



# K O I N Ō N I A

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## MERCY: TRANSFORMING GRACE AND MISSION

### THE SECULAR FRANCISCAN ORDER AND THE WORKS OF MERCY

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"It is my burning desire that, during this year of Jubilee, the Christian people reflect on the *corporal and spiritual works of mercy*"<sup>2</sup>

#### The works of mercy

The works of mercy are charitable actions with which we help our neighbor in their corporal and spiritual need" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Vatican City 1999, n. 2447, pp. 645-646). Following the teaching of Jesus and the example of the early Christian communities, the Catholic Church has always shown a preferential love for the needy in body and spirit.

Jesus also indicates the extent of our merciful love: "Be merciful, as your Father is merciful" (Lk 6,36).

The works of mercy are extracted from the passage of the *Gospel according to Matthew* on the last judgment (25, 31-46). "Bury the dead" is taken from the book of Tb 1.17f. The current understanding is made by S. Thomas Aquinas in the *Summa Theologiae*, Pars II-II, q. 23, a. 2-3; q. 32. a. 2 to 1.

#### Saint Francis of Assisi and mercy

The centrality of mercy in his spiritual experience. The *Poverello* of Assisi begins his life of conversion by showing mercy. He was imbued by the mercy of the benevolent God and wanted to fulfill gestures of mercy. In the *Testament* recalls: "The Lord led me among the lepers and I showed them mercy" (cf. *2Test 2*: FF 110)<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> P. Lino Temperini is a friar of the province of St Francis of Assisi and was invited to write this article by Fr. Amando Trujillo Cano, for his knowledge of the topic. He is currently a local assistant of the OFS in Rome.

<sup>2</sup> Pope Francis in the Bull of Indiction of the Holy Year of mercy: *Misericordiae vultus* (=MV) 15.2.

<sup>3</sup> see L. TEMPERINI, *Misericordia*, in *Dizionario Francescano*, Padova 1995, 1141-1150.

For St. Francis, "Doing mercy" implies concrete actions and not just sentiments of compassion. He begins by embracing a leper!

The mercy of God goes through his whole existence and regulates the rhythms of his apostolate in the light of the Gospel message.

In his *Testament* of 1226, on the eve of his death, he rereads his whole life in the light of divine and human mercy. Guided by the mercy of God, the Poverello of Assisi becomes a servant of mercy and begins to serve the lepers<sup>4</sup>.



Saint Francis embracing the leper.

### Evangelical poverty and the Third Order of Saint Francis

"The brothers and sisters of penance", as sons of St Francis of Assisi, are deeply involved in the practice of the most genuine values of the Gospel and, in particular, in the binomial penance/works of mercy. The question of poverty enters into this context.

The comparison with the First and Second order is enlightening for us to understand the significance of poverty in the background of the Franciscan Family. The First and the Second Order understand "the highest" poverty in its ascetic and Christological aspects. We know the vast literature and the endless debates on the making of the Franciscan poverty. Poverty assumes a theoretical significance and becomes an ideal, a force that stimulates divergent potentialities and attractions. For centuries the problem of evangelical poverty polarized the most engaged intelligences and personalities in the way of perfection. The highest poverty - write the *Rb* 6,4 and the *RsC* 8.4 - makes poor in things and rich in virtues. It makes one to be more free to adhere closely to Christ and to the neighbor.

The "Franciscan Penitents", secular and regular, do not enter into the disputes on the poverty of Christ and the apostles, of the primitive and medieval church, of St. Francis and the followers of the Poverello of Assisi. The Tertiaries, normally, choose the evangelical poverty with the intention of social and charitable assistance. They do not exclude the biblical sense of imitating Christ who "emptied himself" (Phil 2,7) and the function of ascetic purification. These theological significances are present and active, even if often implicitly.

The constant adherence to the practice of charity and the commitment to the everyday life do not permit the brothers and sisters of the Third Order of Saint Francis to pause on abstract and often sterile discussions, if not lacerating and deleterious. A certain pauperistic narcissism, which exalts the poverty as an absolute and idealized value, often away from real life, was not absent in the Franciscan world.

Instead, when a sister or brother of penance decide to live devoid of movable property or devotes his property by testament to "consociatio poenitentium", has before his eyes and in his heart the multifarious needs of the poor and the amount of charitable services provided to their advantage.

Coming from the people and remaining "in the world" in the midst of the people, or at least, very close to the existential reality of the people, the Third Order of Saint Francis shares with attention the problems of the people and with generosity performs works of mercy. The orientation to the concreteness in poverty/charity is also motivated by the fact that the Tertiaries, most of the times, belong to the simple people and are persons not interested in too much of academic sophistications, not introduced to theology

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. L. TEMPERINI, *Francesco di Assisi. Cronistoria Psicologia Itinerario spirituale*, Torino 2012.

and not concerned with abstract discussions. They are people immersed in everyday life and feel involved in alleviating the suffering of others.

It is in this spirit that the fraternities of Franciscan tertiaries are owners of goods and do not despise to accept donations to its title, without legal cover-ups. The goods are not for the exclusive use of the Tertiaries themselves, educated in austere life and in freedom, but for the needs of others!

Between the word of God, living and with a cutting edge (cf. Heb 4:12), and the effective attention toward the materially and spiritually poor, there is a close consequential link. And the verification of the actualization of the Gospel in the point of view of charitable works constitutes the parameter of judgment at the end of time (cf. Mt 25, 31-46). The service of charity, i.e. the corporal and spiritual works of mercy, will have more weight on the Scale of the Judge. This will be the concrete criterion for assessing our earthly existence.

"He who does not love does not know God," warns the apostle John (1 Jn 4,8). "He who does not love abides in death" (1Jn 3, 14). In fact, "he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen" (1 Jn 4, 20). It is not for anything else that the invisible God is made visible in Christ, who became man and was manifested to us.

It is not enough to love in words: you have to love "in deed and in truth" (1 Jn 3,18). The faith of a Christian, negligent to the poor is dead, is an appearance or an illusion, as would say St. James (Ja 2,2s; 14f).

In the great era of Franciscan Poverty, projected by the apostolic community and modeled in part after the model of the primitive church, the Third Order comes therefore with its own style and characteristic: sharing the bread with the hungry, welcoming the homeless, dressing the naked, speaking for the marginalized, supporting the unemployed, comforting the hopeless, illuminating the lost and encouraging the weak (cf. Is 58,7), etc.

This is the program of our brothers and sisters of penance, who follow the example of Francis of Assisi who stripped himself of everything and took care of the lepers. Become poor to donate, so that the goods are transformed into works of mercy in the name of Christ.

The ancient Rule <sup>5</sup> (or *Memoriale propositi*) of 1221 transposes the spirit of charity of Francis and orders that each penitent give at least one coin so that the ministers of fraternity can meet the needs of the poor (n. 20). It also recommends some works of mercy, even if limited, to the brothers and sisters of penance. The members of the Order must dress poorly, practice fasting and abstinence to be more free and available at the service of the brothers (nn. 1-11 and n. 22f). They must also provide whatever is needed and is convenient to the sick (n. 22).

The Rule of the penitents, or of Nicholas IV (1289)<sup>6</sup>, echoes the Gospel mandate of love that makes themselves at the service of the brothers. The *Memoriale propositi* speaks of "opera misericordiae facienda" (n. 21) and the Rule of Nicholas IV speaks of "misericordiae opera exercenda" (12.9). The Rule (*Rp*) urges everyone to donate current money, so that the needs and the convenience of the poor and of the sick are met (12, 3-7).

Living and clothing like real poor, fasting with perseverance, the brothers and sisters of penance can be solicitous toward the less affluent, who are often marginalized by the rhythms of a restless and often inhuman society (cf. *Rp* 3, 5 and 8).

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<sup>5</sup> See the critical edition in L. TEMPERINI, *Carisma e legislazione alle origini del Terzo Ordine di S. Francesco*, Editrice Franciscanum, Rome 1996, pp. 77-109.

<sup>6</sup> The full text in L. TEMPERINI, *Carisma e legislazione*, cit., pp. 113-155.

## The cry of the poor and the voice of the facts

Franciscan Studies in recent decades have brought to light the precious historical evidences that document the charitable activity of penitents, or Franciscan tertiaries. Either for the cultural limitations or for the fact that they are immersed in the daily life of the society, the Tertiaries do not dedicate themselves to theoretical problems and do not participate in the debate about the nature of evangelical poverty, but look at the face of reality and are attentive to the cry of the needy. The signs of the times and the appeal of present history urge the tertiaries to intervene in the emergencies of concrete situations.

The witness of historical sources and archival documents presents us with a great number of penitents, or Franciscan tertiaries, who devoted their goods or part of them to the various works of charity.

In the past centuries, among the beneficiaries of charity are the poor in general, then the pilgrims, widows and destitute girls, abandoned children, blind, lame, lepers, the wounded in war, the sick assisted in hospital or at home. Prisoners as well were assisted. The penitents build modest hospices, manage canteens for the poor, administer hostels for girls, welcome orphan girls, care for the recovery of the prostitutes, oversee on justice in the markets and on the correctness of the weights, protect public sources, preserve the bridges etc. And all on free service and with their own property! When the means were lacking, the tertiaries went on begging to assist the poor and to keep alive the charitable works. All this variegated dynamism of the works of mercy is amply documented by scientific studies<sup>7</sup>.

The Secular Franciscans are committed to animate a new world, always in evolution, shaped by the mercy of God who loves and forgives, illuminates and saves, insists but does no violence. He loves us with a benevolent love that gives and asks nothing. He urges us to follow the strategies of divine love and to put in to practice the therapies of charity.



**St. Lodovico, King of France, the patron saint of the Franciscan Third Order,  
Serves the poor at the table**

(Miniature in the biography of G. Saint-Pathus, Ms 5716, sheet 137  
In the National Library of Paris)

<sup>7</sup> For documentation of the concrete works see L. TEMPERINI, *Il penitente francescano nella società e nella chiesa nei secoli XII-XIV*, in AAVV, *La "Supra montem" di Niccolò IV (1289): genesi e diffusione di una regola*, ed. *Analecta Tor*, Roma 1988, pp. 366-367; ID., *Penitenti poveri per servire i poveri (sec. XIII-XV)*, in *Il Signore ti dia pace*, Bologna 1991, pp. 107-119.

# NEWS - CHAPTERS - VISITS - MEETINGS

## **Hungary – National Elective Chapter**

The National Elective Chapter of the OFS of Hungary was held from July 14 to 16 at the National Shrine Mátraverebély-Szentkút, with the theme: "To desire the spirit of the Lord and his works" (cf. *Const. OFS*, 11). There were 57 chapter members who participated in the Chapter and there was a good number of observers and Tibor Kauser, the Minister General of OFS was also invited. There were also 9 Spiritual Assistants (2 Franciscan sisters, 7 OFM, 1 OFMConv, 1 OFMCap), and Fr. Benedek Dobszay, Minister Provincial of OFM. The elective chapter was presided by Ana Fruk, Counselor to the Presidency, accompanied by Fr. Amando Trujillo Cano, TOR, General Assistant OFS-YouFra. The later made a presentation of the Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris laetitia* of Pope Francis. The opening Mass was presided by Fr. Benedek. There was a meeting of the Spiritual Assistants, the Minister Provincial of the OFM and Fr. Amando on the morning of 15<sup>th</sup> July to discuss the results obtained and the challenges that the Assistants are experiencing in their service to the OFS. The elections were held on the same day in which Kerekes László was elected National Minister, and Beke Márton as the International Councillor. The new Council and the national Minister were installed by Ana Fruk, during the Eucharistic celebration on Friday July 15, which was presided over by Fr. Amando. On the following day the concluding Eucharist was presided by Fr. Tihamér Papp OFM, the National Assistant of OFS. The Chapter took place in an atmosphere of fraternity, prayer and reflection.

## **Krakow, Poland - International Meeting of the Franciscan Youth**

In preparation for the celebration of World Youth Day, was held the International Meeting of YouFra (IIG) from July 22 to 25, in Azory, Krakow, close to the liceo Zespół Szkół Ogólnokształcących nr 5, within the territory of the parish of the Immaculate Conception, run by the Friars Minor. The main theme of the meeting was "Mercy is the source of joy, serenity and peace" (cf. *Misericordiae vultus*, 2). There were 100 participants, among whom there were Franciscan youths, Secular Franciscans and Spiritual Assistants, coming from 27 countries. The meeting was held in a joyful and fraternal atmosphere, wherein was celebrated the cultural diversity of the fraternities present. Among the participants there were six members of the CIOFS Presidency: Tibor Kauser, Ana Fruk, Andrea Odak, Fr. Jose Antonio Cruz Duarte, OFM, Fr. Francis Dor, OFM Cap, and Fr. Amando Trujillo Cano TOR. Fr. Amando celebrated the opening mass. On the second day Andrea Odak, Fr. Amando and Ana Fruk made a presentation on the theme of the meeting. On the same day the Holy Mass was presided by Fr. Jan Maciejowski, OFMConv, Provincial of Danziga and the present President of the Conference of the Franciscan Provincials of Poland. The following provincials were also present: Fr. Jarosław Kania, OFM, Prov. Immaculate Conception, Krakow; Fr. Rufin Maryjka, OFM, Prov. S. Maria degli Angeli, Krakow; Fr. Alan Brzyski, OFM - Prov. Wroclaw, and Fr. Tomasz Żak, OFMCap, Prov. Krakow. In the afternoon there was a round table in which the representatives of five national Fraternities of YouFra explained the involvement of their fraternities in the works of mercy. On Sunday, the participants went to the National Park of Ojcowski where they celebrated the Eucharist, presided by Fr. Francis Dor, OFMCap. On the last day, the Franciscan Youths were invited to use in future the text of the celebrations of the YouFra, approved by the CIOFS Presidency, and to participate in the competition for the logo and the hymn of the Franciscan Youth. The Concluding Eucharistic celebration was presided by Minister General Fr. Nicholas Polichnowski, TOR, on behalf of the Conference of the MM.GG. of the First Order and TOR. The Liturgy of the Hours on these days was presided by various spiritual Assistants.

## **Krakow, Poland - World Youth Day 2016**

During the World Youth Day (WYD) 2016, held in Krakow from July 26 to 31, six members of the CIOFS Presidency (Tibor Kauser, Ana Fruk, Andrea Odak, Fr. Jose Antonio Cruz Duarte, OFM, Fr. Francis Dor, OFM, and Fr. Amando Trujillo Cano, TOR) accompanied a significant group of Franciscan Youth. All of them participated in the events of the general program of the World Youth Day and the activities of the "Franciscan Village", held on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup>, in Kraków-Olszanica, via Korzeniaka 16, at the Provincial Curia of the Friars Minor Capuchin (Prov. of Kraków). The program of the village was comprised primarily of a meeting of young people with the Franciscan General Ministers (Fr. Michael A. Perry, OFM, Fr. Marco Tasca, OFMConv, Fr. Mauro Johri, OFMCap, Fr. Nicholas Polichnowski, TOR, Tibor Kauser OFS, and Sr. Deborah Lockwood, OSF), in addition to some testimonies, to the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, a flea market and musical concerts. The Franciscan Village has been organized by the Franciscan Family of Poland and was attended by approximately two thousand Franciscan Youth, religious and friars, including some Ministers Provincial.

## **Paraguay - National Elective Chapter**

The National Elective Chapter of the OFS in Paraguay was celebrated from August 12 to 14, 2016 at the *Oasis Franciscano* - in Itaugua. The Chapter was presided over by Silvia Diana, member of the CIOFS Presidency and the delegate of the Minister General, Tibor Kauser, and Fr. Jose Antonio Cruz Duarte, OFM, Assistant General to the OFS on behalf of CAS. In a spirit of prayer, fraternity, service and hospitality the Chapter was attended by 30 chapter members and 16 observers, representatives of 1001 Secular Franciscans of Paraguay. Fr. Marcelo Benitez, OFM, the National Assistant of the OFS and Fr. Tomas Acosta, OFM, the National Assistant of the YouFra were present for the meeting. Higino Fabián Díaz Noceda was re-elected National Minister, Alcides Isidoro Martinez was elected International Councillor and Roque Amarilla as International Councillor substitute. The mass of the Installation was presided over by the General Assistant Fr. Jose Antonio Cruz Duarte, OFM.

## **Madagascar - National Elective Chapter**

The National Elective Chapter of the OFS-Madagascar was held in Ambositra, a city 282km south of the capital Antananarivo, at the center of the national headquarters of the Inter Franciscan Conference - Madagascar (CIFM) from September 1 to 4, 2016. The Chapter was presided over by Michel Janian, International Councillor, delegate from Tibor Kauser, Minister General OFS, assisted by Fra Fidèle Rakotoariveharitsoa, OFMCap, delegate from CAS. The first day, after Fr. Jean Charles, OFM, guardian of the Islands of Madagascar and Mauritius, presided the opening Eucharist, was mainly devoted to the triennial report of the outgoing national Minister and the works on the National Statutes. The second day was dedicated mainly to a conference and to the group-works on the Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris laetitia* of Pope Francis. The third day, September 3, was dedicated to the elections. There were 25 voting chapter members with 4 assistants, other than the delegate of CAS and the above mentioned Guardian of the Friars Minor. Raboanary Gérard Cécilien was re-elected to the double function of National Minister and International Councilor (second term). Jean Philippe was elected as the International Councilor substitute. The Chapter was held in a good, typical Franciscan climate of peace, brotherhood and mutual respect. On Sunday, September 4, the concluding Mass was celebrated together with the Catholic community of the Parish of Saint Vincent de Paul at Ivato Ambositra. During this Holy Mass, presided by Fra Fidèle, delegate of the CAS, the new Council was presented and received the blessing. The Capitulars shared a lunch with some leaders of the parish community to mark the end of the Chapter and their stay in that place.

## **Slovakia - National Elective Chapter**

The National Elective Chapter of the OFS in Slovakia was celebrated from September 2 to 4, 2016, at St. John Paul II Centre of the Franciscan Sisters of the Transfiguration at Melcice. There were 29 voting chapter members and an invitee, the National Minister of the OFS of Croatia. The Chapter was presided over by Andrea Odak, the Councillor of the Presidency for the YouFra, delegated by Tibor Kauser, Minister General OFS, who was assisted by Fr Francis Bongajum Dor, OFM, General Assistant OFS-YouFra. Josef Gazdik was elected National Minister for the second mandate and Lucia Spodniakova was elected International Councillor for the third mandate. The opening Mass was presided by Fr Josef Konc, OFMCap, National Assistant and President of turn of the Conference of National Spiritual Assistants. The concluding Mass was presided by Fr Bruno, OFM, Regional Spiritual Assistant. It is worth noting that the works were held in a very fraternal climate. None of the National Assistants has been able to be present during the works of the Chapter and none of them had submitted any report. Some assistants had communicated the reason for their absence.

## **New Zealand - National Elective Chapter**

The National Elective Chapter of the OSF-New Zealand was held from September 2 to 4, 2016 at St. Francis Retreat Center, Hillsborough Road - Auckland, a center of the Friars Minor. There were 25 Capitulars with active voice, 6 assistants and some observers. The Chapter was presided over by Jenny Harrington, International Councillor, delegated by Tibor Kauser, Minister General OFS and was assisted by Fra Mario Dorado, OFMCap, delegate from CAS. All the work was done in a typically Franciscan climate of joy, simplicity and fraternity. Lloyd de Melo was elected National Minister, Chantal Healy was elected International Councillor and Colleen Logan International Councillor substitute.

## **Australia-Oceania - National Elective Chapter**

The National Elective Chapter of the OFS in Australia-Oceania was celebrated from September 9 to 11, 2016 at the "St Joseph's center for Reflective Living" in Baulkham Hills NSW 2153. The Chapter was presided over by Jennifer Harrington, member of the CIOFS Presidency and the Delegate of the Minister General of the OFS, Tibor Kauser, and by Fr. Carl Schafer OFM, Delegate of CAS. In a spirit of prayer, fraternity, service and hospitality the Chapter was attended by 35 Chapter Members and two observers. There were two National Assistants to the SFO: Fr. John Cooper, OFM, and Fr. Louis Schmid, OFMConv, and three Regional Assistants. Lola Kelly was elected National Minister, Andrea Burvill was elected International Councillor and Maria Iadanza International Councillor substitute. The Mass of Installation was presided over by Fr. Carl Schafer OFM.

## **Poland - National Elective Chapter**

The 10<sup>th</sup> National Chapter of OFS in Poland was held in Warsaw, in the Franciscan Center at the convent of the Friars Minor OFM, Province of Santa Maria degli Angeli in via Modzelewskiego 98, from September 16 to 18, 2016. The Chapter was presided over by Ana Fruk, International Councillor, delegated by Tibor Kauser, Minister General OFS, who was assisted in this service by Fr. Robert Rabka, OFMCap, delegate from CAS. There were representatives of the 18 regions of the OFS present in Poland. On the first and second day there were 57 chapter members of the OFS with the right to vote, in addition to some observers. Fr. Rufin Maryjka, OFM, Minister Provincial of the province of Santa Maria degli Angeli and other 12 Friars Assistants (3 National Assistants and some regional Assistants), coming from all the families of the First Order, and 3 representatives of the Franciscan Youth were all present on the first day. On the third day, reserved for the elections, there were 59 chapter members of OFS with voting rights (two new members, elected on the day before, were added to the National

Council). From the vote, were elected: Joanna Berłowska as National Minister and Maria Teodorowicz as International Councillor. As regards the climate of the fraternal encounter, the Chapter was held in an atmosphere of dialog, understanding and mutual cooperation. It was well prepared with a lot of commitment from the part of the local fraternities of Warsaw, who were occupied with the organization (preparation of food, service in the kitchen and at the reception, distribution of room and all sorts of help in any problems). The Friars of the local community of the OFM and the 3 National Assistants helped in the spiritual part.

### **Ecuador - National Elective Chapter**

The National Elective Chapter of the OFS in Ecuador was held in Azogues, in the Convent of the Friars Minor "Nuestra Señora de la Nube" from September 16 to 18, 2016. The Chapter was presided over by Marielide de Lima Tagliaferro, International Councillor of Venezuela, delegated by Tibor Kauser, Minister General OFS, assisted in this service by Fr. Jose Antonio Cruz Duarte, OFM, Assistant General to the OFS. The National Assistant of OFS, Fr. Willan Mora OFM, and the Regional Assistant, Fr. Freddy Sucuzhañay OFM were all present for the Chapter. In addition Fr. Victor Hugo OFM, the guardian of the Convent of "Nuestra Señora de la Nube" was also present throughout the Chapter. There were 59 chapter members and some observers from the 6 regions of the OFS existing in Ecuador. The Chapter was held in an atmosphere of prayer, work, reflection, dialog and Franciscan joy. On the first day, Carmén del Rocio Sánchez Sánchez led a conference on: "The importance of the testimony of the Secular Franciscan in the present context". Saturday was dedicated to reports and elections. John Hernán Palacios Verdugo was elected as National Minister and Doris Elizabeth Benavides Márquez was elected as Vice-minister. The Mass of Installation was presided over by the General Assistant, Fr. Jose Antonio Cruz Duarte, OFM. On Sunday, before finalizing the priorities, Fr. Jose Antonio Cruz Duarte OFM, conducted a conference on "The Spiritual Assistance to OFS and Youfra and its Importance". The concluding Mass of the Chapter was presided over by Fr. Freddy Sucuzhañay OFM.

### **Mexico - National Elective Chapter**

The National Chapter of OFS in Mexico took place from September 23 to 25, 2016, at St. Pope John Paul II Pastoral Center, in San Juan de los Lagos, Jalisco. The Chapter was presided over by Tibor Kauser, OFS General Minister, accompanied by Fr. Amando Trujillo Cano, TOR, General Assistant OFS-YouFra. There were 84 chapter members and around twenty observers and collaborators. The three national Assistants to the OFS were also present: Fr. Jesus Arrondo Aguerri, OFM Cap, President of their Conference, Fr. Abelardo Aranda Echeverria, OFM (who is also the Assistant of National YouFra) and Fr. Francisco Vargas Aceves, OFM Conv. The four provincial Ministers (3 OFM and one OFM Conv) had also participated in different ways and times. The Chapter members were very happy to have the presence of the General Minister of OFS and to be able to communicate with him in Spanish language. The Chapter was held in an atmosphere of prayer, work, reflection, dialog and Franciscan joy. The elections were held on Saturday 24 and Sunday 25. Angel Guadalupe de la Rosa Quintero was elected as the National Minister and, in accordance with the national Statutes, he took also the office of the International Councillor. Teodora Jaime Rojas was elected National Vice-Minister and automatically became the substitute International Councillor. The opening Eucharistic celebration was presided over by Fr. Juan Medina Palma, OFM, Minister Provincial. During the concluding Eucharistic celebration, presided by Fr. Amando, the new Minister and the National Council were installed by Tibor Kauser. On Wednesday 21, a meeting was held with Regional Ministers and about 500 members of the OFS, coming from different regions of the center and the southeast of Mexico at the Franciscan House in Mexico City. On Thursday 22, yet another meeting was held with about 400 members of the OFS, coming from the regions of the west and the north of the country, at the parish of San Diego, assisted by the OFM friars, in the city of Aguascalientes. In both meetings and during the Chapter the Minister General made a presentation that was much appreciated. Fr. Amando had separate meetings with the spiritual assistants during the meeting at the Franciscan House and during the Chapter.