

CONTACT

Newsletters - OFM International Council for JPIC

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The Agenda of JPIC

- 21– 26 March, Animation Committee (Rome)
- 21-27 June, Conference on Formation and JPIC SAAO (Malaysia)
- 12-16 October, Animation Committee (Spain)
- 17-23 October, European Congress of JPIC (Spain)
- 2-7 December, African Congress (South Africa)
- 7– 15 December, OFM International Council for JPIC (South Africa)

The Sub-Saharan Conference

A meeting of the JPIC, in which delegates from Kenya, Togo, Zimbabwe, South Africa and, for the first time, Angola, was held in Africa from the 1st to 5th December 2003. We also had Robert Mickens, of the Geneva FI, and Br. Vumile Nogemane, ofm, Provincial of South Africa and President of the Conference participating.

During the week, time was given to the participants to visit a local clinic for those suffering from HIV/Aids. Here the participants and some local friars underwent voluntary counseling and testing for the HIV virus. We Visited also the St Francis care centre run by the friars for

those infected by the disease and in a terminal stage and also the small children who are infected. In the reports presented by the various entities many topics were covered and there is mention of the possibility of opening an office together with the Capuchins. The office would serve as a resource centre for this area of ministry and for other areas of JPIC activity. In addition the possibility of working with the F.I. office in Geneva on the topic of HIV/AIDS was discussed. The friars are already looking for a person to take charge of this task.

During the meeting there was input from Sr. Berna-

dette Duffy, a Holy Cross Sister, and two men working with the South African Bishops Conference Aids Desk, i.e. Mr. Emmanuel Modikoane and Mr. Johan Viljoen. Their contributions were enlightening and provoked much discussion. They explained the various programs being run by the Church all over the country.

The Delegates suggested that the Continental meeting and the International Council meetings take place in South Africa between 1--10 Dec. Immediately afterwards, the ordinary session of the JPIC International Council of the OFM met from the 10th to the 15th.

International year of rice - Rice is life

Br. Alejandro and Br. Rodrigo participated in the World Conference: "Rice in the world context of the markets and sustainable systems of production" in the FAO Headquarters in Rome on the 13th and 14th of February on the occasion of the International Year of

Rice entitled "Rice is life". About 600 normative authorities, experts and representatives of the rice industry and members of NGO's from 90 countries, presented their perspectives on the tendencies in the area.

The General Assembly

said: "Recalling resolution 2/2001 of the Conference of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, -Noting that rice is the staple food of more than half of the world's population, - Affirming the need to heighten awareness of the role of rice in alleviat-

ing poverty and malnutrition, - Reaffirming the need to focus world attention on the role that rice can play in providing food security and eradicating poverty in the attainment of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration,

1. Decides to declare the year 2004 the International Year of Rice;

2. Invites the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to facilitate the implementation of the International Year of Rice, in collaboration with Governments, the United

Nations Development Programme, the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research Centres and other relevant organizations of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations". (Adopted on 16 December 2002).

IV World Social Forum

About 80 thousand people representing 2,660 organisations from 132 countries participated in the fourth edition of the World Social Forum that was held in Bombay, India, from the 16th to 21st January 2004.

The programme of activities was the responsibility of the Indian Organising Committee, which proposed 13 events in different formats, panels, round-table, conferences and public meetings. The inclusion in the programme of activities proposed by the organisation inscribed in the WSF, such as panels, conferences and round-tables, was something new in the methodology of the process of the WSF. 35 events in this format were held, which when added to other minor activities such as seminars, workshops, meetings, etc., came to more than 1,200 events in total.

"One of the essential elements of the Christian journey is the ongoing capacity to examine the signs of the times and to interpret them in the light of the Gospel" (May The Lord give you peace, General Chapter, 2003)

During the six days of the WSF more than 1,500 artists, poets, playwrights, writers and film stars participated through different cultural proposals presenting some 150 pieces of street and resistance theatre as well as a festival of films with more than 85 titles on the main topics of the WSF. The diversity in numbers was matched by the diversity of thought, which is an indisputable foundation for the alternatives in question. The production of personal and different thought together with the strengthening of the autonomy of each are a solid basis for the construction of this other possible world, as was emphasised in the panel-debate "different alternatives for global changes", organised by different women's networks.

On the other hand, the topic of economic justice also constituted a turning point in the analysis of a broad range of problems, beginning with agriculture where free trade is the main threat even to communications, whose mechanisms form the pivot of globalisation.

In 2005 the WSF will be held in Porto Alegre, Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil), though the dates are not yet fixed. A delegation of 20 people took part in the name of the Franciscan movement through the help of The Central Mission of the Franciscans (MZF) in Germany. In its next ordinary session the Animation Committee will discuss how we can motivate OFM participation.

Water for life
In defence of our "Sister Water"
Water - a right for all

Prepared by the work group for Ecology of the JPIC Promoters in Rome, Italy. Copies of this material and a leaflet are available in different languages.

The copies can be downloaded at:
www.ofm-jpic.org/aqua/

For further information visit the web sites:
1. International Year of Rice:

<http://www.fao.org/rice2004/>

2. World Social Forum:
<http://www.forumsocialmundial.org.br/>