

VOX FRANCISCANA

Ordo Franciscanus Saecularis



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SAVE THE DATE

Nov. 4-11, 2017

The General Chapter of the Secular Franciscan Order takes place in Rome, Italy, from Nov. 4 to Nov. 11, 2017.

The location of the chapter is the Seraphicum - Pontifical University of St. Bonaventure.



SURROUNDED BY FRANCISCAN CHARISM

From joyful youth to feeding the homeless, the CIOFS Presidency is surrounded by the Franciscan charism during its semi-annual meeting in Rome. See PAGE 3.

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YOUFRA 2016

The 2016 YouFra International Gathering took place in Krakow, Poland from July 22 to 25, leading up to World Youth Day.

Some 100 Franciscan Youth and animators from 24 countries participated, Franciscan Youth Councillor **Andrea Odak** reports.



CIOFS Presidency's Fr. Amando, Andrea Odak and Ana Fruk at YouFra International Gathering in Krakow.

BELOW: Smiles and songs were rampant.



CHAPTERS CELEBRATE LIFE IN FRATERNITY

For Saint Francis, Chapters were of extreme importance. They were gatherings in the name of the Lord. They constituted true celebrations of life in fraternity, animated by the Holy Spirit.

The Fraternity Chapter is to be celebrated in an attitude of conversion. All personal interests and ambitions of power must be excluded. Everything

must be done according to the example of Jesus Christ, in the spirit of service.

Therefore, essential aspects of a Chapter are:

- Proclamation of the Word of God, which enlightens themes to be discussed;
- Prayer;
- The search for what is best for the life of the Fraternity.

CIOFS Presidency Meeting: March 18 - 25, 2017 in Rome .

CIOFS MEETS IN ROME

SURROUNDED BY FRANCISCAN CHARISM

By BOB STRONACH, OFS

A dozen young people came bursting into the dining room, smiling and laughing and greeting the Secular Franciscans.

They were part of an Italian Franciscan Youth (YouFra) group, and they provided an exuberant ending to a homemade Italian meal prepared by the National Fraternity of Italy for the CIOFS Presidency (or executive council of the worldwide Secular Franciscan Order). The dining room was on an upper floor of a house the National Fraternity owns, located just a couple of city blocks from the Vatican.

In fact, everyone adjourned up to the roof to get a nighttime view of St. Peter's Basilica – which provided a backdrop for taking pictures, with the dome filling the horizon like a brightly lit moon.

Little did the Secular Franciscans realize that three days later they would be directly under that dome – underground, in fact, in the Clementine Chapel, where the bones believed to be those of St. Peter rest in a side wall just to the left of the altar.



YouFra with Minister General Tibor Kauser, OFS (right).



Minister General Tibor Kauser, OFS, and Italy National Minister Remo di Pinto, OFS, pose on roof of the National Fraternity's home under the nighttime glow of St. Peter's Basilica.



General Spiritual Assistant Amando Trujillo Cano, TOR, of Mexico, and Vice Minister General "Chelito" (Maria Consuelo) Nunez, OFS, of Venezuela lead the group in prayerful song prior to sitting down to supper at the house of the National Fraternity of Italy.

A guide led them there after taking the group through labyrinthine passages where archeological digs revealed the tombs of pagans and Christians. It's an area known as the Ne-

ropolis, which once was above ground, and it's the location on which the first Christian emperor, Constantine, decided to build the church of St. Peter, believing Peter was buried

there after being crucified upside down. The present St. Peter's Basilica is another layer on top of the original church.

The group exited the lower level up narrow



Members of the CIOFS Presidency take in the breathtaking view of art in the Hall of Kings in the Vatican's Apostolic Palace. FROM LEFT: General Spiritual Assistant Alfred Parambakathu, OFM Conv., of India; Presidency Councillor Jennifer Harrington, OFS, of South Africa; Minister General Tibor Kauser, OFS, of Hungary, and Presidency Councillor Augustine Young Hak Yoon, OFS, of Korea.

winding stairs right onto the main floor of the vast basilica, and eventually headed to the adjacent Apostolic Palace for another private tour, where they spent a good amount of time gawking at the frescoes and paintings covering walls and ceilings. (One hallway, for example, boasted ceiling paintings by Raphael, and is appropriately called the Hallway of Raphael.) They concluded their visit to the

Vatican at the offices of the Association for Sts. Peter and Paul, an organization of 850 volunteers headed by Secular Franciscan Calvino Gasparini. The group used to be known for providing personal guards for the pope, Association President Calvino explained, but today is busy at numerous Vatican events, such as helping at liturgies, providing ceremonial escorts, and assisting tourists. The vol-

unteers are also dedicated to charity work, such as cooking and serving meals at Domo di Maria, a house run by Mother Teresa's Missionaries of Charity for the poor and homeless.

Calvino and his wife, CIOFS Secretary Isabella di Paola, are active in San Felice di Cantalice Fraternity, which meets weekly at a church of the same name in Rome. With some 40 members, the fraternity has several ministries,



Calvino Gasparini, OFS, is president of the Association for Sts. Peter and Paul at the Vatican.



View of St. Peter's Square and Rome from a window in the Apostolic Palace.

including bringing food to the homeless that hang out at train stations.

The visit to the Vatican, arranged by Isabella and Calvino, was a momentary break for the CIOFS Presidency, which was holding a semi-annual meeting at the Seraphicum (a Franciscan seminary and conference center) to tackle an array of topics affecting the Order, such as:

- visitations, elections and other events at national fraternities (some two dozen countries).
- the next General Chapter, which will take place in Rome in the fall of 2017.
- the Africa Project, planning congresses for English-speaking, French-speaking and Portuguese-speaking people



Presidency councillor Ana Fruk, OFS, of Croatia and General Spiritual Assistant Francis Bongajum Dor, OFM Cap., in the Hallway of Raphael.



CIOFS Presidency at work.

on the African continent. This past year a formation workshop took place in Zambia.

- Formation, with a critical need for formation material in a number of countries; planning formation workshops in Africa and Egypt; developing an initial formation manual for inquirers/candidates; looking at coordinating online formation courses.

- Franciscan Youth (YouFra), including future congresses around the world.

- Communications, looking at strategies to improve content and methods of communicating (with such tools as web, social media, electronic newsletters); all with volunteers.



General Spiritual Assistant Jose Antonio Cruz Duarte, OFM; Presidency Councillor Silvia Noemi Diana, OFS, of Argentina; Presidency Councillor Michel Janian, OFS, of Lebanon, and CIOFS Secretary Isabella di Paola, OFS.



FROM LEFT: Presidency Councillor Augustine Young Hak Yoon, OFS, of Korea; Interpreter/Formation Commission member Mary Stronach, OFS, of USA; Presidency Councillor Ana Maria Raffo Laos, OFS, of Peru; Presidency Councillor Jennifer Harrington, OFS, of South Africa; and Franciscan Youth Councillor Andrea Odak of Bosnia and Herzegovina.



Participants from 11 countries took part in the African formation workshop.



Jennifer Harrington, OFS, poses with three Franciscan youth who participated in the African formation workshop.

ZAMBIA HOSTS AFRICA'S FIRST FORMATION WORKSHOP

The Africa Project resulted in the first formation workshop in 2016.

It took place June 22-25 at St. Bonaventure's College in Lusaka, the capital of Zambia.

Held in English, "the response from the English-speaking countries was enthusiastic," with 76 participants, reported Presidency Councillor Jennifer Harrington, OFS.

That included 60 Secular Franciscans, three Franciscan youth, and 13 spiritual assistants.

They came from Zambia, Zimbabwe, Malawi, South Africa, Namibia, Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria, Tanzania, plus "five English-speaking Portuguese brothers and a sister from Angola and Mozambique," Jennifer said. She noted that some "34 brothers and sisters

traveled long distances, some taking almost three days each way."

General Spiritual Assistant Fr. Francis Bongajum Dor, OFM Cap., and Jennifer led the workshop. Daniel Chidemo, OFS, national formator of Zimbabwe, also was a presenter.

"There was a vibrant fraternal spirit amongst all the participants," Jenny said. "Everyone enjoyed meet-

ing and sharing with their brothers and sisters from the different countries and cultures."

Participants returned home with copies of Guidelines for Formation booklets to share with their national and local fraternities.

The enthusiasm and comments "show that this was an eye opener to what the Order is," she reported.



Augustine Yoon, OFS, took a selfie with Yangon Fraternity Minister Ann Rose, OFS, during a visit to a Buddhist Temple in Myanmar.

FIRST EVER FRATERNITY IN MYANMAR PROFESSES 8

It's the birth of the Secular Franciscan Order in Myanmar: "This is a real historical event."

That's how CIOFS

Presidency Councillor Augustine Young Hak Yoon, OFS, described the canonical establishment of Myanmar's first-ever local

fraternity, located in the city of Yangon.

The Yangon Fraternity boasts eight professed members in this pre-

dominantly Buddhist, Southeast Asian country, Augustine reports.



The eight professed members of the new Yangon Fraternity in Myanmar.