

CONTACT

QUARTERLY BULLETIN OF JUSTICE, PEACE AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION, OFM



International JPIC Course

Franciscan perspectives on the issue of migration

The annual International JPIC Course was held in Guadalajara, Mexico from 9th to 16th April by the JPIC General Office with the collaboration of the Province of St. Francis and Santiago. This year's theme is "Migration: Causes, Walls, and Franciscan Perspectives." Many experts on the issue were invited to share their expertise and experiences with the participants. The Course covered the issue of migration in depth with the multi-dimensional (historical, socio-political, cultural, and economic) analysis as well as the exposure to refugee shelter homes.

1

LAUDATO SI'

Holy Land - Italy

2

MIGRATION

Brazil - Mexico

3

PEACE

Philippines - Japan - Korea



Course on *Laudato si'* for the Poor Claires in Jerusalem



Peace project in Marawi, Philippines



Meeting of JPIC commissions, Japan - S.Korea

The Challenges to JPIC animation

What prayer and liturgy can the Church offer to God while the human beings are making the planet unliveable for all lives?

What should we do when the ecosystem of the whole creation crumbles down due to the greed of the humanity?

Peace and all Good!

Greetings of St. Francis to you all!

There was held the conference, “SAVING OUR COMMON HOME AND THE FUTURE OF LIFE ON EARTH” at the Vatican on the occasion of the third anniversary of the encyclical, *Laudato Si’* on July 5-6 (the documents, presentations, and the live stream recordings are available at <http://laudato-si-conference.com>). In the letter to the participants of the conference, the Pope Francis said, “We can

think back to the call that Francis of Assisi received from the Lord in the little church of San Damiano: ‘Go and repair my house, which, as you can see, lies in ruins.’ Today, the common home of our planet also needs urgently to be repaired and secured for a sustainable future.”

The Pope’s words imply that the initiative of the encyclical came from the experience of St. Francis and that this Franciscan experience should be reinterpreted in the ecological perspective in the 21st century. I believe that *Laudato Si’* is the Franciscan Source of the 21st century because it changed the hearts and minds of so many people just like the original Franciscan Sources did several centuries ago. For example, the encyclical gave a tremendous inspiration worldwide especially to the delegates at the COP21, Paris, and its historical outcome, the Paris Agreement. And that’s why the International Council of JPIC 2016 has decided to take it up as the main source for the JPIC animation in the Order.

Then, what are the obstacles in our way of conversion to the Heavenly Father who is the source and the Creator of all Good? What are the challenges to our Franciscan mission which is JPIC animation?



The Pope continues to explain those challenges regarding the climate crisis. “The COP24 Summit, to be held in Katowice, Poland, in December, could prove a milestone on the path set out by the 2015 Paris Agreement. We all know that much still needs to be done to implement that Agreement. All governments should strive to honor the commitments made in Paris, in order to avoid the worst consequences of the climate crisis. Reducing greenhouse gases requires honesty, courage and responsibility, above all on the part of those countries which are more powerful and pollute the most, and we cannot afford to waste time.” The Pope is addressing the gravity of the global crisis, the urgency of the collective counteraction, and the importance of immediate international collaboration.

To put them in different words, what prayer and liturgy can the Church offer to God while we the human beings are making the planet unliveable for all lives? What should we do when the ecosystem of whole creation crumbles down due to the greed of the humanity? They are simple questions but, at the same time, are difficult to answer just like the characteristics of the challenges.

In this issue of CONTACT, you can find an article from a Buddhist environmental activist. Its title is “A Climate Solution: Reconnecting with All Beings.” This is an answer to the question on the role of religions for the ecological crisis. I hope this could give you some inspiration and encouragement.

And also, there are stories from several entities. I appreciate all of them who gladly sent their stories to us. There is the final report of the peace project in the Philippines, news about several meetings in Italy, Brazil, Korea, Jerusalem, and Nazareth. Br. Christian Seno shared his report on the JPIC course in Guadalajara with us. Finally, we added our interview by a Dutch research student, who wanted to know better our JPIC work.

Dear Brothers and Sisters, the challenges of the time are enormous, and we may not be powerful enough to confront them. But we are the little ones of the Heavenly Father, and we believe in His Goodness. So, we are all invited to pray with the Pope Francis, **“May St. Francis of Assisi continue to inspire and guide us on this journey and may our struggles and our concern for this planet never take away the joy of our hope.”**

May the Lord bless us all in our journey of conversion!

Br. Rufino Lim, OFM
Assistant, JPIC General Office
Rome



The Peace Initiatives and Inter-faith Dialogue Programs of the *KALILINTAD* Peace Centre

*WALAY-A KALILINTAD Friary
Custody of St. Anthony of Padua
Philippines
East Poblacion, Balo-i, Lanao del Norte*

I. Repair and Improvement of the *Kalilintad* Peace Hall and *Kalilintad* Learning Center

A. On the *Kalilintad* Peace Hall

With the financial assistance of the Development Office of the General Curia and the management of the General Office of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation, the Franciscan friars of *Walay-a Kalilintad* Friary were able to make some repair and improvements to the *Kalilintad* Learning Center and the *Kalilintad* Peace Hall which serve as vital avenues for the

peacemaking mission and inter-faith dialogue programs of the friars in the said area.

For the *Kalilintad* Peace Hall, we were to repaint the ceiling and the outside structure. Moreover, we were also able to put up a new sound system which is very much necessary in any meeting, forum or program. We really see this improvement of the *Kalilintad* Peace Hall as truly providential, timely and relevant because when the war in Marawi City broke out (Balo-i is 19 kilometers only from Marawi City), the *Kalilintad* Peace Hall has served as a venue for various meetings, forums and conferences by different groups:

- Orientation of the leaders of the various evacuation centers in Balo-i, Lanao del Norte
- Meeting of various organizations (NGOs) and orientation of volunteers who are responding to the needs and concerns of the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) from Marawi City
- Meeting and planning of the different members of the Franciscan family who are working for the IDPs and
- Forums and conferences about deep-seated issues and concerns that have arisen out of the Marawi crisis.



Furthermore, the Kalilintad Peace Hall has also served as the “operations command center” of the Franciscan friars in their on-going programs and activities for the IDPs from Marawi City. Repacking of relief goods, inventory of medicines for medical missions, and art therapy sessions for the children IDPs has been done in the Kalilintad Peace Hall. And these activities are still on-going up to the present moment.

Below are the various inter-faith activities and meetings that were held at the *Kalilintad* Peace Hall with the corresponding dates and photos:

B. On the *Kalilintad* Learning Center

In the same manner, through the financial assistance from the Project Commission of the General Secretariat for Missions and Evangelization, we were able to make necessary improvements on the structures and facilities of the Kalilintad Learning Center. Such renovations were very necessary in relation to the requirements set by the Department of Education (DEPED) for our application to continue the operation of the learning center. Hence, such improvements and little renovation were very vital for us to continue our mission of dialogue

and peacemaking in Balo-i via the education of young Muslim and Christian students.

In particular, we are able to repaint and renovate the classrooms of the Kalilintad Learning Center. We were also able to purchase additional chairs, tables and cabinets for the use of our students and teachers in the classroom as well as in the library. Furthermore, we were also able to secure the necessary materials and set up the playground of the learning center which we also see as a very vital aspect in the dynamics, on-going formation and day to day life of the students.

II. Peace Camp/Peace Formation for the Muslim-Christian Youth of Balo-i

Taking into serious consideration the war that has erupted in Marawi City and the humanitarian crisis that it has created, we, the Friars of Walay-a Kalilintad Friary, decided that instead of having the usual peace camp/formation for Muslim-Christian youth of Balo-i, we will gather them and undergo immediate trainings and seminars so that they can serve as volunteers of our on-going humanitarian mission for the internally displaced persons or evacuees from Marawi City. Aside from the fact that we were able to achieve the





main objective of animating, gather and form young Muslims and Christians from Balo-i in the spirit of mutual respect, collaboration, harmony and unity, the activities also became responsive and relevant to the prevailing issue and crisis in this part of our country.

The funds provided by the project commission of the General Office for the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation for the peace camp were used to finance the trainings, formation sessions and activities of the Muslim and Christian volunteers who served in the various humanitarian missions that we have conducted for the IDPs from Marawi City.

Below are the particular inter-faith trainings, formation sessions and activities that involved the young Muslim and Christian volunteers from Balo-i, Lanao del Norte as a response to the needs and concerns of the IDPs (evacuees) from Marawi City.

1. Training and Seminar of “*Duyog Marawi*” Volunteers (July 29-30, 2017 at the Santo Tomas de Villanueva Parish, Maria, Balo-i, Lanao del Norte)
2. “Franciscans, One with Marawi Conference”: Orientation and Updating of Volunteers (August 16-18, 2017 at the Third Order Regular Friary, Assumption Hills, Sta. Felomina, Iligan City)
3. Duyog Eid-al Adha and Inter-Faith Celebration of the Opening of the Season of Creation with the IDPs (evacuees) of Nangka Evacuation Center, Brgy. Nangka, Balo-i, Lanao del Norte (October 1, 2017)

4. Post-Trauma Stress Disorder Prevention and Management Seminar of the Muslim and Christian Volunteers from Balo-i, Lanao del Norte (September 17, 2017)
5. Training and Seminar of the Muslim-Christian Volunteers on the facilitation of Art Therapy Sessions with the IDPs (Evacuees) from Marawi City (September 20, 2017)

CONCLUSION:

All in all, the projects as financed by the project commission of the General Office for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation, with slight modifications considering the present context and circumstances were accomplished. With this, we would like to thank the brothers from the project commission and from the General Office for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation for the support that you have extended to our mission of inter-faith dialogue and peacemaking here in Balo-i, Lanao del Norte. More power and God bless!

Br. Daniel Borromeo, OFM
Project and Mission Coordinator,
JPIC Animator - Mindanao, PHILIPPINES

Peace Initiatives in South Korea

“The true and lasting peace among nations cannot consist in possession of an equal supply of armaments but only in mutual trust” (Pacem in Terris, 113).

A. Solidarity with the Rohingya people

Who are the Rohingya people?

السلام عليكم (May the Divine Peace be with you!) The Rohingyas are a minor Muslim tribe that resides in Rakhine State, Myanmar. The Myanmar military suppressed them from 1960's, and eventually, their citizenship was denied in 1980'. When they faced military crackdown in 1992, they were forced to move to Bangladesh and Malaysia. When an anti-governmental rebel group attacked a Myanmar police station killing six people, the massacre of the Rohingya people was initiated by the Myanmar military on the excuse of removing the rebel group. Villages of the Rohingya were set on fire, the Rohingya women got raped, and more than 640 thousand of the Rohingya people have been escaping their homeland to Bangladesh over the border.

The situation of the refugee camps in Bangladesh

It is fortunate that the Bangla government accepted them. However, since the refugee camps were set up in the mountain area where wild animals such as elephants used to live, elephants attack and destroy the shelters killing children from time to time. 900 thousand people are confined in more than 20 camps. Having been affected by the monsoon, the camps are being repaired and made up with levees. Ten people should live in each tent. It is almost impossible to live in such a condition. Moreover, the immediate aid for orphans, disabled, women without family is needed. There are many NGOs are working for them. However, the distribution of supplies is another problem. There are also other issues such as water shortage and poor hygiene.

Preparation for peace camp among the Rohingya refugees

The JPIC Commission of the Korean Province will visit the Rohingya refugee camps by the end of this year along with ADI (Asian Dignity Initiative) and the Pioneers. The commission will study more in-depth the case and hold a “Camp of Peace” which is not only for one-time-visit or humanitarian aid but also for returning of the Rohingya back to Myanmar in the long run. The Rohingya people cannot stay at the refugee camps any longer. It is necessary to put pressure on the government so that they can return home in the end.



Commemoration on the one-year anniversary of the Rohingya massacre

The 25th of August, 2018 is the one-year anniversary of the Rohingya massacre. The Korean Network of Religion and Civil Society for the Rohingya is preparing a memorial event in solidarity with them. There will be a photo exhibition, peace concert, screening of documentaries, and talk show with the film directors on the issue. The JPIC Commission of the Korean Province is taking part of this network and will put any possible effort for their cause for the Rohingyas.

2. We urge to the president Moon Jae-in and the chairman Kim Jong-un, to accomplish the previous South-North Joint Declarations (6.15 and 10.4), and to create a milestone for the peaceful unification.
3. We urge to the United States and North Korea (DPRK) to make a peace treaty to achieve permanent peace on the Korean Peninsula.
4. We urge to Mr. Thomas Bach, the President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to mediate for the interim suspension of the Key Resolve US-ROK military exercise next year(2018) and of the launch of the missile of North Korea, for the success of the *Pyeongchang* Winter Olympics.



B. Peace Mass for Peace Agreement on the Korean Peninsula

On October 9, 2017, the Conference of Major Superiors of Korean Men's Religious Institutes and Societies of Apostolic Life and the Association of the Major Superiors of Religious Women in Korea have started to celebrate a weekly mass for peace on the Korean Peninsula at *Gwanghwamun* Square every Monday at 19:30.

In the opening Mass, the Korean religious issued a statement that “The true and lasting peace among nations cannot consist in possession of an equal supply of armaments but only in mutual trust” (*Pacem in Terris*, 113).

1. We will not stop praying for the peace on the Korean peninsula.

5. We urge to the international community to make a fair effort to resolve conflicts and tensions that have arisen on the Korean Peninsula, Northeast Asia, and the world.

On May 27, 2018, the historical Inter-Korean summit came true, and it declared a statement, the "*Panmunjom* Declaration" that gave tremendous hope for the peace on the peninsula. Since the summit, the theme of the peace mass became the "Prayer for the Peace Treaty on the Korean Peninsula." About 30 to 50 religious and believers attend the peace masses every week. The JPIC Committee of the Korean Province is also taking part in this movement. We will assess our activities and discuss the future direction anew.

Br. Aloysio Kim, OFM
JPIC animator – Seoul, S. KOREA

JPIC meeting of the Brazilian Conference

The Evangelization Team of the Brazilian Conference gathered in Salvador City, Bahia, Brazil, on May 17-19.

The JPIC Commission met with animators from 6 Entities. In the occasion, we have assessed the different activities that we, as a commission, performed during last year. We also projected next year activities of the Entities and common works of the Conference. There was a time to share personal experiences, and also to express how each animator feels doing this service in their Entities. The three of us, who took part in the JPIC Course in Guadalajara this year, shared our experience.

Taking care of our brother and sister migrants and the refugees we have in Brazil is one of the works that we will carry out jointly as a Conference. Migrant brothers from Haiti and a large number of Venezuelan migrants and refugees who enter Brazil utterly unprotected are being welcomed into our Franciscan parishes.

Another aspect that was a commitment of the Conference is expanding our inter-religious dialogue and getting involved in the political issue we are living in Brazil by denouncing the “parliamentary coup” that we are experiencing and advocating for the liberation of our former President Lula, unjustly imprisoned by the criminal gang of Brazil.

Br. Luis Mendez, OFM

JPIC Coordinator, Brazilian Conference,
JPIC Animator - Porto Alegre, BRAZIL



COMPI JPIC Assembly

The second JPIC assembly of the COMPI was held on June 19 and 20, 2018, at the *Antonianum* in Rome. It was a moment of confrontation that the various delegates had for the work done in their entities, but above all, an opportunity to plan the initiatives of the year 2018-2019.

The Dean of the Theological Faculty of the *Antonianum* University, Br. Giuseppe Buffon and Br. Jaime Campos, director of the general office of JPIC of the Friars Minor, have been with the assembly.

The assembly accepted Professor Buffon's request to participate in the two initiatives planned for the year 2019,

initiatives that aim to celebrate two significant anniversaries for our Order: the fortieth anniversary of the proclamation of St. Francis as the patron of ecology and the Eighth Centenary of the meeting between St. Francis and the sultan.

Among the many initiatives designed for the year 2018/2019, the most interesting one is the construction of a Mediterranean network aimed at countering the culture of exclusion and hatred. The network would be a sign of a culture of encounter and also includes intercultural exchanges among the young people of our realities. The JPIC general office will work together to carry out this project.

Let us pray to St Francis for his intercession to the Lord for us and our work.

Br. Giuseppe Iovino, OFM
JPIC Animator - Salerno

The 10th Inter-Provincial JPIC Meeting, Japan - S. Korea

The annual joint meeting of the Korean and Japanese JPIC commissions was held from May 14th to 17th, 2018 in Seoul. The theme was “Pilgrimage of Peace.” Along with the two JPIC animators (Br. Peter Abe from the Japanese Province, Br. Aloysio Kim from the Korean Province), eight members of the JPIC commissions participated in the program. The participants attended the street mass for the peace treaty in the Korean peninsula and the “Wednesday Protest” for the comfort women (the victims of the Japanese war crimes) and visited the museum of war and women. Later, they had a special session with a Japanese expert on the issue of the comfort women. It helped them have better understanding on the history and the role of religious communities regarding the human rights issues. The brothers opened up and shared their opinions on the past tragic history between two countries. The participants came to realize there had been continuous false propagandas of the Japanese government on the history and war crimes. The session helped them understand each other.

After presenting the reports by each commission, the participants talked much about the future plans. Since it’s been already 9 years so far, there was a strong need of more concrete action plan in common. The next meeting will be on May 8 – 10, 2019, in Tokyo, Japan.

The program was;

- May 14. Peace mass at the *Sewol* Square
- May 15. Reports from each commission, Formation sessions on Japan-Korea History
- May 16. Participation in the “Wednesday Demonstration”, Visit to the “Museum of War & Human Rights of Women”
- May 17. Visit to two fraternities in slum areas of Seoul



Br. Peter Abe Keita, OFM
JPIC Animator - Tokyo, Japan
Br. Aloysio Kim, OFM
JPIC Animator - Seoul, S. Korea

A Climate Solution: Reconnecting with All Beings

Junghee Min*

Do you know how nature and creation are being destroyed by the anthropogenic crisis? Did you ever see how this destruction breaks down our fellow humans and nature? Have you ever felt others' suffering caused by this destruction?

Climate change is the biggest threat of our time, and also to the future generation to come. With just 1-degree Celsius increase in global average temperature, the world has had more and stronger floods, heat waves, droughts, and storms for the past decades. It is a disconnection from nature that has strengthened our greed and caused disastrous climate and ecological crisis. At the same time, it has led us to numb to the other beings' anguish, distress, and despair. How sensitive are we to other beings' distress? Many human beings are indifferent to sufferings of others and don't want to face them.

In responding to the climate crisis, the foremost step is to see reality as it is by reconnecting us with nature and other creatures and correcting our attitudes and perspectives to them. Faith leaders should play a significant role



to bridge people with nature and other beings and transform people's a way of thinking toward nature and other beings whatever they are their fellow humans, or animals or plants. However, like many secular people, many faith leaders also look indifferent to others' agonies and would not confront them.

The Catholic Church has great teachings on nature and environment like the Encyclical letter *Laudato si'* of the Holy Father Francis on care for our common home. I believe *Laudato si'* inspired many people and even different religious organizations and contribute to Paris Climate Agreement. I still remember so many civic groups looked forward to having *Laudato si'* and expected it would influence on UN Climate Conference in 2015.

As far as I know, the Franciscans have St. Francis of Assisi whose teachings are ecological. Despite these invaluable ecological teachings on the protection of nature and creation within the Catholic tradition, I often hear from Catholic priests with whom I have acquainted that not many priests care about the anguish of others caused by climate destruction.

In this respect, I ask a few questions on which the Franciscans can reflect in guiding lay people regarding overcoming climate and ecological crisis, as follows.

Do you feel connected with nature and other creatures? Do you know how nature and creation are being destroyed by the anthropogenic crisis? Did you ever see how this destruction destroys our fellow humans and the nature? Have you ever felt others' suffering caused by this destruction? Then, what are you doing now in order to follow ecological teachings of *Laudato si'* and Saint Francis or to relieve the others' suffering?

We can consider taking people to rural villages affected by extreme weather events or submerging small islands in the Pacific Ocean to help them see what is really happening there. In reality, it is not easy for us to do that as it would cost too much money. Therefore, my

organization, “Inter-religious Climate, and Ecology (ICE) Network” decided to begin screening of movies on climate change two months ago, in collaboration with Franciscan JPIC in Korea. Thanks to a Franciscan father deeply concerned with the climate crisis and supportive of ICE Network, we can hold movie screening in the Franciscan Education Center in the downtown of Seoul once a month.

With the movie screening, we are able to make people aware of how climate change has impacted on human beings and nature and to reconnect people with the underprivileged others. The first movie we showed was *Disruption* directed by Jared P. Scott. In the film, scientists talked about climate science and activists told the reason why people should take to the street to tackle the climate crisis. It also includes a few scenes of places in the Philippines heavily wretched by the typhoon Haiyan in 2013 that took more than lives of 8,000 local people.

A woman said, “We should support the most vulnerable to climate change and disabled people,” right after the screening. The other woman suggested that we have to hold climate march to make our voice for the sake of the vulnerable and the weak. A Catholic nun said, “I was feeling ashamed while I was watching the movie and I am also doubtful whether even renewable energy can be the solution to climate crisis if we continue to consume too many things that are not necessary.”

The audience’s responses to the movie were unexpected and touching. At last, the movie screening helped the audience see reality as it is and linked them with the others who are suffering. They were able to join a climate march by major environmental groups in Korea three weeks later. Along a dozen lay Franciscans, they took part in the march which seemed to deepen their understanding of climate reality, injustice, and inequality.

With different programs and teaching materials like the movie screening, the Franciscan brothers and sisters might train lay people to make them empathetic with other beings’

suffering. The teachings and life of Saint Francis must be applied to the training about climate and ecological issues. The Franciscan churches can let lay people participate in activities to turn the church into ecological one through saving energy and installing renewable energy system.

Besides, the church should inspire people to lead a sustainable way of living their daily lives by consuming less and supporting and praying for the vulnerable in developing countries to adapt to climate change. The most important is to encourage them to take part in climate mobilization and to make voices there to push the government to adopt a green policy and to set an ambitious target on climate mitigation. The church also should be active in advocating the poor in the most vulnerable countries to climate change and strongly suggest that the government financially support them. I am sure these actions must bring about system change, and stave climate change off at last.

Lastly, I hope the church wouldn’t forget to tell its lay people to throw votes for good politicians concerned with the climate crisis and having the willingness to transform society based on fossil fuel.



***Junghee Min**

Secretary-general of **ICE Network** (Inter-religious Climate and Ecology Network), a pan-Asia network consisting of faith-based organizations and leaders from Catholic, Protestant, Muslim, Buddhist, and Won Buddhist communities, and civic groups

responding to climate and ecological crisis.

The ICE Network is headquartered in Seoul, South Korea and working to implement activities of climate adaptation, training for local religious people, and international and regional networking in Asia.



Franciscans in COP24 (2/3)

Again, why the participation?

It's relevant to the Franciscans to participate in COP in any way possible. Why? Firstly, because COP is the only space where the negotiation on the solutions to the climate crisis by the governmental delegates actually happens, and the ethical dimension must be emphasized in the solutions. Franciscans can collaborate with other inter-faith groups and NGOs especially in this respect. And secondly, such movement can be the sign and the example to raise awareness in the Church, since the ecological dimension of the Christian conversion is not yet the famous subject in the Christian community itself. The Franciscan presence in the COP can give testimony to the vision of St. Francis to the world. Thirdly, COP is an exceptional place where one can listen to the powerful testimonies of the most vulnerable in the world, various activists, and experts, and have a dialogue with them. They are the victims of the social and ecological crisis as well as the prophets of our time. Just like the encounter with the Christ in a leper has changed the life of St. Francis, it's critical for the Franciscans to be touched by those who are affected by the systematic injustice.

Participation in COP23, Bonn

Last November, several Franciscan delegates both from Rome as well as Germany took part in COP23. The Franciscan delegation consisted of three brothers from Romans VI, a member of FI, a brother from MZF, and two members of the Franciscan Family in Germany. The activities were aimed to show the Franciscan presence among the civil society during the COP, pray and act together with ecumenical/inter-faith groups, and to raise awareness on climate crisis and action among the local Franciscans.

The delegation served at an ecumenical prayer vigil for the Creation at the St. Winfried

church, participated in the climate march, attended in various workshops, meetings (one of them was the meeting of the inter-faith leaders with the President of COP23) and negotiations, and held a Franciscan climate conference at MZF, the title of which was "Backing Out? Climate and Environmental Protection with St. Francis." The main speaker of the conference was Br. Johannes Freyer, OFM.

The delegation evaluated their participation that there were so many positive experiences of meetings and encounters, and, at the same time, and that it needed to set more explicit goals for participation, better coordination, communication, and follow-ups.

Planning for COP24, Katowice

This year's participation has several objectives.

1. To be present among the people in solidarity,
2. To pray for the victims of the climate crisis and the Creation along with the local church,
3. To raise awareness among the Franciscans on the climate change and ecological conversion through dialogue.
- 4.

The JPIC General office is planning on the participation in (inter-faith/ecumenical/Franciscan) prayer vigils for the creation, public marches and pilgrimages, and organizing a Franciscan conference on the role of religious communities for the creation. Its tentative title is "Climate crisis and the role of religions for climate justice." We are trying to invite panels from different backgrounds and hope this conference would facilitate productive dialogue between religious communities, the civil society, and local workers. We are still working on the details of the program and inform you later so that many of you can take part in.

Your ideas and suggestions as well as questions are always welcome. Send us messages to pax@ofm.org, if there is any.

Br. Rufino Lim, OFM
JPIC General Office - Rome

Meeting with the Poor Clare Sisters in Jerusalem and Nazareth

An introduction to Laudato si'
19-20 April 2018

During a JPIC meeting this year we thought it would be of great benefit to include our Poor Clare Sisters in the work of the JPIC (Justice, Peace and the integrity of Creation). Pope St. John Paul II often referred to the nuns of the cloister as the Power Houses and prayer. Their prayers would be a great benefit and comfort to us and we seek to spread the message of Justice and peace. We also thought it would be an opportunity to introduce the sisters to the encyclical *Laudato Si* written by our Holy Father Pope Francis and to see if the Sisters had any thoughts how they might apply the spirit of the encyclical to their lives in the cloister.

With the blessing of Father Custos, Father Mario Hadchity and I planned two visits, one to the monastery in Jerusalem and the following day to Nazareth. I had already spoken with the sisters sent copies of the *Laudato si* in French, Italian and Spanish, which are the languages spoken by the sisters. Alas, the Abbesses were at a conference in Egypt. Nevertheless, they granted us permission to visit and talk to their respective communities.

We arrived at the monastery in Jerusalem on Thursday the 19th April and were greeted most cordially by one of the Sisters. The monastery is beautiful and well cared for. We then met together with the community. I gave a very simple explanation in Italian of the Encyclical, the Introduction and a brief comment on each chapter. Father Mario then gave some pointers on how we can introduce the principles of the Encyclical into our everyday lives. We stressed our joint Franciscan spirituality and how much we rely on their efficacious prayers. The Sisters listened attentively, took notes, asked questions. We were thrilled by their enthusiasm and asked that they reflect upon the encyclical *Laudato Si*.

We promised that we would return at the end of the year to see what fruits their reflections and discussion had brought and furthermore what they might be able to do within the cloister setting regarding ecology. Each party invigorated by mutual enthusiasm and Franciscan joy said farewell. We left with the assurance of their prayers.

The visit to Nazareth took place the following day. We met with the community and this time the brief conference was given in French. Again, the sisters were very enthusiastic and had already begun various small projects with ecology in mind. We were invited to lunch and spent some recreational time together afterwards. We sang together in Spanish and really felt most welcome and encouraged in our mission amongst them. They promised their prayers for the work of JCIP. We promised to return to visit then at the end of the year once they have had time to reflect and discuss the Encyclical message on God's gift of creation.

These Sisters of the cloister live a life within an enclosure, but this does not mean they do not understand what is happening in the world or to the world. Their assurance of prayers for our endeavours is of the utmost importance. They are our spiritual Sisters. We hope that our friars will make more fraternal visits to contemplative houses in order to be strengthened by their prayers and thereby involve them in our quest to extend the message of *Laudato Si* throughout the world.



Br. John Luke, OFM & Br. Mario, OFM
Custody of the Holy Land

OFM JPIC Course on Migration

We are called to remain steadfast in our commitment to justice and peace, to defend and promote the human rights and dignity of our migrant and refugee brothers and sisters.

From April 9 to April 16, approximately 55 Franciscan friars and lay partners in ministry gathered in Guadalajara, Mexico to participate in the OFM JPIC Office's international course on migration. The annual course was organized by **Jaime Campos, OFM** and **Rufino Lim, OFM** and sought to present the issue of migration holistically while serving as an orientation for the Order's new JPIC animators.

Entitled *Migration: Causes, Walls, and Franciscan Perspectives*, the course was divided into three parts. The first part focused on root causes and drivers of human mobility. **Gerardo Cruz Gonzalez**, from El Instituto Mexicano de Doctrina Social Cristiana (IMDOSOC), provided a comprehensive socio-political history of migration in the Americas and offered six theoretical approaches to analyze this phenomenon. For Mr. Cruz Gonzalez, a critical understanding of the history of migration is important in order to provide Franciscans not only with a recollection of the past but also with the tools to help in our resistance against injustice.

Rafael Alonso Hernández López, the director of FM4 Paso Libre, a migrant shelter in

Guadalajara, presented on the impact of “*Social, economic, political violence and climate change*” on migration while **Melissa Angélica Vértiz Hernández**, of the Working Group on Migration Policy, presented on inequality as a primary driver of migration (“*The unfair distribution of wealth: Social inequality*”). Extreme poverty, political corruption, climate change, and other injustices join to create a deadly mixture of violence and dehumanization that forcibly displaces peoples in vulnerable situations.

For Mr. López, the situation of migrants all over the world is a critical issue that must be addressed on a global scale: “Similar problems that arise in different places demand answers that will have to go beyond the local scope. Migration is constituted in many of these scenarios as an act of survival, an escape from the debacle of nation states and their policies of economic development and armament, from the absence of minimum requirements of a healthy coexistence, and from non-interest in containing and eradicating violence, poverty, and marginalization.”

The second part of the JPIC course focused on “walls” – both physical and metaphoric – that act as barriers in the migration process. **Fray Tomás González Castillo, OFM**, founder of La 72 and a partner of Franciscans International, gave an overview of the legal and political hurdles that inhibit migration in Mexico, as well as the xenophobia, fear, and prejudice that undergird these policies (“*Physical and symbolic walls*”). Fray Tomás noted that various initiatives, such as the *Programa Especial sobre Migración* and the *Programa Frontera Sur*, have been proposed by the Mexican government with the intention of protecting the human rights of



migrants who transit through the country. These programs, however, have failed to protect the rights and safety of migrants – on the contrary, they have increased border security through militarization and have caused a surge in violence and illegal activities along migratory routes, such as trafficking and extortion, as well as physical and sexual assault.

Pointing to the dangers facing migrants from Central America, Fray Tomás offered some challenging words: “Mexico is a minefield for anyone who crosses its borders as an ‘irregular migrant’. Mexico is a transversal wall that one has to jump, a gigantic clandestine grave where we can find the remains of those who were able to jump this invisible wall but who have fallen into the hands of criminals.”



The last part of the course highlighted Franciscan perspectives and responses to migration. Rooted in the spirituality of Saint Francis of Assisi, the presenters focused on Franciscan themes, such as minority, human dignity, and the common good. Ethicist **Martin Carbajo, OFM** from the Pontifical University *Antonianum* and **Juan Rendón, OFM** from Fundación Franciscana Santo Tomás Moro in Colombia explored the various ways in which our Franciscan charism calls us to respond to global migration.

As Franciscans International works to ensure that human rights remain at the center of migration policy at the United Nations, especially in regard to the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, the OFM JPIC course provided a good snapshot of Franciscan engagement with migration at local, national, and regional levels. Fray Martin said, “Franciscans join all of humanity and all of creation to celebrate together the joy of living, while actively preparing the new heavens and the new earth.” In other words, just as Franciscans work to spread the joy of the Gospel, we are also called to remain steadfast in our commitment to justice and peace, to defend and promote the human rights and dignity of our migrant and refugee brothers and sisters, and to protect the earth, our common home.

Br. Christian Leo Seno, OFM
JPIC Team – NY, USA



Talks on the JPIC work in the Order

An Interview with Br. Jaime Campos and Br. Rufino Lim

Daan van Barneveld*

Daan: Could you introduce yourselves and tell me how you came to work at this office?

Jaime: My name is Jaime Campos. I am a Franciscan friar from Chile and the director of our JPIC office. We started working together two years ago, and my purpose is to inspire and encourage the friars of our order.

Rufino: My name is Rufino Lim and I am from South Korea. Compared to Jaime, I was introduced to the JPIC aspect of Franciscan life quite recently. I was assigned as a provincial JPIC animator in 2015, and in the beginning of 2016, I received an invitation from our minister-general, who is the head of the order, to work here as assistant to director Jaime. We have been working together since as JPIC animators.

Daan: What is an animator, exactly?

Rufino: ‘Animator’ is the term used specifically for the friars working in the field of JPIC. It is not exactly a leading or directing function. We are supposed to animate the spirit of justice and peace amongst the friars, to revive the spirit of

justice and peace amongst them. The English word ‘animator’ is a bit strange, but it is about spirit. Maybe ‘coach’ would be a good translation.

Daan: So, what is it that you do at this office?

Jaime: We work in several areas, all of which are for friars. For example, we organize the annual JPIC course, we visit different countries and Provinces to do formation courses, and we gather information from entities and share them with all the other animators in the work. We try to remind all the friars to incorporate the spirit of JPIC in their daily lives through Skype, e-mail, and by means of visits. We also publish the quarterly JPIC bulletin.

Rufino: We have many different meetings, one of which is the continental meeting held in every three years on four different continents: Africa, America, Asia-Oceania and Europe. We also have meetings of the Animation Committee consisting of four friars plus us. We meet annually in person and participate in several online meetings to plan future projects. Oh, and we also have the international council every two years.

Daan: Is there also cooperation between different orders, for example between the Franciscan and Benedictine order?

Jaime: Not all the time, but occasionally, yes.

Rufino: We try to collaborate. We are also involved in a movement against human trafficking in Rome, but that is mainly the work of the association of the sisters’ congregations in Rome. In that sense, we collaborate with other congregations, but not all the time. We do

collaborate with other Franciscan families, congregations, and also with our Franciscan office at the UN called 'Franciscans International.' In the Philippines, for instance, our animators collaborate very well with the Franciscan family members, and the inter-Franciscan JPIC commission is very active. The same applies to Colombia, Brazil and South Korea, etc.

Daan: Is there, by any chance, any cooperation with the Franciscans in the Netherlands?

Rufino: I had a couple of meetings with the JPIC animator of their Conference, but generally speaking about our Provinces in Europe, the friars are older and become less active in JPIC. But still, they do try to do something significant. However, we do not concretely cooperate or participate in common projects at the moment. Do you know they recently opened a new community on JPIC? They told us they are trying to implement a new lifestyle in terms of ecology in that community.

Daan: Now that you mention ecology: a few years ago, Pope Francis wrote *Laudato Si'*. Was it this encyclical that made the theme important again?

Jaime: We had been expecting this encyclical, but from the beginning, *Laudato Si'* was important for all of us, for the Church. We try to live and promote the spirit of *Laudato Si'*. It is like a spiritual umbrella to all of us.

Rufino: The last international council has decided three general directions: 1) migration, 2) mining and 3) new lifestyle. *Laudato Si'* is the spiritual base for all those things.



Jaime: A good example are the ecological farms in Mexico and Indonesia. In Indonesia, they have been working on it for almost 20 years.

Rufino: I have been there, it is fantastic. They run different ecological farming programmes for three months, and many local schools are coming to the centre.

Jaime: Amongst them are also many Muslims.

Rufino: Yes, it is ecology plus inter-religious dialogue.

Daan: Right, because *Laudato Si'* is not just aimed at Catholics, but also at other religions and atheists. Do you cooperate with any atheist organisations such as Greenpeace?

Jaime: Not exactly. We cooperate with the Global Catholic Climate movement, mainly.

Rufino: But we are not exactly selective. We are open to collaboration.

Daan: You already explained your mission and mentioned that you inspire the friars on ecological themes. What happens then? Are the friars supposed to inspire believers?

Jaime: That is right. In most cases, we try to animate them by means of e-mail and visits. Every hundred days, we try to go out of office and meet the people, meet the friars. This meeting is very important to animate them.

Daan: How successful are they in communicating the message to believers? How would they even do that?

Jaime: Some friars run a group of people that deal with this issue, and some provinces take it as a very important part of their missions. In other cases, not so much.

Rufino: We cannot control them, and that is not what we do. It is up to the Provinces.

Jaime: Some of them integrate the JPIC project or ecological project into the mission of evangelization in the Province, in which case it works pretty well, but if they do not, it is hard to stimulate it. Approximately 40% of the Order has little interest in ecological themes.

Daan: You mentioned earlier that the friars in Europe are older than elsewhere. Does this mean that they are less interested, and that the message is not carried out as well as it could? Is Europe behind?

Jaime: It might be because of their lifestyle. There are simply no huge social problems in their societies, and their social context determines

largely what they do. In the first world, we can hardly find any visible social and ecological issues. Maybe climate change, but there is no mining issue.

Rufino: In Poland, maybe. But generally speaking, western Europe doesn't seem to have any critical issues regarding JPIC except migration. Perhaps the friars are living good lives in their convents, trying to pray more and preach better.

Jaime: The social context is completely different from the examples in Latin-America and Asia. Consequently, the religious concepts and forms of spirituality are also different.

Rufino: When we talk about Franciscan spirituality, Italian friars try to pray a lot. In Latin-America and Asia, spirituality is not only personal but also about social perspective. It is also about the structure of a society and economy.

Jaime: Many European missionaries and friars have been sent to other parts of the world where they work on social, political and human-rights issues.

Rufino: We think that it is not about the person itself, but about the social context. When friars live in different social contexts, their lifestyle will change.

Daan: So, in Europe there are fewer problems because people are richer, but there is also overconsumption in Europe which happens because people are rich. What do you do with that topic?

Rufino: We try to encourage and animate the friars, but their lifestyle, to us, seems too well settled. [Points at a booklet] This is a tool to evaluate the lifestyle of the friars, with a guiding principle of minority and poverty, which are the main principles of Franciscan spirituality.

Jaime: There is a small community in Popping, Austria, that is a good exception.

Rufino: The members of the community pray and work for so many hours along with several Muslim migrants. They eat together, they pray together. The community members of their fraternity are very interesting too. There are lay people and a sister of the Poor Claires among them, but they constitute one single community, share everything, and live very humble, ecological lives. Anyone can go and live there, as long as you work together with

them. The Austrian Province is hosting more than 140 refugees. They are a great example to other European provinces.

Jaime: Also, in some Provinces, many friars are starting to cultivate small gardens in their convents. It is quite a new movement.

Daan: Regarding inter-religious collaboration, Patriarch Bartholomew of the Orthodox Church (1989) and Pope Francis (2015) proclaimed the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation. What is the status of this day? Does it exist only on paper or is it celebrated? Are you doing something about it?

Jaime: We promote it in collaboration with the Global Catholic Climate Movement, and between 35 and 40 activities have been organized by different entities in the order.

Rufino: That day is the start of the Season of Creation, which begins on September 1st and ends on October 4th. The Global Catholic Climate Movement encourages their members to organize local activities on earth-day and promote them on their website. We also encourage local animators and friars to organise something.



Daan: Now, *Laudato Si'* is written from a somewhat Franciscan perspective, right? Or is there a Franciscan perspective that differs from the book?

Jaime: The price: it should be free! Joking aside, the way the encyclical is organized is not exactly Franciscan but shows the mentality of Jesuits. However, the source is Franciscan spirituality.

Daan: There is also a JPIC office in the Vatican, ran by Cardinal Peter Turkson, right?

Rufino: It is not exactly a JPIC office, but the Dicastery for Integral Human Development. Their departments for justice, peace, and so on, are fused together. Many friars think this caused the notions of ‘justice’, ‘peace’ to disappear from the Church, from the Vatican. There is also a JPIC office at the UISG, the union of the religious congregations in Rome. Almost every Catholic congregation has a JPIC office. It is a must, these days.

Jaime: We Franciscans were the first at the UN, but the Dominicans, Jesuits, etc., have since formed international organisations as well.

Rufino: We also have a small meeting called the Romans VI (but actually it consists of eight members). There are representatives from different Franciscan congregations, secular Franciscans, third-order Franciscans and the Franciscan sisters. From time to time, we meet, share information, and try to implement specific projects. For example, we participate in some international conferences, climate conferences, etc.

The atmosphere in the Catholic Church is actually more conservative than in the Protestant Church regarding the engagement in ecological conversion. In my experience, the Protestant Church is much more active. They have many active pastors who are involved in ecological projects and issues. They are everywhere. One example is a project on the reduction of the carbon emission in Protestant churches in Germany. It was incredible: they started even before the Paris Climate Agreement (2015), in 2014, they already reduced emissions by 40%, more than they had projected. That was amazing to see. I really want to implement that here, but the structure here is different: we are not centralized, we are localized. At times, it is difficult to move friars to take some adventurous initiatives.

Daan: If you were to enter the training to become a friar these days, would ecological subjects be part of that training?

Rufino: Absolutely. JPIC is a part of this course, and even after that. JPIC is part of the Franciscan DNA, so it should be there.

Daan: Do you think that would be different in other orders?

Rufino: I do not think so. It is the same, everywhere.

Jaime: Perhaps Franciscans are more into it.

Rufino: Our identity and nature are explained in the constitution. JPIC is part of that nature. About other congregations, we are not sure.

Jaime: The recognition of JPIC in the order started in 1979, when the governing body of the order asked for this office. It was a political realization, an enlightenment of the Church at that time. It has been part of Franciscan life ever since then. But, perhaps, it is not that influential in other orders. The Jesuit mindset, for instance, differs much from ours.

Rufino: They have different offices for different issues. For example, their office for migrants and refugees is separate from the office for ecology. However, they do their work very professionally. Another difference is that our office is the only one with two animators. The other offices only have one, with other assignments.

Jaime: We think the Church needs to put more energy, importance, money and people on the issue. We need more, compared to the gravity of the issues in the world.

Daan: Thank you both very much for this interview, and I wish you much success with your mission!

* Daan van Barneveld

- The interviewer, Daan van Barneveld, is a research scholar of philosophy at the Radboud University in the Netherlands. Focusing on consumerism that is indirectly causing tremendous environmental problems, he intended to find out in his research what views the Churches might have on the issue and what they may contribute to the solution.
- The interview took place on May 3rd, 2018 at the General Curia, Rome.



Season of Creation 2018

This year's Season of Creation has the theme of "walking together". Although this theme does not need to be incorporated into your celebration, using it is an easy way to unite with celebrations around the world.

From September 1 to October 4, Christians around the world unite to pray and care for creation. It's the "Season of Creation," and it's happening from Paris to Pittsburgh, Pretoria to La Paz.

You are called to lead your community. The theme for this year's celebration is "walking together," and there are endless ways for your community to show it is on a journey toward better care of our common home.

Register your Season of Creation celebration now and join the global movement to protect creation.

Celebration guide

<http://seasonofcreation.org/guide/>

Register your event

<http://seasonofcreation.org/register/>

Resources

<http://seasonofcreation.org/resources/denominational-resources/>

Others Language

French <http://seasonofcreation.org/fr/home-fr/>

Portuguese <http://seasonofcreation.org/pt/home-pt/>

Polish <http://seasonofcreation.org/pl/home-pl/>

International days – July / September, 2018

July 17	World Day for International Justice
August 9	International Day of the World's Indigenous People
August 23	International Day of the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition
August 29	International Day against Nuclear Tests
September 1	World Day for the Care of Creation
September 1 ~ October 4	Season of Creation
September 16	International Day for Preservation of the Ozone Layer



General Office for Justice,
Peace and Integrity of
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We are glad to present the e-book version of the texts from the JPIC course 2017. The JPIC General Office held the annual course on the theme of "The Slavery of the 21st Century: New Threats to the Human Dignity" at the Pontifical University Antonianum on May 8 - 14, 2017.

**The Slavery of the XXI Century:
New threats to the human dignity.** (JPIC
Book 1; English Edition):

<https://goo.gl/z2Ueqg>