the Presidents of the Federations of the OSC (Ordo Sanctae Clarae) was held in Assisi from the 26th of January to the 6th of February 2008. The principal objectives of the meeting were: to help the Sisters to know each other better and to make a pilgrimage together to the more significant franciscan and clarean places; to plan the future process for celebrating the VIII Centenary of the Foundation of the Order of the Poor Sisters of San Damiano; and to reflect on some more important themes. For further details see: http://www.ofm.org/events/index.php

Blessed John Duns Scotus in the VII Centenary of his death

A second aspect of the doctrine of Scotus regards the deep study and more precise knowledge of those truths not yet clear or explicitly expressed in Scripture or determined by the Ecclesiastical Magisterium, the knowledge of which, in any case, is in continuous progression and development until it reaches the level of certainty and, therefore, becomes the object of dogmatic definition.

Remembering the promise of Christ, according to which the Spirit would have brought us to the gradual knowledge of all truth (Jn 16,13), Duns Scotus justly disclosed and was pleased to state that "in processu generationis humanae semper crevit notitia veritatis" (in the progress of the human race, knowledge of truth is in constant growth).

Chapter of the Foundation of Russia and Kazakhstan

The Chapter of the Foundation of “St. Francis” in Russia and Kazakhstan, dependent on the Minister General, was held in Assisi, near St. Mary of the Angels, from the 19th to the 25th January 2008. There are 28 Friars in the Foundation at the moment. 25 of them were present in the Chapter, in which the Minister General himself participated at the beginning and end. Br. Peter Zan, Visitator General and President of the Chapter, Br. Šime Samac, Definitor General, and Br. Vincenzo Brocanelli, Moderator General for the missions also participated.

The Minister General, during his initial message, recalled the itinerary the Order is making to celebrate the grace of our origins and presented the Project of the Foundation and its challenges. The Chapter Members studied the most important aspects of formation and financial management, and then worked out the commitments for the next three-year period, and reviewed the Particular Statutes of the Foundation.

The opening was celebrated with the parishioners in the Basilica of St. Mary of the Angels and the closure took place in the chapel of the Porziuncola, with a new sending by the Minister General.

The Capitular Congressus was also celebrated during the Chapter. It chose Br. Guido Trezzani, a member of the Seraphic Province of Assisi, as President of the Foundation; and Br. David Gah (North-American), Br. Dominic Kim (Korean) and Br. Bogumil Bednarski (Pole) as Councillors.

There are 5 Fraternities in the Foundation, 3 of them in Russia (St. Petersburg,

Novosibirsk and Ussurisk) and 2 in Kazakhstan (Almaty and Taldikorgan). There are 4 native temporary professed Friars, who participated in a Chapter for the first time. The *implantatio Ordinis* was assumed, with the arrival of the candidates, as a priority duty for the next three-year period.

Missionary evangelisation in Italy

"The Lord spoke to us and speaks to us on the road about mission, for a renewed missionary animation". Guided by this indication which is inspired by the gospel page of the disciples of Emmaus, the Provincial Moderators for the missions of the Conference of Ministers Provincial in Italy (COMPI) gathered in a Congress at the *Antonianum* in Rome on the 31st of January and 1st of February. The general theme was "All the Provinces for all the Order" with the concrete aim of re-launching missionary animation in the Conference by opening the Moderators to the missionary vision of the universal fraternity.

A first moment was dedicated to sharing, using the method of Emmaus, which was followed by a deepening of the present vision of franciscan missions.

The initiatives of missionary animation, putting the methods, means and instruments in common, were shared on the second day. The assembly then approved two new initiatives on the Conference level: the commitment to organise national Congresses of study and formation for the provincial Moderators, but also open to other interested Friars, in order to clarify and assimilate the more actual and urgent topics regarding the "missio ad gentes"; the second initiative regards the preparation of some modern and very practical panels which would present in efficacious images and texts the fundamental aspects of the franciscan mission.

In addition, the Moderators present committed themselves to pay the cost of printing a new scientific publication on Br. John of Montecorvino, the first Bishop of Beijing and Patriarch of the whole East from 1309, on the occasion of the centenary of his Episcopal Consecration. The book is the result of an broad historical research by Br. Pacifico Sella and will be issued soon by the Edizioni Porziuncola.

The assembly of Moderators of the missions confirmed Br. Silvio Bovis, of the Liguria Province, in the office of Coordinator of the Conference.

The Congress saw the participation of the Provincial in charge of the department, Br. Carmelo Finocchiaro, who presided at the statutory acts, of Br. Vincenzo Brocanelli, who gave the general reflection, and of Br. Marino Porcelli, Provincial President of COMPI, who ratified the acts and presided at the concluding celebration.

Great Britain – The celebrations for John Duns Scotus

The Province of the Immaculate Conception will celebrate the anniversary of the priestly ordination of John Duns Scotus, which took place in the Monastery of St. Andrew, Northampton, at the hands of Msgr. Oliver Sutton, Bishop of Lincoln, on the 17th March 1291, with a Mass presided by the Bishop of Northampton, Msgr. Peter Doyle, in the Cathedral of Our Lady and St. Thomas, Northampton, on the 15th March 2008.

Other liturgical celebrations, with the Cardinal Archbishop, will follow in Scotland; there will be a Mass in the Cathedral of Westminster, London, presided by the Cardinal Archbishop, on the 8th December 2008. There will also be a celebration in Duns, the birth-place of Scotus. There have been publications on John Duns Scotus and the environment, and John Duns Scotus and the Primacy of Christ. The publications about Scotus this year are: 'Scotus: Life and Works'; 'The Oxford Tradition and Duns Scotus'; 'Scotus and The Canticle of Creation'; 'Duns Scotus: Social and Political Philosophy'.

Brazil - Master in Evangelisation

The academic senate of the Pontifical University Antonianum (PUA) approved the project of a "*Master in Evangelisation: contemporary scene and the franciscan perspective*" on the 1st December 2007. The course for the Master's will be held in the Francis-

can Theological Institute of Petropolis (ITF), Brazil, affiliated to the PUA. The main aim is that of giving quality to the experience of evangelisation in the contemporary context and of reflecting, in a systematic way, on such experiences in the context of the Latin-American post-conciliar tradition and in a evangelical-franciscan perspective. The ITF intends to be engaged in offering specific courses which correspond to the expectations of the Order, of the Franciscan Family and of the Church with regard to theological reflection on evangelisation. The Master's is open to all those interested in the problem of evangelisation, especially for the Friars and Sisters of the Franciscan Family in Latin America and from other parts of the world. The Master's is of 360 hours, with classes, seminars, study and research groups and is scheduled to begin in 2009. Further information is available, from March, at the website: www.itf.org.br

Peru - III Congress of the Franciscan Educators of Latin-America

The last assembly of UCLAF (Union of the Conferences of Latin-American Franciscans), held in Mexico in 2006, decided to take charge of the organisation of the III Congress of the Franciscan Educators of Latin-America, which will be held in Cusco, Peru, from the 18th to 22nd May 2008. Each Conference assigned a delegate to help this Latin-American event. All the Friars and teachers of our educational centres are invited to participate in the Congress. Further information may be found on the website www.3cief.org

Contributions on the Rule of St. Francis

A team of Friars from the OFM German-speaking Provinces of COTAF (Germany, Austria, Switzerland), the *Werkstatt Franziskanische Forschung* (*Workshop of Franciscan Studies*), is working in the scientific field on franciscan topics since 1999. The first book on the Rule of St. Francis, in German, has been published in view of the coming Centenary in 2009. The book tries to offer a key for reading the Rule, to harmonise a commentary on the Rule by Julio Micó OFMCap, in Spanish, and to understand better the Rule of St. Francis in the light of Sacred Scripture and of the first papal interpretation of the Rule (1230: "Quo elongati"). An ample biography about the Rule, in various languages, offers starting points for a deeper study. The present work, in this way, takes up again and develops the famous *Werkbuch zur Regel* (Manual of the Rule) edited, in the distant 1955, with the works of different authors, including Lothar Hardick, OFM, and Kajetan Esser, OFM. The group is working on a second volume.

Werkstatt Franziskanische Forschung, *Regel und Leben. Materialien zur Franziskus-Regel I* (Workshop of Franciscan Studies, Rule and Liofe. Contributions on the Rule of St. Francis, I), Münster 2007, pp. 150. Text in German.

Participation in the next Synod of Bishops

The Minister General, Br. José Rodríguez Carballo, will participate in the next Synod of Bishops which will be held in the Vatican from the 5th to 20th October. It was the Union of Superiors General which, in accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Synod, proposed 10 names of Superiors General to the Pope for participation in the Synod. The Holy Father ratified the election. The Synod will be on *The Word in the life and mission of the Church.*

Franciscan Bookmark

• **St. Bonaventure *The theology of history***, Joseph Ratzinger, Ed. Porziuncola, Rome 2008, pp. 253.

The book – already considered a classic on the thought of Bonaventure – proposes a stimulating profile of his reflection on history. The subject is revealed through the study of the cultural and religious aspects of the "societas christiana" of the XIII century and an analysis of the debate which arose - in the said context – about the mis-

sion of Franciscanism and about the role of philosophical and theological thought. It is a fundamental contribution to understanding a decisive phase of European civilisation. The book was presented at the PUA (Rome) on the 26th February 2008.

• **Francisco de Asís y la paz** (Francis of Assisi and peace), Francisco Martínez Fresneda, Ed. Cisneros/PPC, Madrid 2007, 171 pp.
The book is divided into two parts. The first deals with the most famous doctrine and signs of peace by St. Francis of Assisi, as well as of the fundamental attitude from which he draws his pacific being. The second part regards various aspects which are extracted from the activities of our Father, treated in a systematic way: faith in God as the power of peace; the Christian and franciscan community which transmits the value of peace, taught through life by Jesus and Francis. Peace has to be formed in the culture and, within it, in education. It is passed from a culture of peace to politics, which then carries out the duty of socialising peace and making it universal.

• **St. Francis of Assisi and the Conversion of the Muslims**, Frank M. Rega, O.F.S., 152 pp.
The book tells the authentic story of the journey of St. Francis, of his meeting with the Sultan of Egypt and of his efforts to convert him to the One, True Faith. Included is a brief biography of St. Francis dealing with the stigmata, the Franciscans, St. Clare and the Crusades, from the point of view of Francis. It is a very necessary book in our era of false ecumenism. See: http://www.thepoverello.com/
Visit the Franciscan International Library: www.libreriafrancescana.it

Big/small news

- **International Exhibition of Cribs:** The "Great" Convent of St. Francis in Quito (Ecuador) and the Fray Pedro Gocial Museum, following the example of the Poverello of Assisi, enamoured and impassioned by the Mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God, who made one of the most beautiful traditions of Christianity immortal, that is, the cribs which harmonise the faith, art and popular devotion, held the second international exhibition of cribs, called ***"100 Pesebres de Nuestra América en Quito"*** (100 Cribs of our America in Quito), from the 8th December 2007 to the 6th January 2008. This important event, under the direction of the crib-maker Br. Walter Romeo Verdezoto Vargas, presented once again the franciscan magic of Christmas, the first exhibition of which was in 2006/2007, with the theme "100 Pesebres del mundo en Quito" (100 cribs of the world in Quito), and enjoyed the great appreciation of the public and of the mass media of communications. One of the first fruits was the creation of the school-workshop "Amigos del Belén" (Friends of Bethlehem) which promotes the technical and artistic elaboration of cribs of different kinds by the use of typical elements of the diverse Latin-American cultures.

- **General Chapter 2009:** The General Definitory met Br. Francesco Patton, Secretary General of the Chapter 2009, and planned some steps to be taken in preparation for it. The day's work dedicated to the theme of the Chapter, scheduled for the Meeting of the Presidents of the Conferences in May 2008, was prepared together with the Secretary General of the Chapter. Br. Walter de Carvalho Junior, of the Immaculate Conception Province in Brazil, and Br. Gabriel Mathias, of the Province of St. Thomas in India, were appointed Vice-Secretaries of the General Chapter. Br. Giampaolo Masotti, of the Seraphic Province, was appointed Secretary for Communications. The Preparatory Commission for the next Chapter, composed of Br. Francesco Patton (secretary and coordinator), Br. Ambrogio Nguyen Van Si (General Definitor), Br. Walter de Carvalho Junior (vice-secretary) and Br. Damien Isabell (of the Missionary Centre in Brussels), was also appointed. Br. Jakab Varnai (General Definitor) and Br. Francesco Patton (Secretary) form the Commission for the revision of the Ordo Capituli.

- **Italy – A course of formation for Spiritual Assistants to the SFO-You.Fra**: with the main theme of "Spiritual Assistance to the SFO-You.Fra, favours communion with the Church and with the Franciscan Family", was held at St. Mary of the Angels, Assisi from the 21st to 25th January 2008. About eighty Spiritual Assistants to the SFO-You.Fra from all over Italy participated in the course of formation. The course was organised by the National Conference of Assistants: Br. Fabrizio Ciampicali, OFM, Br. Giorgio Morosinotto, OFMConv, Br. Daniele Guerra, OFMCap and Br. Fernando Scocca, TOR. The four Assistants General were also invited. They gave various conferences in this order: Br. Samy Irudaya, OFMCap, "The contribution of the Assistant in vocational discernment and accompaniment of the SFO"; Br. Amando Trujillo Cano TOR, "The insertion of the SFO in the ecclesiastical community and civil society"; Br. Ivan Matić, OFM, "Franciscan Youth and Spiritual Assistance"; and Br. Martín Bitzer, OFMConv, "Collegiality and assistance to the one Secular Franciscan Order". The afternoon of the 24th January was dedicated to the theme: "St. Elizabeth of Hungary: spouse, mother, consecrated…", presented by Br. Fernando Scocca, TOR. The interventions and presence of Br. Marino Porcelli, OFM, President of COMPI, of Giuseppe Failla, National Minister of the SFO, and of Maura Murgia, National President of You.Fra, during the course were very much appreciated.

- **The Aracoeli and Omniapolis Cultural Centre** organised a cycle of conferences on ***Francis of Assisi and his time***; Oratorio dell'Aracoeli, 17.00 hours – Basilica of St. Mary in Aracoeli (Rome): 22nd February 2008: Chiara Frugoni, *Francis: his times and relations with the Papacy*; 7th March: Marco Bartoli, *Francis and Clare: The feminine world*; 4th April: Alfonso Marini, *Francis, writer and poet*; 18th April: Sara Muzzi, *After Francis: philosophy and religion*; 16th May: Marco Guida, *Francis: man, revolutionary, saint?*; 30th May: Lucio Maggioro, *Francis in the cinema.*

- **The Cribs Association of Madrid** conferred a silver medal on **Br. Emérito Merino Abad** (a member of the Province of St. Gregory the Great of Madrid, Spain) for the multiple services he gave to the association, on the 20th January 2008.

- **Br. Severino Calderón Martinez**, Minister Provincial of the Province of Granada, in Spain, was re-elected *President of the Inter-franciscan Federation* in Spain for a further three-year period.

New Franciscan Bishop

Vatican City, 25th January 2008 - Benedict XVI appointed **Br. José Elías Rauda Gutiérrez OFM,** of the Province of "Our Lady of Guadalupe" (Central-America and Panama), Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese of Santa Ana, El Salvador (area: 3,272 km; population: 1,420,810; Catholics: 919,409; priests: 82; religious: 110; permanent deacons: 1). The Bishop, up to now responsible for the Office of legal Affairs at the Provincial Curia of the Friars Minor, Guatemala, was born in Agua Caliente (El Salvador) in 1962. He made his solemn vows in the Order of Friars Minor in 1987 and was ordained priest in 1989.

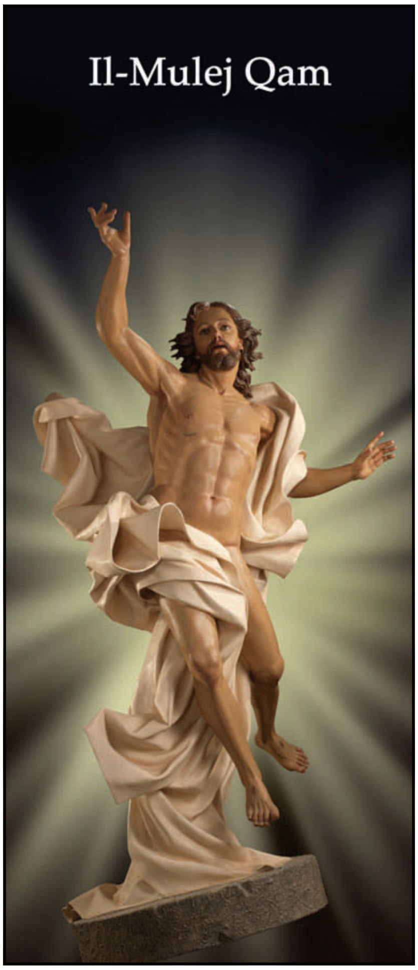
New Visitator General

Br. Louis Mascarenhas, of the Autonomous Custody of St. John the Baptist in Pakistan, for the Province of the Holy Korean Martyrs in Korea.

New Ministers Provincial

Br. Paulus Jun Hasegawa was elected Minister Provincial of the Province of the Holy Martyrs of Japan.

Br. Mauro Vallejo Lagos was elected Minister Provincial of the Province of St. Francis Solanus in Peru.



FESTI U BIRTHDAYS

A P R I L

1. Fra Dijonisju Mintoff
2. Fra Loreto Zerafa
3. Fra Twanny Chircop
4. Fra Joe Bonello
12. Fra Marcello Ghirlando
19. Fra John Muscat
23. Fra Ġużepp Camilleri
24. Mons. Robert Camilleri

23. Fra Ġorġ Aquilina
    Fra George Bugeja
25. Fra Mark Enriquez
    Fra Mark Ciantar
30. Fra Ġużepp B. Xuereb

M E J J U

3. Fra Alexander Borg
   Fra Sandro Overend
7. Fra Charles Diacono
8. Fra Mark Enriquez
19. Fra Ivo Tonna
20. Fra Bernardin Sant
27. Fra Raymond Falzon

F'Dar Arka

Fra Pietru Pawl Meilaq, OFM jinsab residenti f'Dar Arka, li tinsab f'Għajnsielem, Għawdex. Ħajr lid-djoċesi ta' Għawdex għall-ospitalita' li qegħdin joffru lill-provinċja u lill-ħuna wara ħidma pastorali fl-għalqa tad-dwieli tal-Mulej.

L-GĦID IT-TAJJEB!

F' DIN IL-ĦARĠA

Marzu 2008

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