

Rome, 24 April 2020

Prot. N. 00260/20

To all the Major Superiors  
To all the Brothers  
Their locations

Dear Brothers,

*May the Lord give you peace!*

I hope that you were all able to spend the holy days of Easter with particular depth, though most of us spent the time closed up in our respective friaries and in our own chapels. These days offer an impressive and singular opportunity for reflecting more on the mystery of the passion and death that the Son of God underwent, while refreshing the heart with the mystery of resurrection and life. This alone is excellent in providing for us a real and certain hope as we continue along our unsure path.

What is the situation as of now? From the information we have been receiving, especially due to the commendable and vital concern of the general councilors, it seems to me that I'm able to provide here a brief update. In almost all of the countries where we are present, measures have been taken to contain the pandemic, with major restrictions put in place, and above all with the demand to remain at home. We in general are also obliged to do so, and as far as I can see we are submitting ourselves to respecting the measures as well. I strongly recommend that everyone remain careful and prudent in maintaining their responsibility: it is an obligation to oneself and towards others!

So far, relatively few Capuchins have been infected with the virus: a good number of friars from the Province of Venice, some fraternities from the Province of France, and some other friars from the provinces of northern Italy and around Europe. This is the part of the world where the virus has affected us the most so far, and has contributed to the death of some brothers among us; up until now we have ten/fifteen deceased friars, again most of them from the Province of Venice or the Province of France. We pray to the Lord that others will not be infected, as well as for the brothers who have yet to fully recover.

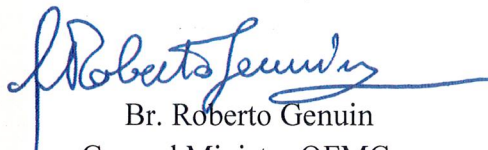
We are informed that the virus has also entered some of the fraternities in North America, and this morning I receive the news that one of our brothers from the Province of NY-NE died of COVID-19. We commend him, as we have repeatedly done for all of the others, to the Lord of Life.

Sadly, we must acknowledge that those who suffer the most are again the poorest people who suddenly find themselves without anything and without the possibility of obtaining even the essentials for living; I am thinking in particular of the great populations throughout Asia, but not only there. Therefore, I want to thank all those friars who are already working to help the poor in different ways; you are really a beautiful expression of our Order. Do not hesitate to let us know the needs, and as far as is possible, the Order will not fail to help you.

While we are all waiting to find out how things will develop in and around the world, we are all aware that activities will not be able to resume anytime soon. This forces us to decide, for the sake of remaining realistically prudent, to also postpone all of the main commitments scheduled for June. **Therefore, the Chapters scheduled for the month of June, as well as the meeting in Rome for the new Ministers are hereby suspended.** Concerning other 'local' meetings, each circumscription will have to approach them with appropriate discretion, upon considering the way things are unfolding around them and paying closest attention to the guidance of governmental and health authorities.

That's all for now. United with you in prayer, I can only send you my deepest regards, wish upon you a strong breath of the Spirit, and bless you all.



  
Br. Roberto Genuin  
General Minister OFMCap