

EXPO Milano: A Franciscan program for food

ANSA/ Edited by BICI

The Universal Exposition: EXPO MILANO 2015 is being held from May 1 to October 31, 2015 in Milan, and the principal theme is our relationship with food. The Franciscan Family is also making itself present in this unique event with various initiatives, above all in Milan and Assisi, with an inclusive and participatory agenda that proposes: the distribution of 250,000 copies of Franciscan magazines and periodicals with texts dedicated to the issue of food at the infopoints of EXPO Milano 2015. The texts will be published in Italian and English and will have as principal themes: Franciscan food, food 'on display', wasted food, food that speaks, invoked food, consumed food, Food between War and Peace, Food in the Religious Confessions, etc. Other initiatives are foreseen for:

MILAN: May 1 – October 31: Italian Pavilion, two works of art of Frederick Mason Perkins will be displayed from the permanent show of the Treasury of the Basilica of St. Francis, by concession of the Sacro Convento of Assisi: jewelry box-reliquary covered with silver and decorated with red coral (XVII c.); St. Sebastian, Martyr, oil painting on wood (XVI c); Video installation "The Restoration – Beauty Reborn": Images from the frescoes of the Basilica of St. Francis, from the catastrophic earthquake of 1997 to their return to splendor. The video is promoted by the Ministries of Cultural Goods and Activities and that of Tourism. The video installation, on the restoration of the Upper Basilica, at the show of the Palazzo Italia, is situated on the second floor in the area of "The Power of Beauty"; Video projection "the first color films of Francis in ultra HD" which

will them be transmitted to Europe, the Middle East, and North Africa on the experimental Ultra HD channel – 4K1 – of Eutelsat, official partner of EXPO 2015.

September 6: Italian Pavilion, at the Conference Center, there will be held the meeting, "Food in the religious faiths" – at which representatives of the various religious faiths will take part, illustrating the significance and importance of food in their religions.

October 13 or 16 (date to be determined): Eataly Pavilion, in the context of the exposition "Treasures of Italy" there will be a meeting on the presentation of the work of the renovation of the illumination of the Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi. Various experts in the area will participate in the event, treating the theme of light from the points of view of conservation, improvement of the appreciation of the frescoes, energy conservation, art, and the spiritual-liturgical.

ASSISI: October 1 – 31: In collaboration with the Region of Umbria, there will be the initiative "Between health and spirituality – the oil that heals and gives rebirth." In the time of the harvest and production of oil, emphasis will be given to this most important product, which is fundamental for Umbrian agriculture but also of great religious/sacred significance.

September 11: At the Sacro Convento in Assisi, there will be held "Panis Angelicus", an event dedicated to the relationship between food and music, meant as a tradition of the territory but also as creativity. The show is presented by the regional secretariat of the Ministries of Cultural Good and Activities and of Tourism for Umbria.

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MILANO 2015
1 MAGGIO • 31 OTTOBRE
NUTRIRE IL PIANETA
ENERGIA PER LA VITA

EXPO

October 4: Day dedicated to St. Francis, patron of Italy, on which the Lombardy Region will participate in the ceremony of the lighting of the Lamp of the Communes of Italy which will burn on the tomb of St. Francis, offering oil for the same land.

October 17: At the Sacro Convento in Assisi, the inauguration of the new lighting system of the Basilica of St. Francis which will give new value to the artistic patrimony, will respect the environment, and permit a better energy savings. At the end of the event there will be held a closing concert of the International Show of sacred music, "Assisi pax Mundi".



The Pope and the Capuchins in the heart of America

Interview with Br. Mariosvaldo Florentino, OFM Cap – Custos of Paraguay



What does the recent apostolic voyage of Pope Francis mean in practice for the Church in Paraguay?

The Church of Paraguay has experienced a moment of great joy and rejoicing with the presence of the successor of Peter in our 'Guarani' land. Well known is the admiration of the Holy Father for this land, its traditions, its Guarani language so loved by its inhabitants, the courage of the Paraguayan woman that he himself proclaimed as "the most glorious of all America". His presence has brought a new vigor to us, this Church living but also suffering because of certain scandals and internal disputes in recent years. It seems as if the visit of the Pope has healed over the wounds and has given a dose of fortitude to the pastors and faithful. It was beautiful to see the people in the streets, the great rows of volunteers, organizing groups in the various services, the close collaboration between Church and state in a good harmony.

A Pope called Francis in the midst of *the poorest*. What personal impressions remain with you?

Francis brought much hope to the sick, especially to the children he visited at the children's hospital, to the victims of flood who live in the shanty towns of the *bañados* that surround the city of Asunción. He listened

attentively to the complaints and the desires of the civil society, motivating them to profound and sincere dialogue. He celebrated the Eucharist in the National Shrine of the Virgin of Cacupé and consecrated Paraguay to her, he prayed vespers with the religious, priests, and seminarians. He also celebrated a large Mass at a precious altar made of ears of corn, squashes, sunflower seeds, and coconuts where Francis of Assisi and Ignatius of Loyola were portrayed as witnesses of Paraguayan faith. Finally, he met with more than two hundred thousand young people in a moving farewell.

Jesuits and Franciscans worked in *the first evangelization of Paraguay*. How are these two ways of living the gospel still perceived by the people?

Paraguay was evangelized by Franciscans and Jesuits. Initially by the Franciscans, in a simpler way with the 'Reductions,' more or less, living the same as the indigenous. The Jesuits will construct their reductions with technical use of stone, then unknown to the natives. When all the religious were expelled from the country the faith was preserved for a good hundred years by the Secular Franciscans. This has left a deep Franciscan impression in Paraguayan culture. It is often said that the Jesuits left stone ruins and the Franciscans left the faith in the people. In fact, we Capuchins note that the Paraguayan people love to define themselves as 'the Franciscan heart of America'. Therefore we have begun to print our publications and materials: Paraguay, Franciscan Heart of America. And we are convinced that the identity of this nation is Franciscan. Thus, to welcome a Pope called Francis, with his particular simplicity, has struck in a

deep way the chords of the very Franciscan instrument that is the Paraguayan pastoral identity.

What was the contribution of the Capuchins during this voyage of the Pope?

For the papal visit, I was invited by the Bishops' Conference of Paraguay to take on the coordination of the liturgical preparations and to make the bridge with the Office of Liturgical Celebrations of the Supreme Pontiff, for the simple reason of being the only doctorate in liturgy in the country. I don't know why, but the head of that office, Monsignor Guido Marini—who is close to the Capuchins in Genoa, having said that he received his first communion in the Santo Padre friary—when he saw me he exclaimed, "I didn't expect to see a Capuchin in this job!" The experience of collaboration was intense and fruitful. Thanks be to God the celebrations were dignified, simple, and the participation was good. Other friars collaborated as well: Br. Valentim Pesente, as member of the National Commission of Catholic Communicators, was very involved in this field during the visit. Br. Ramón Arévalo also served as deacon during the vespers, Br. Marcello Caballero proclaimed the gospel during the principal Mass and the friars Héctor Perez and Marcelo Lezcano (post novices) served at the altar during the vespers. Our Capuchin community in Paraguay, as in the whole country, saw itself as very blessed in this visit. We hope that this blessing will be able to help us to deepen its message and make us live with greater joy the gift of our consecration and mission.



Meeting of 'Project Europe'



ROME, Italy – “Let us fan the flame of our charism”, was a desire expressed by our General Minister, Mauro Jöhri. To follow up on the Europe Project which was the topic during the Fatima meeting and what was shared during this meeting of the Provincial Ministers and Custodes of Europe and the Presidents of the Conferences

of the Order as well as responding to the hopes of many friars of the Order, the General Minister and his Council have decided to establish a reflection and research group on this theme. After appointing a Commission with Br. Pio Murat, General Councilor, presiding, and made up also of Br. Eric Bidot, Provincial Minister of France, Br. Tomasz Żak, Provincial Minister of Cracow, Br. Gaetano la Speme, Provincial Minister of Syracuse, and Br. Eduard Rey, Provincial Councilor of Catalonia, the Commission met on July 21 and 22. An intense work of analysis and reflection was carried out. Following communication with the General Council, the results, plans, and conclusions will be communicated to the Ministers and Custodes of Europe.

European vocation meeting

PRAGUE, Czech Republic – From July 6 to 9, 2015, in the Year of Consecrated Life and looking forward to the Synod of Bishops on the Family, the Commission for vocations of the European Service for Vocations (EVS), organized the annual European Vocational Congress on the theme of the accompaniment of young people to priesthood and on the consecrated life in the cultural context of the family today. To the meeting, which was held in Prague (Czech Republic), was invited Bishop Josef Kajnek, auxiliary of Hradec Kralové and bishop-delegate for vocations among the Czech bishops. 72 people, among them 9 bishops, participated, together with those responsible for the vocation ministry as well as delegates from the bishops' conferences of Europe and from the religious congregations, coming from 20 European countries and from the Commission for



Celebrating 400 years of Capuchin missionary work on Brazil



MARANHÃO, Brazil – From July 4 to 22, 2015, about 90 Capuchin friars from the different circumscriptions of Brazil (12 like the tribes of Israel!) participated in an intense missionary animation in the city of Primeira Cruz (first cross), to conclude the celebration of 400 years since the arrival of the first Capuchin missionaries in Brazil. Beginning from Primeira Cruz and then dividing into different groups, the friars did intense missionary activities for a long period, concentrating their efforts above all on reaching the most isolated populations, compromised by difficult access, distances, and the complicated navigation of rivers. The visits to families,

catecheses, celebrations of the sacraments, and formation gatherings were also enriched by important exchanges and meetings among the friars and between the friars and the people of the place. This was an opportunity to renew the closeness of the friars of the people with the poorest and above all a first experience of true mission for many young friars. In fact, the welcome of the people made an impression on the friars—people who seemed to live with little or nothing to offer—and on the other hand the simple and direct manner of the friars was striking for the communities that were visited. This was a unique experience since it was the first time that

Consecrated Life of the USA.

“The first purpose of this European meeting is to put at the center of attention and of pastoral practice an essential priority of the whole Church and of the same pastoral care of the family and of vocations: to create, therefore, the conditions for a vocational culture in the family, such that the family can be a true ‘fertile womb of vocations’. This means that the family is not only the place where the educational crisis of our time emerges with great force, but that it can become, in harmony with the other vocations, the beating heart of a rebirth of vocational choices” – affirms Bishop Domenico dal Molin, Director of the Vocation Office of the Italian Bishops' Conference and Coordinator of the CCEE Commission for vocations (EVS). He continues: “In these days we would like then to create a particular focus on the extraordinary sense that the voices of parents can have – or could have! – if too often they don't give up on the task entrusted to them in the name of providers of education, above all those of the media, which is so invasive and overflowing. We would like to treasure the input that Pope Francis has given us in *Evangelii gaudium*, in order to give life to a fertile cooperation with parents, to help them to rediscover their own vocational experience as a couple and to become together, without hesitations and without fear, the fertile ground of education in choices for life, even those that are radical and courageous, of their own children”.

Vocation Animation Service (SAV)

HIDROLÂNDIA, Brazil - The national meeting of the Vocation Animation Service was held at the meeting house of the Province of Central Brazil in Hidrolândia from July 19 to 25 of this year. The meeting is sponsored by the CCB and coordinated by the National Group of Initial Formation. 36 friars participated, young for the most part, from the 12 circumscriptions of Brazil. The majority of the circumscriptions were present with a good number (up to 5) of representatives. The significant number of participants indicates the interest and hope there is for the future of our charism in Brazil. All the provincial coordinators of the SAV were present and many local animators of the fraternities.

The meeting was set up like a course, but with a lot of interaction from all the participants. In practice, the first day was dedicated to the sharing of plans and the many creative activities and initiatives going on regarding the Vocation Animation Service. The first realization was that in this field the Provinces are very active and creative. It's certainly not the case that effectively in Brazil there is a significant increase in vocations and of young people in initial formation in our houses of formation.

Beyond the rich sharing, the meeting had four basic themes:

- a) Two days were dedicated to the theme: formation of vocation directors, beginning from values. The theme was developed by Professor Carlos Bruno Araújo Mendonça. The necessity of a vocation director living in his life the Capuchin Franciscan values, in order to then propose them to young people, was highlighted.
- b) The third day, under the guidance of Br. Sergio M. Dal Moro, was dedicated to the question of a vocation culture. A good vocation ministry cannot limit itself to recruitment. To cultivate a positive vocational culture is a guarantee of a future.
- c) Friday had as a theme the vocational accompaniment from the perspective of initiation into our form of life. It was led by Br. Evandro de Souza.
- d) Finally, Saturday was dedicated to the website of the CCB and the importance of vocation ministry by internet communication. It was led by Br. João Carlos Romanini.

At the time for evaluation much joy and positive feeling came out about the meeting. Everyone expressed the wish that meetings of this kind would happen again in the near future.

the twelve circumscriptions of Brazil worked together on a project of this kind. They found places where the Eucharist had not been celebrated for years, for example places where base communities celebrate the Word and seek to raise up groups of young people and catechists, even though in many places the leaders of such communities do not have enough formation and may not even be literate.



Indians and friars use cell phones to evangelize...in the Amazon

Capuchin brothers Paolo Maria and Ricardo

Since May 2015 it is ever more frequent in the Upper Solimões, in the Amazon rainforest, to find Ticuna Indians that – most often in small groups – watch MP4 videos on cell phones in which the actors aren't 'white' nor speak Brazilian, but rather are Ticuna themselves and speak their own native language!

The Catholic Church – which has always listened to the people and by its missionaries lives in their midst – has been present among this people for many years. The Magüta people (whom we 'non-indigenous' call the Ticuna) is the most numerous of this region: more than 40 thousand. In reality – since for them the political borders don't exist – the Indians of this same people live also in Peru and Colombia and speak the same Ticuna language.

If then you keep in mind also these 'beyond the borders', the Ticuna are more than 50 thousand. To complete the picture you also have to keep in mind that there exist many Ticuna colonies, also growing, in the periphery of Manaus, the capital of the state.

In 1971 the Capuchin bishop Br. Adalberto Marzi realized that the indigenous had need of particular



attention and that it was not possible to make them conform to the ordinary pastoral care of the other parishes. This is something that is also valid today! Thus he thought to create a parish meant just for the indigenous (there are also some villages of the Cocoma people, one of the Canamari, and some few other indigenous river people).

Thus on October 4, 1971, the bishop established the parish of St. Francis of Assisi in the village of Belém do Solimões. Down to today this is the only parish that is not of the city and the pastoral care of the Indians there continues to be entrusted to us Friars Minor Capuchin, who assist pastorally in about 65 communities using just canoes and small boats, because there are no roads...

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