

THE LORD GIVE YOU PEACE  
**A NEW WORLD IS POSSIBLE**

Pamphlet to help implementation  
of the 2003 OFM General Chapter  
proposals in regard to JPIC



ORDO FRATRUM MINORUM



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The world itself is our place of presence and action. The first texts of Franciscan history tell us that “the world is our cloister.” We also know that the Kingdom of God is becoming a reality in history through the slow and ongoing transformation of the world, prompted by the action of the Holy Spirit. The signs of the times remind us of our responsibility to work for this new world. To realize this work, we invite the friars to announce: “THE LORD GIVE YOU PEACE – **A NEW WORLD IS POSSIBLE.**” True peace commits us to work for a new and just world.

This introductory pamphlet is presented as a tool to help all friars, individually and communally, to reflect on the challenges of each JPIC 2003 General Chapter proposal.

JPIC Animation Committee

Editors

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## INTRODUCTION

The General Chapter celebrated in 2003 approved the proposals for the six-year period 2003-2009 which await a practical response in our personal and fraternal life. The General Chapter asked the JPIC Office to help all the entities of the Order to carry out the proposals regarding the dimension of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation. For that purpose we are presenting a small introductory booklet to begin the implementation of the proposals of the General Chapter on JPIC.

Each JPIC proposal of the Chapter invites us to highlight a different area of our life in fraternity: environmental justice / sustainability; active gospel non-violence; commitment to the excluded; ethical investment / responsible use of goods; the study of JPIC. This booklet is an instrument to help all the Friars, individually and in community, to reflect on the challenges contained in each JPIC proposal. It offers an aid for each one, which does not propose to exhaust all the elements and aspects of the proposals, but rather wishes to be provocative so that, through dialogue and interaction, we might animate reflection and collaboration in the search for practical actions.

The JPIC Office, in order to respond to the plurality and richness of our Order, invited collaboration in this booklet from the following: two Franciscan Institutes with experience in the northern and southern hemispheres of the world, the Mission Zentrale der Franziskaner (MZF) and Franciscans International Geneva (FI); Br. José Alamiro of the Province of the Immaculate Conception in Brazil, who works in the Inter-Franciscan Service for Justice, Peace and Ecology of the Brazilian Franciscan Family (SINFRAJUPE); Br. Joseph Rozansky economist, member of the JPIC Animation Committee and Director of Post-novitiate Formation for Holy Name Province in the United States; Br. Bobby Vadakkal, Provincial Secretary, and Br. Babu Jose Pampany, Provincial Bursar, of the Province of St. Thomas the Apostle in India; Br. Johannes Baptist Freyer theologian, of the Province of the Three Kings in Germany, professor of theology at the PAA.

The MZF invites us to reflect on the impact of our style of life on creation by opening us up to the great questions of the environment and the necessary commitment to environmental justice in today's world. Br. José Alamiro, starting out from the experience of active non-violence in Latin-America, reminds us that, in a world of conflicts, polarisations are positive when accepted in a spirit of love. FI shows that human beings are not illegal, whether they are refugees, migrants, ethnic minorities, landless or asy-

lum seekers. Br. Joseph Rozansky presents the topics of ethical investment, of the need for transparency, of coherence with gospel values and of the responsibility of the whole fraternity for their financial resources. Br. Bobby Vadakkal and Br. Babu Jose Pampany, invite us to question ourselves about what is essential and non-essential, about what we should leave aside and what we should develop in the use of our resources. Br. Johannes Baptist Freyer reminds us that the centres for Franciscan studies are places where the challenges of the world, our faith and the Franciscan tradition enter into dialogue and, therefore, Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation are not marginal and peripheral values in philosophical and theological research.

We maintain that our place for presence and action is the world in all its reality. It has already been said in the texts of early Franciscan history that “our cloister is the world” (3Com. 63). We also know that the Kingdom of God is a reality which is being realised in history through the difficult and continuous transformation of the world, guided by the action of the Holy Spirit. Many “signs of the times” today announce the possibility of and the responsibility for a new world. To carry out this work together, we invite the Friars to make their own the proclamation of the General Chapter, “May the Lord give you peace”, with the addition that “a new world is possible”. We wish, in this way, to state forcibly that the result of a true proclamation of peace is the reality of a new and different world.

The General Chapter, taking up once again the directives of the Magisterium of the Church, often speaks about the signs of the times and invites us to read and interpret them. They are not always immediate, easily readable by individuals, but they need to be identified and interpreted through a common investigation. For us, Friars Minor, the most suitable place for this task is the fraternity on its various levels (“May the Lord give you peace!” 6), along with all those who, with us, seek a new and different world.

The signs of the times are often ambiguous, at least in appearance. They have positive and negative aspects, and they are not the same everywhere in our present-day human society which is so varied and complex. They always, however, provoke us to action, to change and to conversion.

The 2003 Chapter gives us some guidance when it invites us to live itinerancy and to be present in the places of fracture and contradiction, to be with our brothers and sisters who are suffering. In the proposals regarding JPIC, the Chapter highlights some places of the fracture where the signs of the times speak with greater eloquence.

Based on these reflections we are called to examine our style of life and question our mode of living in and relating to the world. This booklet is meant to be the beginning of a dialogue; the questions are offered to stimulate reflection and action on each of the General Chapter proposals.

JPIC General Office of the OFM.  
Rome, Italy.

## THE IMPACT OF OUR STYLE OF LIFE ON CREATION – ECOLOGICAL CONVERSION AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

*The General Chapter requests that, during the six-year period 2003-2009 and with the help of the Office of JPIC, all the Entities of the Order should: examine our style of life and its impact on creation, take on more responsible behaviour with regard to the environment and defend the justice of the environment.*  
General Chapter 2003, Assisi, Italy

One of the new signs of the times that we Friars Minor are called on to examine and interpret in light of the Gospel is our interaction with the earth. The Final Document of the 2003 General Chapter states that the Chapter Members felt questioned in a special way by some negative realities of the context in which we live, such as the pitiless destruction of nature. But they also discovered some signs of life and hope. Dialogue, understood as inter-communion and relationship with the entire work of creation and with its Creator, is pointed out by the document as the path of the Friar Minor, indeed, “*dialogue involves all the dimensions of our life with creation, society, fraternity and mission*”.

### I. ECOLOGICAL CONVERSION

Pope John Paul II, during his audience on the 17th January 2001, reminded us of the task we all have in warding off ecological disaster, noting that the human being, from being a minister of the Creator, has become an autonomous despot of creation. He made a strong appeal for **ecological conversion**, and also stated that “*Another welcome sign is the growing attention being paid to the quality of life and to ecology, especially in more developed societies, where people's expectations are no longer concentrated so much on problems of survival as on the search for an overall improvement of living conditions*” (*Evangelium vitae*, n. 27”. According to the Pope, it “*is not only a "physical" ecology that is concerned to safeguard the habitat of the various living beings, but also a "human" ecology which makes the existence of creatures more dignified, by protecting the fundamental good of life in all its manifestations and by preparing for future generations an environment more in conformity with the Creator's plan*”.

Today we live in a world that is moving towards unsustainability in terms of life: land that is becoming desert and the absence of water are real problems for one third of the world population; the excess of carbon dioxide and other gases in the atmosphere are causing global warming, the melting of polar glaciers and the rise in the level of the sea with possible catastrophic consequences for agriculture and for numerous cities and island countries;

with the holes in the ozone layer which expose us to the dangers of ultraviolet rays; through the systematic cutting down of the forests by which we are losing species of animals and plants at an incredibly fast rate without even giving us time to know them. The kinds of plants lost could be taking with them the secrets of important medicines for humanity; this destruction has done away with the ways of life of populations that traditionally lived in harmony with nature. We are quickly losing cultural and human diversity, along with the accumulated knowledge of these peoples. Bio-piracy has become a reality, along with genetic manipulation and the possibility of subsequent genetic erosion, with unimaginable consequences. And despite the fact that countries have improved the standards of their health, education and production of foodstuff, we know that what we are now losing is life itself in all its diversity.

### II. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

If we note the quality of life of almost 80% of the world population and the quality of life of nature itself, we clearly come face to face with an environmental injustice that has serious consequences for the near future of the cosmos. An environmental injustice is understood as “*the mechanism through which an unequal society, from the economic and social points of view, destines the major part of the environmental damage of development for the poorest, for discriminated racial groups, for traditionally ethnic groups, workers neighbourhoods, marginalised and vulnerable populations. This environmental injustice is the result of the perverse logic of a system of production and use of land, of the destruction of the eco-system, of dumping pollutants, all of which compromise the health conditions of people excluded from the great development projects. This logic keeps a great part of the population on the margins of cities and civil rights, without drinking water, without garbage collection, without sewerage. This logic permits big business to earn more while putting at environmental and sanitary risk those groups which, even if they are the majority, have less power to make themselves heard in society and especially in the spheres of power, because they are poor*” (WWWFase.org.br).

Leonardo Boff affirms that “*interest in integral ecology grows in the measure by which humanity becomes aware of the risk it is running. In recent decades we have created the principle of auto-destruction. We can destroy the bio-sphere with the machine of death, already set up many times, and destroy the only house we have to live in, planet Earth. This awareness is not yet collective, but it is growing day by day. It is becoming urgent. Either we change the paradigms of civilisation, the predator of nature and the oppressor of human beings, or we will get worse. This time there will be no Noah's Ark to save some and leave the rest to perish. We will all perish or we will all be saved. This fact, in the*

*measure it is perceived and taken seriously, will lead to a change of conscience in people. Co-responsibility for the common future of the Earth and of humanity will arise". As a consequence, the mission "to take care of all beings must be ours and we must become guardians of the natural and cultural common heritage by acting in a way that the bio-sphere may continue to be the heritage of all in the future and not only ours. Because of the ethos which makes us responsible, we will respect all beings and all forms of life".*

The Universal Declaration of the Rights of the Environment, or "THE EARTH CHARTER", states in its preamble: *"We stand at a critical moment in Earth's history, a time when humanity must choose its future. As the world becomes increasingly interdependent and fragile, the future at once holds great peril and great promise. To move forward we must recognize that in the midst of a magnificent diversity of cultures and life forms we are one human family and one Earth community with a common destiny. We must join together to bring forth a sustainable global society founded on respect for nature, universal human rights, economic justice, and a culture of peace. Towards this end, it is imperative that we, the peoples of Earth, declare our responsibility to one another, to the greater community of life, and to future generations. Humanity is part of a vast evolving universe. Earth, our home, is alive with a unique community of life. The forces of nature make existence a demanding and uncertain adventure, but Earth has provided the conditions essential to life's evolution. The resilience of the community of life and the well-being of humanity depend upon preserving a healthy biosphere with all its ecological systems, a rich variety of plants and animals, fertile soils, pure waters, and clean air. The global environment with its finite resources is a common concern of all peoples. The protection of Earth's vitality, diversity, and beauty is a sacred trust".*

The World Social Forum held in Porto Alegre and in Mumbai continues to proclaim and believe that *"another world is possible"*, a new world that is not centred on power, money and profit, but on fraternity, solidarity, respect for and promotion of the life of the whole cosmos, a world in which all creatures are – tenderly and vigorously – respected and protected like sisters and brothers.

### III. THE FRANCISCAN RESPONSE

Francis and Clare, considering the social context of the period, lived new ways of relating to the lepers, the poor, the Church, society and nature. The richness of the Franciscan spirituality includes, in a singular fashion, an ecological spirituality, the tenderness of Francis and Clare towards all creatures and the subsequent search for universal brotherhood and sisterhood, the mystique of non-possession, of non-power, of non-domination, profound solidarity with the poorest of people, mercy and a great desire for reconciliation, etc.

What should be our position as Friars Minor now in the face of the sub-human conditions and extreme poverty in which many human beings live, in the face of violated and stripped nature? The Canticle of Creatures and the Prayer for Peace, attributed to St. Francis, could be an optimum programme, a wise gospel posture, in the face of the present abandonment of people and of mother Nature.

We, as Friars Minor, on the personal level, in fraternity, in the organisations and the places where we work, are called to give together, even as the OFM, a blunt sign of our Franciscan spirituality. Let us proclaim in word, and especially through our practical commitment, the integrity of creation, the balance of nature, the discovery of the meaning and reason for belonging to the whole of creation. Let us assume, brothers, a posture that is born of the universal brotherhood, where luxury and refuse are paired up as a lack of respect and as aggression against nature and the violation of brotherhood. Let us not accept, under any pretext, the death which is the result of injustice and the violation of life, but rather that death which is integrated into the vital process as the summit of a life which is given and as a transformation and resurrection of life itself. The account of our practices will include, undoubtedly, the question: What world project are we constructing through our Franciscan action?

For us who commit our life in favour of life in abundance for all people and also for all nature, the Spirit must blow strongly and then we will always be very creative. All of us, the old and the young, the lay brothers and priests, professors and students, formators and those in formation, all are called without distinction by the Spirit of God to unite our efforts into one common endeavour for the full life of all the beings of the cosmos. Let us also unite in networks through the various means of communication in the Order, sharing our creativity and commitment in this process.

Some suggestions:

1. Adopt new practices in our fraternities and places of work: have respectful and fraternal relationships with the people and things that surround us; do not use genetically modified foods; use foods that are free of death-giving elements, pollutants and poisons.
2. Include in our liturgies the ecological dimension of life, the praise of creatures and their Creator, the integration of all creatures as the work of the Creator, Father-Mother.
3. On the Provincial level, include some content in the programmes of initial and ongoing formation which will encourage us to become conscious

of and to take up positions for the defence of and respect for life in its totality.

4. Promote meetings, seminars and symposiums among ourselves and with the people on environmental justice and on the impact of our life style on the environment.

5. Intensify environmental education in our ministries and works.

6. Promote concrete activities and support popular movements in favour of the integrity of creation.

7. Promote international links among the friars and others for the purpose of having an exchange of experiences, ideas, data and strategies of action in favour of all nature, and especially in favour of “*humble, precious and chaste*” Sister Water, who is indispensable for life and, today, is so expensive, polluted and scarce.

#### IV. QUESTIONS:

1) Identify and evaluate the causes of environmental injustice which exist in my own fraternity.

2) How can we protect and respect nature by overcoming the utilitarian and consumerist spirit that is often present in our relationships with the environment?

3) What can we do to make our ecological conversion practical? What practical steps can we take in our fraternities and in the places of our ministry and work?

4) What are the values and attitudes present in our culture which promote harmony with the environment?

Mission Zentrale der Franziskaner (MZF) – Bonn, Germany.

## ACTIVE NON-VIOLENCE – THE HEALTHY POLARISATION OF LIFE

*The General Chapter requests that, during the six-year period 2003-2009 and with the help of the Office of JPIC, all the Entities of the Order should: promote a non-violent but active style of life and pay particular attention to the resolution of conflicts.*  
General Chapter 2003, Assisi, Italy.

### I. GOSPEL NON-VIOLENT LIFE INSPIRED BY FRANCIS AND CLARE

The 2003 General Chapter proposed that we should assume a style of active non-violent life, individually and in community. Active non-violence is evangelical and we find it, in its most perfect expression, in the experience of Christ, of His Apostles (the Gospels) and in the early Christian community (Acts of the Apostles).

During the early period of the movement initiated by Francis and Clare (Francis-Clarean Movement) we find an extraordinary development, an active style of non-violent life.

Active non violence is not only the absence of violence, it is the energy of love, the power of truth and the requirements of justice animating a friar's life, a fraternity, a Province and the whole Order.

Active non-violence is not omission or passivity in the face of the challenges which hatred, lies and injustice put before us, rather it is commitment to enter the struggle with determination and unwavering perseverance. It is the ongoing effort to resolve conflict and to build a peaceful environment where people can live together in reasonable harmony, despite the tensions present and the normal polarisations of life.

In the Gospel of John, 17,15, Jesus prays to the Father “I am not asking you to remove them from the world, but to protect them from the evil one”. The style of life initiated by the Francis-Clarean movement is a way of persevering in the combat with evil without leaving the world and is characterised by attitudes that reinforce a style of non-violent life, when:

1. the fragility of life is assumed through itinerancy and living with nothing of one's own;

2. solidarity with the excluded is a fundamental norm of life through being inserted into the places of fracture in society and giving continuity to Francis'



embrace of the leper;

3. the different is accepted, without being excluded, and when minority is assumed in relationships with the other;
4. ecology is lived by constructing the universal fraternity along the lines of the Canticle of the Creatures;
5. the process of evangelisation is seen as embedded in culture, as Francis did in popular religion and expressed so well in the representation of the crib;
6. the programme presupposed by Francis' greeting 'Peace and Good' is put into practice in as complete a way as possible, as Francis did in relation to the Crusades;
7. the Eucharistic spirituality of Clare is lived and the popular religiosity of Francis is manifested very well in the love of the crucified Christ and Mary;
8. the prayerful reading of the Word of God is carried out as an integral part of our spirituality and of our mysticism.

The Apostle Paul wrote: "That is how I run, intent on winning; that is how I fight, not beating the air" (1Cor.9,26). Mahatma Gandhi clearly knew who his enemy was, the British Empire. Martin Luther King Junior saw clearly who the enemies of the North American black people of his time were.

The non-violent struggle requires preparation on the part of those who wish to live it. There can be no improvisations, they do not work. Whoever lives by improvisation will be fatally defeated. The capacity to read the signs of the times and to interpret them in the light of the Gospel and of science is an essential element of active non-violence. The methodology of See, Judge, Act and Celebrate has been assumed by many as a secure way for understanding and non-violent action.

## II. VIOLENCE IN OUR PERSONAL LIFE

The forms of violence against ourselves are numerous. If God, during the creation of the universe, had seen that all was very good and beautiful, why is there violence because of the lack of self esteem? A great number of Franciscans men and women, do not take care of themselves and do not know how to love themselves. If Francis of Assisi praised God for brother sun, sister moon and the stars, why do we not praise God for the life and gifts which He has given us and continues to give us? How much violence is inflicted on our bodies by the food and drink we consume, by the absence of walking and physical exercise, the stagnation in the process of study and spiritual development initiated with so much enthusiasm in the Novitiate and continued during the time of initial formation. Continue to enumerate the different kinds of violence that we visit on ourselves. What are the causes? Who are the people who cause this violence? What means do they

use?

## III. VIOLENCE IN OUR LOCAL AND PROVINCIAL FRATERNAL LIFE.

The quality of life in our Franciscan fraternities could be much better if it were not for the erroneous manner of understanding and exercising service and the responsibility of power. This is the gospel and Franciscan way of exercising power: washing the feet of the brothers and sisters and being at the service of all creatures without any self-interest, just as Jesus, Francis of Assisi and Mahatma Gandhi teach us.

Asphyxiation by the media also reduces the quality of life of the Franciscan fraternities in various parts of the world very much.

How living together becomes violent when nothing of any good is seen in otherness! The different is what is beautiful! Look at the rainbow in the sky and tell me it is not the differences that make the beauty! Life in fraternity is always polarised by differences; but this becomes violent when polarisation is transformed into conflict, thus creating a climate of tension where everything is a threat for all. Evidently, there are other kinds of violence which affect the local and provincial fraternity. Make a list of them, indicating their causes, those who cause them and the means used.

## IV. VIOLENCE IN THE SOCIETY WHERE WE LIVE

Lies, hatred and injustice freely camp out in the society in which we live, creating great violence in the media (How much untruth there is! Worse still, how many half-truths, O my God); in the economy (how absurd! Economies which collapse if there is no war); in racial and cultural relations (holocausts continue in various regions of the world in different ways!); religious violence even among Catholics; how much violence between men and women, between the feminine and the masculine (It is necessary to stress the word "Francis-Clarean" which reminds us of the harmonious relationship of reciprocity, of friendship between Francis and Clare of Assisi!); violence between young and old; violence even against nature. Make a list, indicating the causes, those who cause them and the means used.

## V. HEALTHY POLARISATION OF LIFE AND DESTRUCTIVE CONFLICT

Personal and community life, and even the elements of nature, have within them a natural polarisation and convergence through synthesis. When the energies of hatred prevail in relationships one pole seeks the destruction of the other and the end of all is the death or destruction of the creature. When the energy of love, the transparency of truth and justice predominates in a

relationship the poles invigorate each other and the whole of the creature is filled with life so as to arrive to fullness in a harmonious, progressive and unexpected process, indeed “love has its own laws!” (as a popular Brazilian song says)

In our personal, local and provincial fraternity life and in society we must see clearly what is what in fundamental polarisations, identify which energies prevail in this polarisation, the energy of hatred or of love, and be capable of carrying out the non-violent struggle in the cause of life, justice and the Kingdom of God with lots of love.

## VI. A CHALLENGE FOR ACTION

What you have just read wishes to be a word in the dialogue begun some time ago. Let us continue in the process. Reflect. Exchange ideas with your confreres. Manifest your disagreement with this or that point of view expressed here. Do not be afraid to create “polarisation”, but know how to live it in such a way that it is not transformed into suppression of the other. There is only one way to do this: water the plant of life, personal or communal, with the transparent waters of the truth! Give it oxygen regularly through the energy of love and, with continuous firmness, prune it with the tools of justice.

## VII. QUESTIONS

1. Where do you experience violence in your personal life, in the local/provincial fraternity and in the society where you live?
2. What are the values and attitudes present in my (our) culture which promote active non-violence?
3. What is the first step that must be taken to establish or fortify the gospel and Francis-Clarean non-violent style of life in your personal life and in that of the local/provincial fraternity and in society?
4. How can we overcome the so called structural violence expressed in poverty, social exclusion, development which destroys nature and supremacy of the market economy?
5. What must be done to move beyond a process of reflection, and lead to concrete action?

Br. José Alamiro, SINFRAJUPE – S. Paulo, Brazil

## SPECIAL ATTENTION TO REFUGEES, MIGRANTS, ETHNIC MINORITIES, LANDLESS AND INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS – NO HUMAN BEING IS ILLEGAL

*The General Chapter requests that, during the six-year period 2003-2009 and with the help of the Office of JPIC, all the Entities of the Order should: pay special attention to refugees, migrants, ethnic minorities, landless people and fugitives.*  
General Chapter 2003, Assisi, Italy.

“I was a stranger and you welcomed me...I assure you, as often as you did it for the least of my brothers, you did it for me.” (Matthew 25: 36, 40)

## I. PEOPLE ON THE MOVE: A WORLDWIDE CONCERN

As Franciscans and Christians, we are called to welcome the stranger. Strangers are among us every day. The stranger is the migrant worker, asylum seeker, trafficked person, landless and homeless, internally displaced or refugee whom we receive in Jesus’ name.

Movement of people is at an all-time high level. According to UN statistics, 3% of the world – nearly 175 million people – has moved away from their country of origin. In addition, 25 million are internally displaced in their own country. We must recognise our obligation and commitment to those brothers and sisters in our daily ministry and mission. For when we do it for “the least,” we also do it for God.

As Franciscans, we believe that it is extremely important, while speaking about this vulnerable group, to put at the core of our reflections and initiatives the human dimension. Discriminatory behaviours and prejudices on the basis of race, sex, language, poverty, religion or ethnic origin must be categorically rejected. Working with people on the move is an invitation to rebuild our humanity, an invitation to open our minds and hearts towards a new perspective at the service of each human being. Our vocation calls us to keep alive Francis’ loving message towards all God’s creatures and to struggle for the respect of their rights.

Human beings become strangers as a result of both internal and external causes. In order to fully understand our responsibilities, we must first acknowledge the causes of such a process, including:

- Breakdowns of the economic, political, social, and environmental situations;

- Wars due to religious and ethnic tensions;
- Refugee flight and internal displacements;
- Periods of economic distress increasing the rate of poverty and extreme poverty both in southern and northern countries;
- Increase in racist and xenophobic hostility against refugees and immigrants.

Many people on the move are organized and struggling for their rights, dignity and better life. There are many movements and organizations run by refugees, migrant workers, landless, homeless and internally displaced people. People on the move being empowered and learning to be the subjects of their own lives. To dedicate special attention to people on the move demands of us a process of dialogue, learning to work with them and their organizations. The World Social Forum is becoming an international arena to debate alternative means to building a globalization in solidarity, which respects universal human rights and those of all men and women of all nations and the environment, and is grounded in democratic international systems and institutions at the service of social justice, equality and the sovereignty of peoples.

Further, we often hear nowadays that people on the move are labelled “illegal,” thus becoming victimised. Saint Francis’ embrace of the leper is a commitment to the poor and marginalised and compels us to oppose this labelling. The term “illegal” criminalises and dehumanises human beings and must be unequivocally opposed. United Nations fundamental principles teach us that States are obliged to ensure the promotion, protection and implementation of the basic human rights of all persons present in their territory, regardless of their status.

## II. OUR FRANCISCAN RESPONSE

Franciscans can join the many initiatives that already exist to foster positive attitudes and behaviours that welcome the stranger:

- Create a welcoming atmosphere of sharing and solidarity as a sign of acceptance and respect towards people on the move;
- Denounce abuses committed against people on the move.
- Promote poverty eradication in any way we can;
- Open our houses to receive people on the move in a spirit of brotherhood;
- Work with the organizations established by people on the move.

- Urge States to put at the core of their national and international migration policies the question of the dignity of human beings and the respect of their fundamental rights.

## III. QUESTIONS

1. Through recognising people on the move, we also recognise Christ. How do we recognise and serve them?
2. What are the legal and technical needs of people on the move? How can we serve these needs?
3. Jesus and Francis were both considered migrants and itinerants, moving out to the unknown. How do we, in our ministries and work, reflect their example?
4. How do we empathise with the experiences of people on the move?
5. How do we, like Francis, see the face of God in the stranger? What are our apostolic and prophetic missions to people on the move?

Franciscans International (FI) - Geneva, Switzerland.

## ETHICAL INVESTMENTS – ACCOUNTABILITY, COMMUNITARIAN RESPONSIBILITY AND GOSPEL VALUES

*The General Chapter requests that, during the three year period 2003-2006, the Council for Economic Affairs, on the general and provincial levels, should draw up guidelines for the responsible use of its resources.*

General Chapter 2003, Assisi, Italy.

### I. WHY SHOULD WE BE CONCERNED WITH THE ETHICAL USE OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES?

Throughout the centuries friars have sought the resources necessary for their life and work in the world. Such interaction with the world requires that we operate within its structures, and it raises questions about how we use the resources entrusted to our care in provisioning for the brothers and in funding our apostolic endeavors. It is in this spirit that the General Chapter requests that guidelines be drawn up for the responsible use of our financial resources.

Franciscans today generally take for granted the need to deal with money and other financial resources in the course of life and ministry. All entities of the Order have some amount of capital, smaller or larger, which allows them to provide for their needs. The presence of such capital, and the necessity to administer it well in the context of our Franciscan vocation, leads to some important questions. First, on all levels of the Order (general, provincial and local) we must ask: “What capital does each entity possess?” We have an ethical responsibility to make an accurate appraisal of community resources, including prudent projections, so that we can wisely use what we are keeping. Second, as stewards of the resources that we have, we must also ask: “How is our capital being used?” Like the good and faithful servant, we must put our capital to good use for the purposes of the Kingdom. This leads to a final essential question: “Where is our capital kept, and how much is it earning?” As followers of Jesus Christ in the footsteps of Francis, we are challenged to administer our resources according to Gospel principles.

As Christian participants in the economy, our primary goal is to seek the common good, with an eye toward the integral development of each person and all persons. We believe that the earth and everything in it belong to our Creator, and that we are meant to care for it as responsible stewards. We are to use the resources of the world in such a way that they will be preserved and expanded for the benefit of future generations. Thus there is a universal

purpose to earthly goods, and money is not an end in itself, but meant for the development of God’s creation. And while it is true that the complexity of the financial scene makes it increasingly difficult to judge the “best use” of our resources, Christians must nonetheless strive to understand the options available and to maximize the social utility of our resources.

All religious are invited to pay special attention to this aspect of our lives, and the Union of General Superiors encourage us in this endeavor. In the final document of their 60<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (May 2002, “The Economy and Mission in Consecrated Life Today”), they recommend that all congregations review their economic and social practices.

As Franciscans, we have an even greater responsibility to use our resources well: looking inward we need to consider the question as religious vowed to poverty; looking outward the issue challenges us as people committed to social justice for the poor of the world. Money which is not being used now to promote apostolic ministries and which will not be required in the future to provide for membership needs, should not be simply stockpiled for eventual use. Rather, in keeping with the generosity and Gospel fervor of Francis, it should be used to promote the rights and the development of those who are at the margins of society.

### II. HOW CAN WE ELABORATE ETHICAL POLICY REGARDING ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL PRACTICES?

In order to help answer the questions posed above about the capital we possess, and to judge whether it is being employed in the best ways possible, both financially and ethically, the General Chapter requests creation of a set of guidelines. Centered on our values, they will help to orient the economic and financial practices of the Order and its entities. Preparation of these guidelines can be entrusted to an International Commission, composed of friars and appropriate experts, including friars from the JPIC Office in Rome and the Office of the Treasurer of the Order. The Commission will work in close collaboration with the conferences and provinces, and it is recommended that the work of the Commission be shared with all friars to allow them the opportunity to participate in the discussion concerning our resources and their use. Such a process will ensure general understanding of the guidelines. Based on these guidelines, all levels of the Order will then be encouraged to develop specific policies concerning economic and financial matters, with particular attention given to the issue of ethical investment. Effective collaboration between the Commission and the entities of the Order will allow the sharing of practices that have already proven successful,

and the process should include provincial treasurers and JPIC commissions at all levels.

Creation of such guidelines will encourage us to scrutinize our relationship with money and material goods; to review how we make provision for the needs of the friars and our ministries; and to reflect on how we remain faithful to our calling in the concrete circumstances of life. It will help us to ensure that our economic and financial practices are in harmony with our stated mission goals as Franciscans; to contribute to a global culture of solidarity; and to work at making the process of globalization more human and more ethical.

One specific area that ought to be addressed in elaborating ethical guidelines for our economic and financial practices is that of “ethical investment,” or “socially responsible investment.” Such investment is an attempt to place money into stocks, securities, bonds and other financial instruments that meet certain ethical criteria (e.g., respect for life, concern for the environment, protection of human rights, promotion of peace, etc.). Formulation of guidelines for ethical investment will allow us to understand what happens to the money that we invest, and to know who benefits from our investments. It will offer guarantees that brokers are not investing our money in industries that function contrary to the values we espouse. By working together with one another and with other religious and interested parties, we as an Order can use our monetary influence to ensure that companies conform to ethical criteria, and that banks and financial funds provide ethical portfolios (the dismantling of the apartheid regime in South Africa is a notable example of what concerted action on the part of stockholders, in conjunction with other actors on the local and international levels, can accomplish). If we as Franciscans do not seriously consider the ethical investment of our resources, we run the risk of appearing hypocritical, as we rightly proclaim with our documents and pastoral activity a concern for justice, peace and the integrity of creation, but then fail to apply this concern to the administration of the goods put at our disposal.

### III. QUESTIONS

1. What is the attitude that we take toward money and other forms of financial capital? Do we see them as a “necessary evil” of the modern world that we Franciscans must use, or as goods with which we, in accord with the spirit of the Gospel, seek and pursue “the good” in our world?
2. Do we consider resources as “our own,” or as things entrusted to us by God for our responsible use, for the promotion of the dignity and welfare

not simply of our Franciscan community, but of the entire human community?

3. How have we been using our financial resources, and what does this say about us and about the practical values by which we live?
4. What are the financial priorities of your province? What Franciscan values are involved in your choices?
5. What guidance do you give to financial advisors so that provincial investments are “ethical” and “socially responsible”? Upon what Franciscan values is this guidance based?
6. Who is responsible for the investment decisions of the Order and of its entities? How do the brothers participate in the decisions regarding financial resources?

Br. Joseph Rozansky – Washington, D. C. USA

## RESPONSIBLE USE OF OUR REOURCES - THE ESSENTIAL AND NOT SO ESSENTIAL

*The General Chapter requests that, during the three year period 2003-2006, the Council for Economic Affairs, on the general and provincial levels, should draw up guidelines for the responsible use of its resources.*

General Chapter 2003, Assisi, Italy.

### I. A STORY TO START THINKING:

A young mother was very worried about her only son. Though he was perfectly healthy, even at 3 years of age he had not yet learned to talk. He never spoke a word. The mother kept coaxing him to speak but he would not utter a word. She took the boy to a number of doctors but no one could find anything wrong with the boy. The doctors told her that the boy is physically perfect. But they too could not help him to speak. She had cared for him so much since his birth and finally she gave up all hope that her son would ever speak.

One day the mother was serving her son supper when the boy finally spoke – “the soup is very hot and I burned my tongue” he said. His mother was overjoyed to hear him – “my son she said I have been waiting so many years to hear you speak, I have been so desperate for so long, why didn’t you say anything till now?” “Well,” replied the boy “everything was fine until now.”

How many times do we open our mouth only to criticize and complain? How seldom do we make an effort to appreciate that which is good?

### II. A REFLECTION: OUR ATTITUDE TOWARDS MONEY.

Pump in money and you can solve any problem, overcome any enemy, cope with any crisis and correct any aberration! We often seem to look towards money to bail us out of any difficulty. We tend to believe that money resolves all crises and answers all our problems. If this were true Bush would have, by now, wiped away terrorism from the face of the earth.

The truth is that money is a wonderful thing to have, but it cannot by itself achieve anything. Real change takes place only when people and organizations rely on their imagination, ability and courage to do things right, to find real solutions to real problems instead of waiting for money to solve it for them. True solutions lie in understanding what has gone wrong and then

finding out the real answers to problems instead of letting money do the managing.

The humility and poverty of St. Francis, the simplicity of Gandhi, the compassion of Mother Theresa have made a difference in the world, which great amounts of money could not and did not. The best achievements happen in most challenging conditions often with very little or no money at all.

Money may be a great lubricant for progress. It has indeed entered our lives and revolutionized the way we live. And as many may think and believe money makes the world go round in a certain way. But money cannot buy us dreams and rainbows.

As the saying goes it is good to have money and things that money can buy, but it is good too once in a while to check up to make sure that you have not lost things that money cannot buy. Yes understanding what money does is to understand what money doesn’t do.

### III AREAS OF CONCERN.

1.) Spirit of accountability and transparency.

2.) The need to contribute. The whirlpool of consumerism has not spared our individual and communitarian lifestyles. Many of us channel our frustrations and tensions going on a shopping spree. Has our vow of chastity got trapped in non-productive existence? If our creativity and fecundity do not find higher expressions it may sink into bottomless wants.

3.) Sense of economy.

Our vow of poverty invites us to regulate our spending in conscious thought and planned activity, for instance:

- Only required spending is legitimate
- Cutting down of wastage/ or proper utilization in the area of food, gas, electricity, telephone, internet, computer-consumables/ stationery and clothing
- Avoiding buying things irrespective of its cost or requirement because it is easily accessible at the supermarket.
- Paying fees and taxes with fine etc.
- Spend for oneself much more than one can account for. Over spending without earning upsets the finance management.

4.) Filing, Record Keeping and Documentation.

Doing what is required from time to time not for the sheer fear of loss and risk it entails, but for the joy of doing things well, and handing down a tradition worthy of it. This creates a ripple effect! Proper records of resources and assets are effective tools for financial management and administration as

well.

#### 5.) Administration and Management of Goods and Resources.

Success of an organization lies not only in efficient management of short-term operations but to conduct these short-term operations with long term vision and direction. Responsibility between hands on, day-to-day management and strategizing for future growth needs to be clearly bifurcated. We must be clear as to what we are looking for and subject possible solution to rigorous thinking not afraid of failure and without falling prey to analysis paralysis.

This also means that we must be able to implement our ideas with passion, force and commitment. Prudent financial management would require rationality and an unbiased commonsense, with a courage and conviction to opt for the dream.

Every friar needs the brotherhood like the fisherman needs the boat and the net. A good fisherman takes good care of his boat and net because it is these that give him his identity, security and means of life. This calls for a bonding between the brotherhood and the individual.

Our Administration must be able to focus on Development and day-to-day administration at the same time. Long term planning, care of creation, care of the young and the old, consolidation of manpower, maximum utilization of resources are to be envisaged and built into the administrative system. Optimism alone will not be enough when it comes to proper financial development, planning and management. Monitoring is a must, of course with a human touch because our stories are different like those of all humans.

#### IV QUESTIONS

1. Take stock of the resources given to your care. Name the various resources at your disposal – Material Resource(e.g building, goods, vehicles), Economic Resource (finances, investments), Cultural Resource(social status, name, power), Intellectual Resource(e.g informations, knowledge, skills), Organizational Resource(e.g man power, capacity to communicate, mobilize), Environmental Resource(e.g land, water) and Spiritual Resource(e.g values, mastery over codes of signification, ability to generate trust and good will in people).

2. What are the things you complain about? When do you complain? What makes you complain?

3. How can you appreciate the resources at your disposal? What better means and ways will make you capable of intelligently using them? Enumer-

ate.

4. Prepare long-term and short-term plans, and then action plans to realize them, specifying who, where, when and how?

Br. Bobby Vadakkal and Br. Babu Jose Pampany – Bangalore, India

## JPIC COURSES - INTERACTION BETWEEN TEACHING AND MISSION (PRAXIS)

*The General Chapter requests that courses dedicated to JPIC, in which special attention is paid to the topics of creation and non-violence be established at the PAA of Rome and recommends that similar courses be given in all the Franciscan Institutes of Higher Education.*  
General Chapter 2003, Assisi, Italy.

### I. THE GENERAL CHAPTER

The Final Document of the General Chapter, “May the Lord give you Peace!”, places the greeting revealed to Francis at its centre. This greeting takes up the profound desire of humanity to achieve peace, justice and integrity of creation in the face of its destruction. Taking into account the ambivalent situation of our world, which is balanced between signs of hope and of need, misery, war and the destruction of the environment, the Final Document reminds us of the Franciscan obligation to commit oneself to establishing the values of the Kingdom of God in the world. In this way, we Friars Minor tie ourselves to a long tradition of following in the footprints of our Lord Jesus Christ (RnB 1,1) as messengers of peace (cf. 1Cel 24) and witnesses to a “new world” (cf. 1Cel 36) together with Francis and the first Friars. In the Franciscan tradition of almost eight centuries, in its different historical stages, it can be constantly seen that the Friars Minor became committed through their gospel spirit to peace, justice and respect for the integrity of creation. This constantly renewed mission in favour of the promotion of the values of the Kingdom is founded on a profound theological, philosophical and spiritual reflection. It was precisely this intensive intellectual confrontation with the challenges that the concrete environment presents to the basis of faith that helped the Friars Minor to conquer the prejudices and obstacles of all times, including internal ones, in order to turn themselves into credible witnesses to this “new world”, which comes only from God through the praxis of a living faith. In this way, doctrine was always put at the service of a praxis that wished to give answer to the concrete challenges from a faith based on the practice of the Gospel. The interaction between teaching and mission (praxis) encouraged the rooting of the saving message in the real history of mankind and of the world. It is precisely because this message of salvation is always seen as being threatened in the world through different kinds of conflicts, great injustices and the destruction of nature, that the Friars Minor feel called in a special way to commit themselves to peace, justice and the dignity of creation. This commitment prepares the ground for sowing the Gospel in the world.

## II. PHILOSOPHICAL AND THEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION AND JPIC

In philosophical and theological investigation and also in spirituality, the foundations that arise and are derived from faith were made explicit together with the concrete mission for peace. Thus, practical action has intensive investigation and study as its base. At the same time, the teaching was not only the transmission of the patrimony of the faith and an introduction to theoretical thought. It was tied to the uneasy search for responses from the revelation of God in the period and cultural challenges, with which the Friars Minor saw themselves confronted. The present centres of formation and study, such as the PAA, must keep alive this interaction between doctrine and mission (praxis) through the respective contemporary historical and cultural challenges as was always inherent in our tradition.

The Final Document of the General Chapter insists that the great challenges of our times, the needs and the Gospel itself challenge us to renew and deepen our faith so that we may give witness to the Kingdom of God today. This new mission to and evangelisation of our world requires good preparation in the knowledge of our patrimony of faith, of our tradition and of our world. The centres of formation like the PAA are places where the challenges from the concrete world, the doctrine of the faith and Franciscan tradition enter into dialogue. This confrontation, including the intellectual, must help in finding ways and means to announce the message of Franciscan peace that are credible and efficient in the present-day world. It corresponds to the long Franciscan tradition and to studies in the Order to take a stand against disagreements in the world, injustices and the devastation of creation, with the aim of revealing the real causes and of denouncing them and, from the Gospel, discovering and making possible ways that promote JPIC.

Peace, justice, non-violence and the preservation of creation are not marginal values or peripheral fields of philosophical and theological investigation. On the contrary, these values belong to the nucleus of the Kingdom of God at whose service we Friars Minor are. It is necessary to offer the necessary space to these central values of the Kingdom of God in formation and studies. This is possible when this topic is taken into account in relationship with the Franciscan tradition and the challenges of the present world. The Gospel and the Kingdom of God itself compel the Friars Minor to put their intellectual powers at the service of these values.



### III. QUESTIONS

1. How significant has the formation you have received in JPIC values been to you?
2. Which are the concrete challenges of our world today that require a more systematic approach?
3. How can our ministries, work and life experience become the content of the JPIC courses in our study centres?
4. Identify the courses related to JPIC that exist in your province, your country?

Br. Johannes Baptist Freyer – Pontificio Ateneo Antonianum – Roma, Italia