

African and Arabian Fraternities request formation and support for YouFra



Press release

Rome, November 7, 2017 -- The OFS General Chapter learned at first hand about the progress of two of the Order's particularly attractive projects, Africa and Holy Land – Arabia, both of which asked for greater access to formation materials and support for the growing number of Franciscan vocations among groups of young people.

After being renewed three years ago, Project Africa is now in its second stage, and continues its work of facilitating the growth of local fraternities now surging accross the continent, despite the difficult communcations and huge distances between them.

The aim is to continue with the workshops which untuil now have made it possible to reach brothers and sisters in different countries, living in both French and English-speaking fraternities.

The project leaders are working on the celebration of the first Panafrican Congress of the OFS, due to be held in 2018.

Regarding the Holy Land – Arabia, this project was begun in the present sexennium. Its aim is to achieve united action in an area that shares a number of characteristics: cultural and linguistic affinity and a minority Christian presence, sometimes with limited freedom to express religious faith.

Some of the regions have the additional difficulty of political conflict affecting their daily lives, as in Israel and Palestine in the Holy Land, or even a state of war, as in Syria, which has meant the disappearance of fraternities in Aleppo and Damascus.

Both projects also declared their intention to focus on the transmission of our charism to young people through Franciscan Youth, whose representative also spoke at the Chapter today. Andrea Odak, International Coordinator of YouFra, highlighted the need to give YouFra its proper place within OFS. The means to do this already exist, and they need to be used, such as simultaneous membership of a fraternity (of YouFra and OFS) and the presence of a fraternal animator.

