

II INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF JPIC, OFM THANKS

Brothers and Sisters

We came to this Congress with fears and expectations and, thanks to the collaboration of all, we have overcome our doubts and have progressively achieved our expectations. This is the most important thing. Therefore, besides the results of this Congress, we have the certainty that the experience of the work of the Friars with the excluded, the reflection on the **causes**, the **processes** and the **consequences** of exclusion, the elaboration of some guidelines for accompanying the excluded, both within and outside our fraternities, and the doctrinal elements and methodologies for the formation of the JPIC Animators, will help us immensely in our service of animation in the fundamental values of justice, peace and integrity of creation, together with the other priorities of the Order.

Equally, the participative methodology which we used will continue to make possible the passage from reflection to concrete proposals on the basis of the different experiences and orientations which come to us from the Bible, Franciscanism and sociology, expressed in many documents of the Order. It is a methodology which will enable us to work along with the secretariats of our Entities and Conferences.

Because of all this, brothers and sisters, as we approach the end of this II International Congress of JPIC, we wish to express our feelings of appreciation and gratitude to God as well as to each and every one of you.

We express our profound thanks to the Trinitarian and One God for His presence, manifested at times in the silence of personal and fraternal prayer, in the celebration of the Eucharist and in the face of the brother whom He Himself gave us, and also in the faces of the landless brothers and sisters whom we had the opportunity to know. All has been a grace from God, a kairos, for our daily discernment as Friars Minor.

Our gratitude goes to each and every one of you for your active participation in the different moments of the meeting, especially in the prayer, the visits to our landless brothers and sisters, recreation, reflection and in working out the proposals in groups and in plenary sessions. The running of the Congress would have been impossible without your capacity to adapt to unforeseen circumstances of our plans and programmes, without the generosity and the creativity to confront and solve the difficulties which came up. All these attitudes, undoubtedly, helped us to create a milieu of serenity, joy, cordiality, respect, simplicity and of gratitude.

Now, in the name of the JPIC Office in Rome and of each one of the Animators, we wish to manifest our particular and fraternal appreciation and gratitude to:

Br. José Rodríguez Carballo, Minister General, who convoked, in the name of the General Government and of the entire Order, this II International Congress of JPIC. We thank him for his closeness, his support and for all the confidence placed in the Friar participants and, in a very special way, in the JPIC Office in Rome.

The Friars of the General Curia: Br. Mario Favretto, Definitor General, Br. Juan Ignacio Muro, Definitor General, Br. Máximo Fusarelli, Secretary General for Formation and Studies; and Br. Nestor Schwerz, Secretary General for Evangelisation, for their contributions in the reflection and at other moments of the Congress. Their presence was a sign of unity with the Entities of the

Order and an urgent call to work together in the task of animating the Friars in the different aspects of our charism.

The Ministers Provincial: Br. Marino Porcelli, of Roma, Br. Roberto Ferrari, of Milan, Br. Augusto, of San Pablo, Brazil; Br. Irineo Gassen, of San Francisco, and President of the Brazilian Conference; Br. Manlio di Franco, of Salerno, for their support of this Congress and their decision to continue to push, within their respective Entities, this service so that JPIC might be a fundamental part of the life and mission of the Friars.

The Animation Committee of JPIC in the Order: especially to Br. Teddy Lennon, Br. Cesare Azimonti and Br. Markus Heinze, for all the work of preparation for and execution of the Congress, carried out together with Br. Vicente Felipe, as Moderator, and Dr. Miguel Alvarez, as facilitator. Their availability and practical sense helped to orient the dynamics of the Congress.

The experts: Br. Celso Marcio, in Franciscanism; Dr. Thomas Mc Grath, in the Bible, and Dr. Miguel Alvares, in Sociology and also Facilitator of the Congress. Their reflections and clear, opportune questions put drive into the Congress..

The team of translators and interpreters: Br. Patrick Hudson, Br. Gabriel García and Br. Alessandro Caspoli, for their presence and professional work, which make it possible to overcome the linguistic distances and to facilitate communication between the Friars.

The secretarial team: Br. Jim McIntosh, Br. Gianfrancesco Sisto and Br. Tito Cubillos, for their generous and efficient work. The daily bulletins and the updating of the web page kept up the interest and the desire to continue.

The coordinators of the various commissions: Br. Atilio Batistuz, for liturgy; Br. Fabio L'amour, animation; Br. Kaus Finkam, health; Br. Markus Heinze, finances; Br. Rodrigo Peret, logistics, together with his team composed of Friars from the Provinces of the Immaculate Conception and of St. Anthony, and of the Foundation of Our Lady of Fatima and some lay people. Thank you for your work during both the preparation and realization of the Congress. Thanks for your silent, constant and opportune service, carried out with great dedication and generous commitment.

Thank you once again, brothers and sisters, for having accepted the invitation of the Minister General to come to the Congress and, above all, for the work carried out. We know the process is long and nothing is easy. But we are not alone. The Lord of history, who continues to invite us to listen to His Word, to eat His flesh and to drink His blood, accompanies us so that we may discover Him in the face of the needy and be participants in His destiny of death and resurrection. It is the same Jesus who invites us to both the solitude and silence of the mountains, and the paths of life in order to embrace and practice the mercy of the Good Samaritan. Francis of Assisi walks with us, challenging us to “dismount from the horse” of our comforts and social and cultural prejudices... in order to go to embrace the excluded of today. A multitude of excluded are also at our side. They wish to embrace us through their life, joy and hope, simply because they continue to trust in our presence as Friars Minor, despite our limitations. Thank you, brothers and sisters, for taking on this service of JPIC animation within the daily effort to live, with greater authenticity and coherence, the Franciscan vocation and mission, which we freely took up one day.

Uberlandia, 8th February, 2006

Joseph Rozansky, ofm
Luis Cabrera, ofm