

# ***Highlighting JPIC Work in the Order – An Evaluation: 1998-2000***

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## **Introduction**

This presentation will try to summarize some of the impressive and valuable JPIC work in the Order. It does not purport to be all-inclusive, but hopefully will give a flavor of activities around the world. In fact, there are many more examples given in the JPIC Resource Book of brothers promoting JPIC in their lives and ministry. It is not my intention to exclude any important work, but due to time restrictions I have had to make some choices in the examples I use. I apologize if I offend sensibilities by excluding some important activities. I will share what I see happening. There will be a certain unavoidable flow of examples from one continent to another. The fact that an initiative is mentioned in one Conference does not imply that it is not also being promoted in another. As a precautionary measure, I invite you to complete the overview with other examples at the end of this presentation. The idea for this presentation is based on a choice not to ask for individual Conference or Province reports. The experience each brother has brought to this meeting is invaluable and we

encourage you to share what you are doing and how you are working with as many brothers as possible over the next two weeks, both formally and informally. After the overview I will conclude with some pointers as to the strengths and limitations of JPIC work in the Order, as well as making several suggestions for improvement.

## **1. The Americas:**

### ***1.1 Brazil:***

Friars working with landless:

Each year more than forty brothers working with landless people and their movements meet. Many brothers were involved from the early stages of the “SEM Terra” landless movement. For some Brazilian Provinces work with the landless is a Provincial priority and brothers are freed to work full time. A project has been proposed to recognize this work as part of the Provincial missionary evangelization and support itinerant fraternities accompanying people in their struggle for land and dignity.

### ***JPIC Handbook:***

The Handbook has been translated and distributed as a result of the commitment to it by JPIC Conference commissions. To date it has been translated into Spanish, French, Italian, German, Croatian and Portuguese. It will be translated into Korean, Indonesian, Japanese, Vietnamese and Mandarin. The success of the process is a tribute to the commitment of the JPIC Conference commissions who have, against the odds, succeeded in having the book translated and distributed.

The JPIC office would not have been able to undertake such a mammoth task alone. Success of this project is a good indication of the health of the JPIC structure in the Order. It indicates the commissions are facing up to challenges. They have gained much credibility during this process. It is interesting to note that every friar in Brazil will receive a copy of the Handbook in Portuguese. This is a strong recognition by the Brazilian Provincials of the document's value, placing it on a par with other General Curia documents.

#### *Washington Office:*

There is a need to bring Latin American JPIC issues to the US Congress and International agencies. The Brazilian Conference asked the ESC to finance an office in Washington. Eventually the Holy Name Province agreed to do so for two years "ad experimentum." This project is important to show friars the importance of advocacy; working to change structures and not just responding to the material needs of the poor. This work is at the cutting edge of evangelization and in general is not appreciated or understood by the vast majority of brothers. It is easier to feed the hungry than to challenge policies causing poverty. The Washington project is weak and needs a lot of support from the JPIC commissions of the Order, particularly those in Latin America.

#### **1.2 Mexico/CA:**

##### *Peace Missions:*

Five missions took place in three years (Chiapas, Manantlán, Borders (Tijuana,

Tapachula and Ciudad Suarez) Costa Rica and Humedad, Oaxaca). The objective was to draw close to the problems in each place, support the local church, the people, and their organizations working for peace, as well as to heighten consciousness among brothers of the Provinces in the hope some would become involved in similar issues locally. There have been some positive effects both for the people visited and for the furthering of JPIC consciousness in the Conference. Support for JPIC initiatives has gradually increased. At the UCLAF meeting of Latin American Provincials in May 2000 the Conference agreed to open an inter-provincial inserted fraternity in Tijuana dedicated to serving migrants.

#### *JPIC Offices:*

The CA Province has opened a number of JPIC offices in the Province (El Salvador, Guatemala, Nicaragua) in conjunction with the FF. They retain their own provincial commission, but work on national issues with the FF. The office gives a physical space and a focus to the work. It is no substitute for the work of the commission. Similar offices, with a variety of activities and functions, are also in Manila (Philippines), Santa Barbara (US), St. John the Baptist (US), Cori (Italy) and Split (Croatia).

#### *Solidarity with JPIC Causes:*

The Vice Province of San Felipe extended an invitation to friars of the Order interested in solidarity work with indigenous peoples of Chiapas to come

and work for a period of time in one of their communities. A friar from the Central America Province supported peace communities in Colombia at the behest of the National Religious JPIC commission, headed by a Franciscan. In many conflict situations an International presence can mean the difference between life and death for the local population.

#### *JPIC and Evangelization:*

The Holy Gospel Province, Mexico, has encouraged the setting up of Human Rights commissions in their parishes. Many other provincial commissions including the Philippines, Provinces in Brazil and CA have worked with Parish Priests and encouraged and supported them in the promotion of social ministries in their parishes.

#### **1.3 Colombia:**

##### *Tribunals of Opinion:*

In order to highlight the continuing and unabated abuse of Human Rights in Colombia the JPIC commission of the Franciscan Family organized a tribunal of opinion in Barrancabermeja to draw national and international attention to the massacre of 35 people in 1998, one of an infinite number of massacres committed in Colombia in recent years. Brothers from the JPIC commissions of CA and Mexico participated as a sign of solidarity with their Colombian brothers. Letters of support were sent from other commissions of the Order.

#### **1.4 Chile:**

##### *Ecology:*

The JPIC commission of the Chilean Province was responsible for helping organize a National Ecology confederation of 150 NGOs. This led to more coordinated work with the subsequent sharing of valuable resources.

#### **1.5 United States:**

##### *Full time JPIC animators:*

Two of the four full time JPIC animators in the Order are members of US Provinces. They are Santa Barbara and St. John the Baptist Provinces. Irian Jaya has two friars working full time for the Human Rights' office of the Episcopal Conference, as well as animating JPIC in the Custody. In Pakistan a friar has been released to work for the Diocesan JPIC commission and another friar is responsible for JPIC animation of the brothers. The full time US friars have a staff and a budget. They animate JPIC by working closely with other commissions of the Provinces. They visit fraternities, organize regional meetings, inform the Province about JPIC issues by means of their office bulletins, and attend Definitory meetings regularly informing on the progress of the work. Holy Name, New York, has hired a full-time lay JPIC animator. Sacred Heart Province is to make a half time job available for JPIC animation.

##### *JPIC as a priority in Holy Name Province:*

Several Provinces in the order have explicitly assumed JPIC as one of their

provincial chapter priorities and entrusted the implementation of the agreement to the JPIC commission of the Province. Holy Name Province has assumed Social Justice as one of three Provincial priorities and they are: respond to the material needs of the poor, educate brothers in social justice and advocate for and with the poor and their organizations.

#### *School of the Americas:*

Many Provinces of the Americas have actively supported the closure of the School of the Americas. Many of the most notorious dictators and violators of Human Rights of the Americas were trained there over a 37-year period. The JPIC commission of the English Speaking Conference participated in protests organized at Fort Benning in November 1998. Many other activities, including the collection of signatures, were promoted in CA, Bolivia and Brazil.

#### *Sister Relationships:*

The ESC assumed a sister relationship with the archdiocesan Human Rights office in Guatemala to help support them in the process of clarification of the murder of Bishop Gerardi. The Central European and Spain/Portugal Conferences have consistently supported the Peace Mission in Colombia, through letter campaigns, finances and visits.

#### *Single-issue Campaigns:*

Many commissions focus on a theme to make brothers conscience about a justice issue. As example of this is the campaign organized by the Santa Barbara Province

to highlight the unfair nature of the visa allotment policies of the US immigration board; where only 2% of Salvadorians compared to 73% of Iranians had made successful applications. The brothers in each local fraternity were encouraged to write to their local representative protesting these and other injustices related to immigration policy.

#### *FRANCAP:*

The ESC Conference organized a pilgrimage every year to CA in order to expose Franciscans to the reality of poverty and to heighten consciousness about the influence exerted by the US government on the social/political/economic realities of the region. Fifteen such pilgrimages have been organized, resulting in a greater participation by Franciscans in the US on CA issues, in particular on support for migrants and their causes.

## **2. Europe:**

#### *Inserted Fraternities:*

Brothers living in inserted fraternities in Europe organize an annual meeting to support one another and share ideas related to insertion as a way of life. Many friars involved in JPIC issues live in inserted fraternities and they encourage this way of life as a means of acquiring greater integration of JPIC values into the life and ministries of the brothers. The Minister General participated in the 2000 meeting in Heerlem, Netherlands and supports the promotion of these fraternities in the Order. In general, there are few inserted

fraternities in the Order and many of them are initial formation fraternities especially in Latin America and the Philippines. Many Provinces with insertion as a formative experience (CA, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Philippines and Kenya) have not managed to promote it among their solemnly professed brothers.

### ***2.1 Response to Chapter's mandate on Refugees, Migrants and Ethnic Minorities:***

#### ***European Meeting:***

The JPIC commission of Europe met on two occasions since the last International Council meeting in 1998 in Rome: in Geneva and Sarajevo. One of the priorities of the commissions was to find ways of implementing the General Chapter resolution (8.4). A series of Conference meetings were organized for brothers working in this field by the JPIC commissions and a representative of four Conferences met in Barcelona in June 2000, in order to share ideas and draw up proposals for their work. This initiative highlights one of the functions of a JPIC commission, that of enabling and empowering JPIC activities to take place.

#### ***Albania:***

Some strongly believe the Albanian Province's response to the Kosovo refugee crisis is a model to be considered for future responses. One of the important lessons learned is the collaboration achieved among all religious and Christian NGOs in response to this human tragedy. All recourses were pooled,

enabling a more efficient response and a better use of scarce resources. Traditionally, each NGO tries to maximize propaganda around their particular response, in order to keep their donors happy, thus ensuring future support. Frequently, as soon as journalists leave, many NGOs depart to the next media focused crisis. Friars and other religious are left to continue responding.

### ***2.2 Conference and Provincial JPIC publications:***

There are few JPIC publications in the Order. The Central European Conference publishes a JPIC bulletin called "Tauwetter" four times a year. The Brazilian Conference publishes "Contacto" with news from the Conference, but rarely with news from the rest of the Order. The Indian Province publishes a bulletin and is examining possibilities of making it a Franciscan family publication. The Bolivarian Conference has again recently started a publication. Some Provinces and Conferences (John the Baptist, Santa Barbara, COMPI,) have a newsletter. The English Province JPIC animator sends a hard copy of the JPIC Rome office's publication, Contact, to all houses of the Province.

#### ***Lobby Work:***

The Turinga Province in Germany supports protests against the German Bank's investment in the arms trade. It takes the form of a monthly protest in front of the German bank. The JPIC Conference com-

mission has highlighted the fact that German weaponry has been used against Kurdish civilians in Turkey. The Dutch JPIC coordinator, along side other religious and NGOs, regularly attends arms trade fairs demanding the elimination of arms. Brothers of the Santa Barbara Province initiated protests against nuclear weapons at the Nevada test site and have kept vigil, along with other concerned groups, for two decades.

#### *Inter-Religious Dialogue:*

Brothers from the JPIC commission in Germany, Netherlands, France and Bosnia work in inter-religious dialogue, mostly with Muslims. There is a large Muslim population in Germany, especially Turks and Kurds. Brothers assist them in their efforts to achieve legal recognition and one fraternity in Cologne is a sanctuary for those whose lives might be endangered should they be forcibly repatriated to Turkey. The Sanctuary traditions was also strong in some Provinces of North America in the 80's when many Central Americans were fleeing repression in their own countries and the US government did not wish to attend to their plight. France is home to many Arabs from Morocco and Algeria. The French JPIC commission supports efforts by some brothers who also work on immigration issues. Sometimes this is done through the local dioceses. One of the brothers is the coordinator of refugee issues for several dioceses. Brothers in Bosnia have established foundations to support inter-religion dialogue. They promote development projects for all sec-

tions of society affected by the war, regardless of race or religion, as well as a multi-religious choir that performs songs from all the Bosnian traditions.

#### *Peace Institute:*

The South Slav Conference gave its approval for a Peace institute to be established in Split, Croatia, during the war. The principal work is the promotion of reconciliation and peace. It has organized several Peace Conferences, seminars and retreats as well as publishing materials on peace work for schools. In fact, the Croatian Episcopal Conference has endorsed one of the books as it's principal text for peace studies in Catholic Colleges. In 1999 each Province of UFME agreed to finance the Center by making an annual contribution to the Institute.

### **3. Asia**

#### *Formation for JPIC Animators:*

The Philippines Province freed their JPIC animator to do a four-month course for JPIC animators in London organized by the Columban missionaries in 1999. They organize a similar course every two years and reports are positive. It is rare for provincial JPIC animators to be given an opportunity to participate in an ongoing formation program related to their ministry. More attention must be given to this aspect and perhaps this Conference will propose some ideas to respond to this need.

#### *Formation Programs:*

The Philippines Province has had several meetings with the formation team result-

ing in a systematic JPIC program for each stage of the initial formation process. Several Provinces in Latin America have similar programs: San Pablo, Colombia; St. Francis, Rio Grande du Sul; Holy Gospel, Mexico. The Brazilian Conference organizes a two-week JPIC formation course every year open to any brother interested in learning more about JPIC. Some brothers from other Conferences have participated. Costs for lodging are defrayed by the host Province. Every year a different Province agrees to be the host. To date two successful courses have taken place. A fifteen-day program was organized for friars in initial formation in Northern Europe in 1999 to heighten consciousness of the reality of Poverty in Europe. In Brussels they participated in practical programs designed to alleviate poverty, as well as receiving input on the Franciscan responses. The Irish Province organized a ten-month JPIC program for the Franciscan family in 1998. It consisted of one afternoon input a month with a seminar lasting several days at the end of the program. The majority of participants were lay people, many of whom traveled several hundred miles to participate. The local fraternities as well as the Province assumed the costs. The COPEFA JPIC commission has designed a program on non-violence for each stage of the initial formation program.

*Collaboration with the Dioceses:*

Two of our brothers run the Human Rights offices of the Dioceses in Irian Jaya, Indonesia. They are responsible for the formation of pastoral agents as well as

recording and denouncing human rights abuses. They are influential in coordinating efforts with many disparate groups. Several of our brothers around the world work on JPIC issues in co-ordination with the local church. In Pakistan one of the brothers works for the diocesan JPIC commission, while another is responsible for the JPIC animation of the Province. Another brother co-ordinates work with the inter-religion JPIC commission, which was responsible for addressing a letter to the president after the coup, outlining their fears and hopes for Christians and for the population in general. It might be interesting, at some stage, to hear the rationale underlying the job distinctions.

*East Timor:*

Our brothers remained in East Timor with the people during the most difficult time of repression. The JPIC commission of the Province was responsible for organizing a coordinated response to the refugee crisis, especially to the people forced to flee the country, in particular to West Timor. The JPIC animator was freed for three months to help set up programs in the camps, which were eventually handed over to other organizations. He was particularly adept in ensuring regular communication with the Franciscan world, detailing the state of affairs, through news bulletins to the Rome JPIC office. This news in turn was communicated to the Conferences, as well as placed on the Curia web page. Their projects received financial support as a result of these appeals. Regular updates were forthcoming.

#### **4. Africa and Middle East**

##### *Chapter of Mats:*

After the election of the new government a “Truth and Reconciliation Commission” was established to establish responsibility for what happened during the apartheid years, with the possibility of amnesty for those responsible for Human rights violations, conditioned by their willingness to admit responsibility for their part in atrocities. The South African JPIC commission established a “Truth and Reconciliation” process for the Province”. Brothers reflected on attitudes and behavior that contributed to maintaining and/or challenging the status quo. More will be shared on this process later.

##### *Development Projects:*

Friars in the Holy Land have worked to ensure the survival of an every decreasing Christian population; reduced from 28% of the total population in 1948 to 2% at the present day. They build houses and look for jobs to support the Christians thus slowing down the tendency to emigrate. One of the projects awards University scholarships to young Palestinian Christians to study in Palestine or Israel. They sign a contract before starting their studies. Graduates are assured a job for three years after they finish their studies. Money has been raised outside the country to ensure the success of this project. Brain drain to the developed world is one of the major difficulties preventing the recuperation of the developing world’s economies. Brothers are involved in an infinite number of development projects around the world. It is

the job of the JPIC coordinators to support these projects critically. Projects should be designed to ensure their eventual independent survival, as well as empowering people to assume responsibility for their own lives. Too many of our Franciscan projects are paternalistic in nature.

##### *Conference Project:*

The United Nations is organizing a Conference on Racism in South Africa in October 2001. The Sub-Saharan JPIC commission has suggested that all entities in the Conference assume this theme for 2001. There are serious problems on the Continent related to tribalism, racism, regionalism and xenophobia. They propose to promote reflection at all levels of the Provinces and to bring results of the reflection to the Conference. This initiative could help unite the Franciscan Continent around other issues besides initial formation. Distances, cultural and linguistic differences, as well as economic factors often prevent brothers meeting on a regular basis. The lack of organization is a factor preventing brothers from having more effective contact with the JPIC movement at an International level. Fortunately, the Australian Province has agreed to finance the travel expenses of the JPIC animators of each of the African entities for the next three years. This will greatly help the organization of the Conference and ensure greater continuity in the work, as well as qualitative contact with other Conferences of the Order. Similar difficulties related to distance and cultural and linguistic differences are

experienced by entities in Asia. It is not unusual for JPIC commissions to meet only every two to three years.

## **5. Strengths, Limitations and Suggestions for JPIC Work in the Order**

### **5.1 Strengths**

- Many Provinces have constituted JPIC commissions and do not expect an appointed animator to work alone.

- Fourteen of the 15 Conferences have met during the period 1998-2000. There have been approximately fifty-three meetings. (2 Conferences 9 times; 3 Conferences 6 times; 4 Conferences 3 times; 5 Conferences once; 1 Conference did not meet).

- Communication between the entities of individual Conferences and the JPIC Rome office is improving, especially as a result of increased access to email. All but one of the JPIC Conference coordinators have email.

- JPIC Conference animators in Europe and the Americas have met since the last International Council meeting in September 1998; twice in Europe and once in the Americas. This is facilitating greater communication between entities on the Continent and opening possibilities for JPIC Continental projects.

- The JPIC animation committee has met seven times since the last International Council meeting. A trusting and open

relationship among members has contributed greatly to clarifying the work of the Rome office and motivating the implementation of agreements. Members have a wealth of experience that helped the organization of the Vossenack meeting, as well as the implementation of some of the Council and General Chapter resolutions.

- The caliber of JPIC animation in the Provinces is generally excellent.

- Five Conference coordinators are brothers.

- Permanency of animators in the job has improved compared to past years. In general, we have not seen the “willy-nilly” changes in Provincial animators that considerably disrupted work in the past.

- Many JPIC animators are trying to integrate JPIC values into their own lives and spirituality.

- Many animators have noted a less aggressive attitude in the brotherhood towards JPIC issues; there is a greater openness to allow work to continue, although, in general, not necessarily implying a greater participation by the fraternity.

- We have excellent and enviable network possibilities at an International level: Franciscans International and the Washington office. Progressively, our brothers are becoming aware of our responsibility to be advocates for and with the poor and their organizations; helping bring justice

issues affecting them to the International arena. The Conference of the Franciscan Family's (CFF) acceptance to be sponsors of FI for three years and their appointment of a new board will help ensure closer OFM JPIC – FI collaboration. Many of our brothers have participated in International Summits and Human Rights commission meetings in Geneva, New York and other places, facilitating access to Government delegations as well as NGOs working on similar issues.

- A considerable number of JPIC Provincial commissions work closely with JPIC commissions of the Franciscan Family (FF) while at the same time they do not neglect the task of animating JPIC values in their Provinces. Collaboration and friendship with members of the FF ensures support for the brothers, as well as a more intelligent use of resources. Some OFM JPIC commissions share office space with the Family.

- Many of our commissions network with other religious and diocesan organizations as well as with NGOs. The desire to support existing JPIC efforts and initiatives is increasing.

- Incorporation of JPIC into the Provincial plans of several Provinces has contributed to a greater appreciation of the importance of these values. Commitment to some dimension of JPIC by a Province, as a priority, gives greater direction and clarity to the JPIC commission in their animation role. The following Provinces are among those who have made explicit commitments to JPIC:

Holy Name (USA), St. Francis (Brazil), San Pablo (Colombia), Our Lady of Guadalupe (CA), Santa Barbara (US), St. John the Baptist (US), Holy Spirit (Australia), St. Pedro Bautista (Philippines) and the Irish Province.

- Awareness among JPIC animators is growing with regard to the distinction between their role as animators and personal involvement in particular causes. Animators are creatively promoting JPIC values both within the fraternity and in ministries of the Provinces. Animators are encouraging brothers to take small steps and support them in existing work, as well as encouraging them to assume new tasks when it is opportune.

- Many animators are realistic about what can be achieved in the short term. They do not allow themselves become frustrated by negativity and lack of immediate response. They are aware of frustration levels associated with animation in general and with JPIC in particular. This permits them to be more relaxed, more at ease with the fraternity and in the long term more affective. Once trust has been established, brothers tend to be supportive, not necessarily because they are convinced but, because they trust the animator and are thus willing to take more risks.

- A small number of animators have received some formal preparation for the job.

- The overwhelmingly positive response by Conferences to translate, distribute

and promote the JPIC Handbook is an indication of the strength of JPIC structures at an International level. The importance of strengthening local Conference structures for any eventuality is generally recognized. The Australian Provinces' support for the printing and publication of the JPIC Handbook for Africa and Asia is worthy of a mention.

- Responses to Urgent Action Alerts, especially in the case of the attempt on Fr. Rodrigo's life and the brothers in Colombia, prove how willing brothers are to respond when properly motivated. There were over 5,000 responses to some of these appeals.

- Brothers in initial formation in some provinces are members of JPIC commissions (Chile, Central America, Brazil, Singapore, Kenya and Korea).

- Recognition by JPIC commissions of the importance of coordinating work with formators and brothers in initial formation.

- This International JPIC Congress open to all JPIC provincial animators, the first of its kind in the Order, is a sign of the growing recognition that JPIC is an integral dimension of our Franciscan Spirituality.

### ***5.2 Limitations of JPIC Work in the Order***

- Provincials do not generally provide JPIC animators with clear criteria for their work and expect them to know how to act regardless.

- Many JPIC animators lack basic organizational skills: planning and co-coordinating a meeting, as well as subsequent follow up. Some meetings I have attended have not been planned and much time is lost. The importance of having a plan at the end of each meeting, with assigned responsibilities, is not appreciated in some Conferences. A Conference that fails to elaborate a plan of action, no matter how simple, undermines the credibility of the commission and future support by provincials and the fraternity in general.

- Nothing can substitute personal contact with brothers of the Province or Conference JPIC commissions.

- Few Provincial commissions and only six Conference commissions have a budget.

- I fear some JPIC animators are appointed in order to satisfy legislative requirements. Some brothers assume the task from a sense of obedience, despite a lack of interest or motivation to do the job. Fortunately, many overcome these limitations and make considerable progress in the work.

- Some Provinces have changed JPIC delegates once a year on average. This undermines the credibility of the job and acts as a deterrent for suitable brothers to volunteer in the future. Some Provinces punish delegates who are critical on internal JPIC issues by simply removing them.

- Sometimes new JPIC delegates find no archives, materials or history of the commission.

- Several Provincial and Conference commissions have no approved Statutes to legitimize their work and safeguard the commission's projects from possible future disinterested provincial administrations.
- Weak provincial support may cause animators to give up on the fraternity and instead look for outside support by working with like-minded people in the Franciscan Family or other NGOs. While this is understandable, it only prolongs the agony of not achieving the objective of integration of JPIC values into Provincial fraternal life and ministries.
- Lack of appreciation of the importance of good communication seems to be a general failure among animators. Excuses abound; excessive workload and other responsibilities are often cited. However, basic tasks are often not complied with: news concerning JPIC activities or projects is not communicated to provincial or the Order's newsletters (Fraternitas, Contact), some Conference co-coordinators communicate infrequently with Provincial coordinators, nor do they forward JPIC news items to them. Coordinators often fail to remind brothers about deadlines for tasks nor do they motivate towards their implementation.
- Lack of or no financial support for JPIC projects from Provinces.
- Too many brothers are expected to work alone without the support of a commission.
- We have not arrived at the ideal of formally preparing brothers to assume the role of JPIC animator as is regularly done for initial formation.
- It is far more difficult to be a JPIC animator in some Provinces and in some parts of the world than in others. However, this does not excuse any animator for having a fatalistic attitude such as: "it is impossible to do anything in this Province or in this country".
- Whereas the general problem is lack of provincial support for JPIC, there are cases of Provinces assuming JPIC as a Chapter priority, allowing brothers the freedom to work and giving them space and finances. Animators have abused this support by promoting personal projects while showing scant concern for the general animation of JPIC in the Province. Unfortunately, this is causing resentment against JPIC, which argues badly for the future of JPIC.
- There is a lack of creativity in incorporating JPIC into fraternal life and existing ministries.
- Insufficient attention is given by leadership at most levels of the Order to aspects of Scripture, theology, spirituality, the General Constitutions and Franciscan documents related to the social dimension of the Christian commitment.
- Lack of ability by some JPIC co-coordinators to handle frustration and a desire to experience immediate results, rather

than prepare the ground for greater receptivity in the future.

### ***5.3 Suggestions for Improving JPIC Animation***

- Have regular and qualitative communication with members of the provincial and Conference JPIC commission, as well as sending news items to the Order's publications: Provincial bulletins, Fraternitas, Contact etc.

- Promote link ups between Provinces and Conferences with the idea of mutually supporting one another. This could be particularly effective between Provinces of the developing and developed world, e.g. the French Conference and West Africa.

- Continue to promote intercontinental meetings: e.g., similar to those organized in Europe and the Americas.

- Extend invitations to brothers involved in Human Rights or Development work, especially those in conflict situations. Organize visits to fraternities or provincial meetings. This is invaluable for raising consciousness and promoting solidarity with specific causes. An example of this was visits made by Fr. Raphael and Fr. Omar from Colombia. They visited fraternities in Europe explaining the precarious situation of the internally displaced people. Similar work was done by Fr. Rodrigo in Japan and the United States.

- When the Minister General or General Definitors visit your Province or Confer-

ence request a meeting with them. Inform them about your work. This is helpful in furthering the cause of JPIC. Write occasionally to the Minister General asking him to sign important petitions. An example of this is a letter written by the Central European Conference asking him to include the topic of refugees in one of his letters to the Order. As a result the General Definitory decided to write the St. Francis day message on Solidarity.

- Meet regularly with your provincial and request formal meetings with the Provincial Definitory in order to inform them of progress in the work and to seek support whenever it is required.

- Every Province and Conference should have a plan of action arrived at through a process of participatory reflection. It need not be complicated, but it is vital to have something down on paper. The plan should be regularly evaluated, especially before organizing a new one.

- The JPIC Resource book needs to be considered for future JPIC formation work, particularly with formators and those in initial formation. Seminars, retreats and days of reflection could be organized in conjunction with other provincial commissions to avoid overburdening the brothers. It is preferable for the commission to organize activities in conjunction with other commissions and groups rather than look for an exclusive slot. Some brothers may participate in an activity with a JPIC theme organized by

the ongoing formation commission who might not necessarily do so if it was promoted by the JPIC commission. We have to assume brothers are over worked and always busy. There are too many activities vying for their attention!

- An Annex to the Resource book on local JPIC issues and relevant themes may be worth considering.

- Encourage contact, networking and collaboration with the FF, FI, other religious, diocesan offices and NGOs.

- Make use of offers by friars and others to support JPIC formation in your Province. Get to know the brothers at this meeting and find out how they can help you in the future.

- Every Province and Conference should have a set of Statutes approved by the appropriate ministers.

- Consider elaborating a Provincial or Conference news bulletin or make more effective use of existing means of communication.

- Plan dates of meetings and activities well in advance. This will greatly facilitate participation by members of the commission as well as the brothers in general.

- Learn how to facilitate a meeting. Always insist on concrete and workable proposals with clearly defined responsibilities before leaving the meeting.

- Do not neglect your own ongoing formation and seek out appropriate opportunities.

- Encourage other brothers to join the JPIC commission, especially those in initial formation.

- Consider who will follow you in the animation job and start to prepare the ground. It is not good enough to leave this responsibility to Provincials. We need to make proposals.

- Take care of your relationship with the Lord. Pray for and about your work. Bring your struggles related to JPIC animation to your prayer and to your spiritual director.

- Draw up realistic JPIC programs for the different stages of initial and ongoing formation with the appropriate commissions. They should include both theory and practical experiences. Use the materials available from other Provinces. Too often we try to invent the wheel again.

### **Conclusion**

As I stated at the outset of this presentation I did not propose to cover all aspects of JPIC work. In fact, it would have been impossible. After visiting all of the Conferences, listening to you and experiencing first hand much of the work, I can give an overview, limited as it may be. I am greatly impressed with what I have seen. I am optimistic about the development of JPIC in the Order. I think we have excellent animators and good struc-

tures built up over the years by eminent and dedicated brothers. It is due to their tenacity and fidelity in difficult times that JPIC values continue to be considered. We are responsible now to ensure that this progress continues, privileged by this opportunity of ongoing formation in Vossenack. Let us always be positive and faith filled. The more positive and creative we are, the greater the possibility that our ideal will be reached; the total

integration of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation into the life and ministry of the brotherhood and there will no longer be a need for animation of these values. Our service is to the Lord and to those who are deprived of an equitable share of the planet's resources. For their sake, let us improve our ability to animate and take the task seriously. Let us learn from one another and support one another now and in the future.