

FRANCISCAN CENTENARIANS
GENERAL COMMITTEE OF THE FRANCISCAN FAMILY

Rome, May 31, 2025

Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary

To all National Franciscan Families.

Dear brothers and sisters of every national Franciscan Family,

The Lord give you peace!

We, the Franciscan Family, are currently experiencing years of grace and deep reflection, stimulated by the Centenaries of the Rule, the Greccio Crib, the Stigmata and the Canticle of the Creatures.

In 2026, we will commemorate the 800th anniversary of the Transitus of St. Francis of Assisi.

The 8th centenary of the *Easter of St. Francis* can be a chance to bring the Poverello of Assisi into “the streets and squares” of every part of the world, exposing his life, mission and spirituality to those unfamiliar with his story. We have a powerful opportunity to draw others into the Franciscan Spirit. As the Franciscan Family, we join together to creatively share St. Francis with every person we meet in every place possible.

Organizing something together will also be a prophetic sign of unity and hope, responding to the call of the universal Church in this Jubilee year. Francis of Assisi was the ultimate pilgrim of hope.

The General Committee of the Franciscan Family for the Franciscan Centenaries is offering to help in international efforts, where it is possible to organize events open to all, involving every national Franciscan Family. The General Committee would like to initiate a dialogue among us and with those who are not Franciscans, to plan an event that would build fraternal relationships and make St. Francis of Assisi even more widely known.

HOW TO ORGANIZE AN EVENT

- a) Establish a coordinating committee composed of representatives from all orders of the Franciscan Family: OFM, OFM Conv., OFM Cap., TOR, OFS, IFC-TOR, Poor Clares. Aside from the benefits of uniting and multiplying resources, working together among the various members of the Franciscan family would generate new creativity, coming from fraternal encounter.
- b) This coordinating committee would have the following mission:
 - 1) Decide on the theme and objectives of the event. The overall goal should be to reach a wider audience, mainly composed of non-Franciscans, and of different age groups: children, young people, adults, the elderly. The theme suggested by the General Ministers

of the Franciscan Family is "**Francis Man of Peace, Brother of All**," but each national Franciscan Family may consider other themes, deemed more suitable to its own reality. The Guidelines of the Conference of the Franciscan Family and the Thematic Cores provided by this General Committee in 2022 can be of help;

- 2) Decide where to hold the event and what its length needs to be over several days.
- 3) Decide on the program and types of events. Activities can be of various kinds: round tables; forums; meetings/debates with Franciscan and non-Franciscan experts; workshops; exhibitions; performances; prayer times; activities for children and/or families; poetry, art and music competitions, even involving schools if possible; etc.
- 4) Establish an outline budget of event costs and prepare all informational materials;
- c) set up an Organizing Group to take care of logistics; necessary permits; preparation of any contracts; contact with speakers and artists; recruitment and coordination of volunteers; and implementation of the event;
- d) Establish a fundraising group to look for sponsors and expenses;
- e) Establish a Communications Office to handle internal communications within the Franciscan Family and external communications; to take care of any social media to spread awareness of the event.

It is important to start working on this project a long time in advance, so that you can build good relationships among the members of the committee and other service groups, contact the people you want to involve and the institutions needed to obtain the locations. Long-term planning is a great aid for being able to arrive prepared for the success of the event.

Here are some links to events "in the streets and squares" organized by National or Regional Franciscan Families, where you can see videos and photographs, so you can get an idea about what is being suggested by the General Committee for Franciscan Centenaries.

<https://www.festivalfrancescano.it> (Italy - Emilia Romagna Region)

<https://www.meetingfrancescanomediterraneo.it> (Italy - Sicily Region)

Facebook Pages: Franciscan Meeting of the Mediterranean; Franciscan Festival

Youtube: searching Franciscan Festival or Mediterranean Franciscan Meeting

The real priority is to give space to Franciscan creativity and imagination in order to reach as many people as possible in our cities and put them in touch with St. Francis and his message, which is more relevant today than ever before. For our Franciscan Family, it can be a beautiful opportunity to evangelize, as a welcoming Church to every brother and sister thirsting for the Gospel. It gives testimony to the Gospel through the credible stories of St. Francis and the many who have embraced his charism in the course of eight hundred years.

Finally, we remind you to send contributions on what you accomplish in your national events (articles, photos, short videos) to the Franciscan Centenaries website <http://centenarifrancescani.org>

Fraternal greetings to you, all good in the Risen Lord!

The General Committee for Franciscan Centenaries.