



# K O I N Ō N I A

*...together on the journey*

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## EVANGELII GAUDIUM

### PEACE AND SOCIAL DIALOGUE

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In this short article we want to re-read the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* by Pope Francis, from no. 217 up to n. 258, pointing out two important elements of the social dimension of evangelization: **peace**, as a fruit of the Spirit,<sup>1</sup> and the **dialogue**, as a path for evangelization.

In the Apostolic Exhortation the words dialogue and peace are as frequent as the words meeting, joy, gospel, evangelize, mission and missionary. We can say that from the first speech, Pope Francis had expressed the desire to carry on this mission as Pontiff, when March 13, 2013 he said: “we take up this journey: Bishop and People. This journey of the Church of Rome which presides in charity over all the Churches. A journey of fraternity, of love, of trust among us. Let us always pray for one another. Let us pray for the whole world, that there may be a great spirit of fraternity”.<sup>2</sup> This brotherhood should be built through dialogue.

In the morning meditation of May 8, 2013, the Pope presents St. Paul as an example of a herald of Jesus Christ: “Paul is a Pope, a builder of bridges. He did not want to become a builder of walls”.<sup>3</sup> The Apostle does not begin his ministry condemning the Greeks as worshipers of idols, but tries to reach their hearts through dialogue. Once he approaches their hearts, he announces to them the joy of the Gospel. In the evangelization, it is important the way. In the 1<sup>st</sup>. year of his pontificate, Pope Francis presented himself as the Pope of dialogue.

#### The common good and the peace in society

Social peace can not be understood as the absence of war, conflict, that is, giving up the truth to avoid confrontations and all forms of violence, and accepting the imposition of one group over another.<sup>4</sup> Social peace can not be the result of lack of claim for a more equitable distribution of wealth to all, or the result of the absence of social inclusion of the poor and human rights, as a pretext for a consensus that benefits a small minority.<sup>5</sup>

As the Pope says: “The dignity of the human person and the common good rank higher than the comfort of those who refuse to renounce their privileges. When these values are threatened, a

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Gal* 5, 22.

<sup>2</sup> [https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2013/march/documents/papa-francesco\\_20130313\\_benedizione-urbi-et-orbi.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2013/march/documents/papa-francesco_20130313_benedizione-urbi-et-orbi.html)

<sup>3</sup> [https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/cotidie/2013/documents/papa-francesco-cotidie\\_20130508\\_non-exclusion.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/cotidie/2013/documents/papa-francesco-cotidie_20130508_non-exclusion.html)

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Evangelii Gaudium* (EG) n. 218

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

prophetic voice must be raised.”<sup>6</sup> Peace must be the result of a comprehensive development of all, if it were not so, there will be new conflicts and violence.

It’s necessary to remember “that the common good must take account of all those social conditions which favor the full development of human personality”.<sup>7</sup> We can say that “It is generally accepted today that the common good is best safeguarded when personal rights and duties are guaranteed”.<sup>8</sup>

To develop fully involves becoming a people, consisting of responsible citizens who do not let themselves be dragged as a mass manipulated by dominant forces.

“Progress in building a people in peace, justice and fraternity depends on four principles related to constant tensions present in every social reality.”<sup>9</sup> To Pope Francis, these principles constitute a way that makes it possible to achieve peace. These four principles are:

### **Time is greater than space**

The first principle appears when “a bipolar tension between the fullness and the limitation... [between] “time”, considered in a broad sense, [and that] refers to the fullness [and] the moment [as] expression of the limitation that you live in a confined space”.<sup>10</sup>

“This principle enables us to work slowly but surely, without being obsessed with immediate results... One of the faults which we occasionally observe in social political activity is that spaces and power are preferred to time and processes... Giving priority to time means being concerned about initiating processes rather than possessing spaces... is to give priority to actions which generate new processes in society and engage other persons and groups who can develop them to the point where they bear fruit in significant historical events”.<sup>11</sup>

The Pope also states that “this criterion also applies to evangelization, which calls for attention to the bigger picture, openness to suitable processes and concern for the long run... The parable of the wheat and the weeds (cf. Mt 13: 24-30) describes an important aspect of evangelization, which is to show how the enemy can occupy the space of the Kingdom and cause damage to the weeds, but he is defeated by the goodness of the grain that occurs with time”.<sup>12</sup>

### **Unity prevails over conflict**

The Pope tells us that “conflict cannot be ignored or concealed... But if we remain trapped in conflict, we lose our perspective, our horizons shrink and reality itself begins to fall apart. In the midst of conflict, we lose our sense of the profound unity of reality”.<sup>13</sup>

In addition, he clears out that “facing conflict, some simply look at it and go on as if nothing had happened, they wash their hands in order to continue with their lives, Others enter the conflict so that they remain captives, lose the horizon, projected on institutions their confusion and dissatisfaction, and so the unity becomes impossible. But there is a third way, as appropriate, of facing the conflict. It is to agree to bear the conflict, solve it and turn it into a ring connection of a new process”.<sup>14</sup>

This third form “makes it possible to develop a communion in the differences... [In this manner, the people are able to] go beyond the conflict surface... [and] ...build social friendship [because they know that] unity is higher than conflict”.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> EG, n. 218.

<sup>7</sup> Pope John XXIII, Encyclical *Pacem in Terris*, n. 58.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, n. 60.

<sup>9</sup> EG, n. 221.

<sup>10</sup> EG, n. 222.

<sup>11</sup> EG, n. 223.

<sup>12</sup> EG, n. 225.

<sup>13</sup> EG, n. 226.

<sup>14</sup> EG, n. 227.

<sup>15</sup> EG, n. 228.

“The conflicts, tensions and opposites can reach a multiform unity that generates new life... [if they find the right environment for a resolution] on an upper level that preserves itself the valuable potential of polarity in contrast”.<sup>16</sup>

We must always remember that “Christ has made all things one in Himself: heaven and earth, God and man, time and eternity, flesh and spirit, person and society. The sign of this unity and reconciliation of all in Himself is peace. Christ “is our peace”. (Ef 2,14) Peace is possible because the Lord has overcome the world and its constant conflict “by making peace through the blood of his cross (Col 1,20)”.<sup>17</sup>

“The message of peace is not about a negotiated settlement but rather the conviction that the unity brought by the Spirit can harmonize every diversity..., [which becomes] beautiful when it can constantly enter into a process of reconciliation and seal a sort of cultural covenant resulting in a ‘reconciled diversity’”.<sup>18</sup>

### **Realities are more important than ideas**

“Between [reality and idea] it has to be a continuous dialogue, lest ideas become detached from realities ”.<sup>19</sup>

“Ideas – conceptual elaborations – are at the service of communication, understanding, and praxis. Ideas disconnected from realities give rise to ineffectual forms of idealism and nominalism, capable at most of classifying and defining, but certainly not calling to action. What calls us to action are realities illuminated by reason ”.<sup>20</sup>

“The principle of reality, of a word already made flesh and constantly striving to take flesh anew, is essential to evangelization.”<sup>21</sup>

### **The whole is greater than the part**

“The whole is greater than the part, but it is also greater than the sum of its parts. There is no need, then, to be overly obsessed with limited and particular questions. We constantly have to broaden our horizons and see the greater good which will benefit us all. But this has to be done without evasion or uprooting.”<sup>22</sup>

It is important that the whole and the parts are held together to avoid falling either “in an abstract universalism”, or in the “daily meanness”.<sup>23</sup>

Between the local sphere and the global dimension should be a mutual enrichment. For example: “A person who retains his personal peculiarities and does not hide his identity, when integrating cordially in a community, he does not cancel but receives new stimuli for its development. It is neither the global sphere canceling, or partiality isolated which makes sterile”.<sup>24</sup>

“Both pastoral and political action alike seek to gather ...the best of each”; thus, preserving their peculiarities, incorporates each in full, for the common good of all.<sup>25</sup>

“The Good News is the joy of the Father who desires that none of his little ones be lost, the joy of the Good Shepherd who finds the lost sheep and brings it back to the flock.”<sup>26</sup>

### **Social dialogue as a contribution to peace**

“Evangelization also involves the path of dialogue. For the Church today, three areas of dialogue stand out where she needs to be present in order to promote full human development and to pursue the

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<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> *EG*, n. 229.

<sup>18</sup> *EG*, n. 230.

<sup>19</sup> *EG*, n. 231.

<sup>20</sup> *EG*, n. 232.

<sup>21</sup> *EG*, n. 233.

<sup>22</sup> *EG*, n. 235.

<sup>23</sup> *EG*, n. 234.

<sup>24</sup> *EG*, n. 235.

<sup>25</sup> *EG*, n. 236.

<sup>26</sup> *EG*, n. 237.

common good: dialogue with states, dialogue with society – including dialogue with cultures and the sciences – and dialogue with other believers who are not part of the Catholic Church”.<sup>27</sup>

“In her dialogue with the State and with society, the Church does not have solutions for every particular issue”.<sup>28</sup>

“The Church proclaims “the Gospel of peace” (Eph 6:15) and she wishes to cooperate with all national and international authorities ... [to] design, in a culture which privileges dialogue as a form of encounter, it is time to devise a means for building consensus and agreement while seeking the goal of a just, responsive and inclusive society”.<sup>29</sup>

“It is the responsibility of the State to safeguard and promote the common good of society ... [and, for this reason,] with a fully committed to political dialogue and consensus building, it plays a fundamental role, one which cannot be delegated, in working for the integral development of all”.<sup>30</sup>

### **Dialogue between faith, reason and science**

“Dialogue between science and faith also belongs to the work of evangelization at the service of peace ... Evangelization is attentive to scientific advances and wishes to shed on them the light of faith and the natural law so that they will remain respectful of the centrality and supreme value of the human person at every stage of life. All of society can be enriched thanks to this dialogue, which opens up new horizons for thought and expands the possibilities of reason. This too is a path of harmony and peace”.<sup>31</sup>

“The Church... rejoices... [With] the progress of science, [because it] rigorously focused on their specific field of inquiry, arrive at a conclusion which reason cannot refute faith does not contradict.... [On the other hand] believers cannot claim that a scientific opinion which is attractive but not sufficiently verified has the same weight as a dogma of faith. At times some scientists have exceeded the limits of their scientific competence by making certain statements or claims. But here the problem is not with reason itself, but with the promotion of a particular ideology which blocks the path to authentic, serene and productive dialogue”.<sup>32</sup>

### **Ecumenical dialogue**

“The credibility of the Christian message would be much greater if Christians could overcome their divisions and the Church could realize “the fullness of catholicity proper to her in those of her children who, though joined to her by baptism, are yet separated from full communion with her”.<sup>33</sup> “In addition, it becomes more difficult to express in every respect the fullness of catholicity in the reality of life.”<sup>34</sup>

“You have to trust your heart to fellow traveler without suspicion, without mistrust, and first of all look at what we seek: peace in the face of the one God.”.Relying to another is something handmade, peace is crafted”.<sup>35</sup>

“If we really believe in the abundantly free working of the Holy Spirit, we can learn so much from one another!”<sup>36</sup>

### **Relations with Judaism**

“As Christians, we cannot consider Judaism as a foreign religion... The Church, which shares with Jews an important part of the sacred Scriptures, looks upon the people of the covenant and their faith as one of the sacred roots of her own Christian identity (cf. Rom 11:16-18)”.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> EG, n. 238.

<sup>28</sup> EG, n. 241.

<sup>29</sup> EG, n. 239.

<sup>30</sup> EG, n. 240.

<sup>31</sup> EG, n. 242.

<sup>32</sup> EG, n. 243.

<sup>33</sup> EG, n. 244.

<sup>34</sup> *Unitatis Redintegratio*, 4.

<sup>35</sup> EG, n. 244.

<sup>36</sup> EG, n. 246.

It must be remembered that both also share "many ethical beliefs and common concern for justice and the development of peoples."<sup>38</sup>

### **Interreligious dialogue**

"An attitude of openness in truth and in love must characterize the dialogue with the followers of non-Christian religions, in spite of various obstacles and difficulties, especially forms of fundamentalism on both sides. Interreligious dialogue is a necessary condition for peace in the world, and so it is a duty for Christians as well as other religious communities".<sup>39</sup>

"True openness involves remaining steadfast in one's deepest convictions, clear and joyful in one's own identity, while at the same time being 'open to understanding those of the other party,' and 'knowing that dialogue can enrich each side'<sup>40</sup>

"Our relationship with the followers of Islam has taken on great importance, since they are now significantly present in many traditionally Christian countries, where they can freely worship and become fully a part of society.... Many of them also have a deep conviction that their life, in its entirety, is from God and for God. They also acknowledge the need to respond to God with an ethical commitment and with mercy towards those most in need." <sup>41</sup>

"In order to sustain dialogue with Islam, suitable training is essential for all involved, not only so that they can be solidly and joyfully grounded in their own identity, but so that they can also acknowledge the values of others, appreciate the concerns underlying their demands and shed light on shared beliefs. We Christians should embrace with affection and respect Muslim immigrants to our countries in the same way that we hope and ask to be received and respected in countries of Islamic tradition."<sup>42</sup>

### **Social dialogue in a context of religious freedom**

"The religious freedom [is] a fundamental human right. This includes "the freedom to choose the religion which one judges to be true and to manifest one's beliefs in public". A healthy pluralism, one which genuinely respects differences and values them as such, does not entail privatizing religions in an attempt to reduce them to the quiet obscurity of the individual's conscience or to relegate them to the enclosed precincts of churches, synagogues or mosques... The respect due to the agnostic or non-believing minority should not be arbitrarily imposed in a way that silences the convictions of the believing majority or ignores the wealth of religious traditions"<sup>43</sup>

"Intellectuals and serious journalists frequently descend to crude and superficial generalizations in speaking of the shortcomings of religion, and often prove incapable of realizing that not all believers – or religious leaders – are the same. Some politicians take advantage of this confusion to justify acts of discrimination".<sup>44</sup>

"As believers, we also feel close to those who do not consider themselves part of any religious tradition, yet sincerely seek the truth, goodness and beauty which we believe have their highest expression and source in God. We consider them as precious allies in the commitment to defending human dignity, in building peaceful coexistence between peoples and in protecting creation".<sup>45</sup>

Towards the end of Chapter IV, the Pope encourages Christians to express with words, attitudes and actions of the social dimension of the Gospel.<sup>46</sup>

In conclusion, we can say that Saint Francis has always had a focus on peace. In fact, we find in his writings the word peace many times. For example, in *Ammonizioni* nn. 13 e 15, in *Benedizione a*

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<sup>37</sup> EG, n. 247.

<sup>38</sup> EG, n. 249.

<sup>39</sup> EG, n. 250.

<sup>40</sup> EG, n. 251.

<sup>41</sup> EG, n. 252.

<sup>42</sup> EG, n. 253.

<sup>43</sup> EG, n. 255.

<sup>44</sup> EG, n. 256.

<sup>45</sup> EG, n. 257.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. EG, n. 258.

*Frate Leone*, in *Cantico delle Creature*, in the *Regola non Bollata* in chapter 14 and in so many other writings. The word dialogue does not appear in the Franciscan Sources, but that does not mean it was not present in St. Francis' s life In *the Regola non Bollata* in Chapter 16, talking about how the brothers should go among non-Christians, Francis trace the method of dialogue with the Islamic world. In the *Letter to a Minister*, he invites us to listen to his brother; this is the first step of the dialogue to understand each other and possibly grant forgiveness.

## NEW – CHAPTERS – VISITS – MEETINGS

### **Belarus – National Elective Chapter**

The ofs Belarus National elective chapter happened from September 19th to September 21st, at the P. P. Redemptoristis's, in Grodno. The chapter was presided by Atilio Galimberti, OFS (Italy), delegate of the General Minister, and Br. Alesky Romanowicz, OFM, delegate of CAS. The chapter members were 27, but some did not attend the meetings due to their health problems. The chapter members came from the 6 areas in which the territory of the Fraternity is nowadays divided. Nineteen chapter members were present during the voting, and Maria Etol was elected as Minister and International Counselor, as well as Halina Rakowska, was elected as vice Minister.

### **Lituania (Kaunas) – National Elective Chapter**

The National Fraternity of Lituania celebrated its National chapter from September 19th to September 21st, at Kaunas. The chapter was presided by Ewald Kreuzer (Austria), delegate of the General Minister of the OFS, and by Br. Antanas Bluzas, OFM (National Spiritual Assistant of GiFra of Lituania), delegate of the Conference of the General Spiritual Assistents (CAS). The new national Minister and international Counselor is Virginija Mickuté. From 2006 to 2012 Virginia had been national president of GiFra of Lituania. The leaders of the national fraternity OFS and GiFra of Lituania and the delegate of the general minister were received by Mons. Sigitas Tamkevicius, Archbishop of Kaunas.

### **Portugal – National Elective Chapter**

From September 26th to September 28th, at the House of Spirituality Francesco and Giacinta Marto, in Fatima, 54 secular Franciscans and 3 spiritual Assistents were assembled to celebrate the national elective chapter. Benedetto Lino, delegate of the general Minister of the OFS, presided the chapter together with Br. José Antonio Cruz Duarte, OFM, general assistant OFS. Because there was no quorum to celebrate the Chapter, it was nominated a temporary national counsel, being Maria Paula Canário, the Minister and International Counselor, and Ana Reis, Vice minister.

### **Assisi – Encounter with the “Conferenza dei MM. GG. Del I Ordine e TOR”**

At October 2nd, at St.Damian's Convent, in Assisi, there was the annual encounter of the Conference of MM. GG. Of the Order and of the TOR with the CAS. It also took part in that meeting Br. Rui Lopes, OP, General promoter of the Dominican Laity, with his colaborator, Br Manolo Puppini, OP, and the Fr. Alzinir Debastiani, OCD (Ordo Carmelitarum Discalceatorum), General Delegate OCDS (Ordo Carmelitarum Discalceatorum Saecularis = Order Carmelite Saecularis Discalced ). The purpose of the meeting was to be aware of the relationship of religious belonging to other Orders, precisely that of Preachers like that of the Discalced Carmelites, with their respective Tertiary or secular members which they are bound. We have seen that there are similarities but also important and relevant differences. We were at lunch. The monks at the Monastery of St. Damian welcomed us very brotherly. To them goes our full gratitude.

### **Spain - National Elective Chapter**

In October 11th and 12th it happened in Madrid, at the Sister's House of Spirituality *Franciscan Missionaries of the Mother of the Divine Shepherd* the National elective Chapter of OFS of Spain. María Consuelo Núñez, the CIOFS Presidency Counselor in Spanish language presided the chapter, together with Br. Martín Bitzer, OFMConv, General Assistant OFS. Present were the four National Spiritual Assistants OFS: Br. Leonardo García, OFM, Br. Antolín Mayo, OFMConv, Br. Inocencio Egidio, OFMCap e Br. Enrique Herrero, TOR. The maturity of the Chapter members was the characteristic feature for elections that took place with great serenity and transparency. José Luis Lopetegui was elected national Minister and Manuela Berciano, was reelected international Counselor. Br. Martin presided over the closing Mass, concelebrated in which all the spiritual assistants present. This Mass was also transmitted to National Radio of Spain, thanks to the service of Br. Manuel Muñoz Fernández, OFM Cap.

### **Pakistan - National Elective Chapter**

From October 17<sup>th</sup> to October 19<sup>th</sup>, in the house of the Custody of St. John the Baptist OFM, at Gulshan-e-Iqbal, Karachi, 13 brothers were assembled for the national elective Chapter, representing the nine local brotherhood, of which only four are canonically established. Lucy A. Almirañez, member of the CIOFS presidency, Encarnación del Pozo delegate, General Minister OFS presided the Chapter, together with Br. Daniel Pervaz, OFM, delegate of the Conference of the Spiritual Assistants (CAS) general. The Franciscan Youth (YouFra) in Pakistan does not have a national structure, but in four fraternities already established meet a total of 46 young people. One of these young people is the Franciscan Youth in the Provisional National Council of the OFS. Albert Nazir was elected National Minister and International Counselor and Younas John, Vice-Minister.

### **Assisi – Africa project**

From October 22nd. To October 24th., the group that coordinates the Africa project had its first meeting in Assisi, at Domus Pacis, next to Basilica Santa Maria degli Angeli in Porziuncola. Encarnación del Pozo, General Minister OFS, presided the encounter. Doug Clorey, Vice Minister general OFS, coordinated it. Adolph Assagba, Togo, was elected coordinator of the Project, assisted by Jenny Harrington South Africa, which will also serve as a secretary, and Michat Legrand-Raout island Mauritius. Br. Amanuel Mesgun Temelso, OFM, will serve as spiritual assistant of the Project during the first year. The other members of the Project are: François Tabi Cameroon and Honorius Chilufya of Zambia. The Coordination Group has revised the Project who presented Doug Clorey, in which he showed the first phase of the same and its development. On day 23rd, Br Vincenzo Brocanelli, OFM, invited as an expert, has helped members to clarify the elements of the project for submission to the Presidency of the CIOFS which approved the Phase II. Following, the Africa Project was presented to the members of the General Elective Chapter of the OFS (Assisi, November 1 to 9).

### **ASSISI – Meeting of CIOFS Presidency**

The outgoing CIOFS Presidency (OFS Internacional Council ) met for the last time, from October 25th to October 30th at the Domus Pacis, next to the Basilica of Santa Maria degli Angeli in Portiuncula. This meeting, as said Encarnacion del Pozo in the letter of invitation, would be "a very special and joyful meeting for the brothers and sisters who, with God's help, have offered their services to all the brothers and sisters of the OFS and of YouFra in every part of the world. We carried out the mission entrusted to us, even with our limitations and our weaknesses. "This was "also a time to give thanks to the Lord for all goods and gifts we have received from Him in this time" On the first day was presented Br Francis Dor, OFMCap, new General Assistant OFS-YouFra. At the beginning of the meeting, each member of the Presidency has shared the most significant moments experienced since the last meeting in April. They were days of preparation for the VI General Elective Chapter of the OFS.

## **Assisi - General Elective Chapter OFS**

The VI General Elective Chapter of the OFS was held in Assisi at the Domus Pacis, next to the Basilica of Santa Maria degli Angeli in Portiuncula. The elective session was presided over by Br Nicholas Polichnowski, the General Minister TOR. Br Marco Tasca, OFM, he visited the headquarters of the Chapter to greet the chapter members gathered there, and Brother Michael Perry, OFM, has sent a letter of greeting. The central theme of the chapter entitled "How would you handle a world order as the OFS, at all levels", has aroused particular interest in the present, who have thought about this topic in the working groups and then intervened with great liveliness during the plenary. Eighty chapter members, plus forty observers and some special guests took part, according to their terms, the celebration of this event. To detect the logistics of Chapter coordinated by Lucio Monti, General Treasurer of the International Council, who was accompanied by many collaborators. The fraternal atmosphere has ensured that it took place with agility and serenity. The definition of new linguistic and geographical areas, the result of careful preparation and followed by a vote capitulate, does provide a more effective service to the International Fraternity of the OFS (FIOFS). The opening Mass, where it was consecrated the entire Order to Our Lady, took place in the Lower Basilica of St. Francis, and was presided over by Msgr. Domenico Sorrentino, Bishop of Assisi-Nocera Umbra-Gualdo Tadino. Other liturgical celebrations have marked the entire chapter, especially the Mass celebrated by Br Nicholas Polichnowski, the presence of the newly elected President of the International Council (International Council OFS), which was also attended by the four General Assistants OFS-YouFra. A conclusion of the Chapter were presented by the special Commission priorities on which the OFS should work in the next six years. The members of the new Presidency are:

- Minister General: **Tibor Kauser** (Hungary);
- Vice Minister general: **María Consuelo de Núñez** (Venezuela);
- Area Counselor Europe-1 English / German: **Ana Fruk** (Croatia);
- Area Counselor Europe-2 English / Italian: **Attilio Galimberti** (Italy);
- Spanish Latin America Area Counselor: **Ana María Raffo** (Peru);
- Area Counselor Portuguese / Spanish Latin America South: **Silvia Diana** (Argentina);
- Area Counselor English North America / Africa: **Jenny Harrington** (South Africa);
- Area Counselor English Asia / Oceania: **Augustine Young** (Korea);
- Area Counselor French: **Michel Janian** (Lebanon);
- YouFra Counselor: **Andrea Odak** (Bosnia and Herzegovina).

It also takes part of the Presidency the four General Assistants OFS-YouFra: **Br. José Antônio Cruz Duarte, OFM** (Brazil); **Br. Martín Pablo Bitzer, OFM Conv** (Argentina); **Br Francis Bongajum Dor, OFM** (Cameroon); and **Br. Amando Trujillo Cano, TOR** (Mexico).

## **Assisi - "Tempo forte" of the CAS**

From November 10th to November 15th, in Assisi, gathered the Conference of Spiritual Assistants (CAS) General OFS-YouFra, at the Convent of the Immaculate Conception (the head office of the Provincial Curia of the Capuchins of Umbria) to celebrate the so-called "Tempo forte", whose main purpose is to verify the path taken by the CAS during the year 2014 and to programme the year 2015. The meeting took place in an atmosphere of prayer, hard work and fraternal coexistence. The local Capuchin Franciscan community has welcomed very fraternally the Assistants and gave them a beautiful testimony about their life of intense prayer and fellowship, shared these days.

## **Rome - Canonization of Blessed Amato Ronconi, OFS**

Sunday, November 23rd, in St. Peter's Square, the four General Assistants attended the Mass of canonization of Blessed Amato Ronconi. During the Mass, were canonized by Pope Francis, five more blessed. The new saint, born in Saludecio, in Italy, in 1226, was orphaned early and spent his youth with the family of his brother. From a young age, Amato decided to live according to the Gospel, as St. Francis, becoming Secular Franciscan. His house has been turned into a home for the many pilgrims who came to Rome. In fact, he is the founder of the Hospital of the Poor of Saludecio Pellegrini, now it became the Retirement Home for the elderly.