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QUARTERLY BULLETIN OF JUSTICE, PEACE AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION, OFM



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SOS: OUR COMMON HOME IS ABLAZE AND PARCHED.

Between June and August 2026, more than 1.5 billion people worldwide experienced at least one month of dangerous heat intensified by climate change. These high temperatures were compounded by waves of wildfires in various countries. At the same time, a lack of rainfall in many regions is drying out fields, reducing crop yields, and jeopardising the food security of millions. Pope Francis was right when he stated that “The world in which we live is collapsing and may be nearing the breaking point” (*Laudate Deum*, 2). Below are some data broken down by continent.

North America and Europe

From June to August this year, wildfire activity was intense, particularly in North America, Western Europe, Siberia, and the Arctic. In the United States, for example, nearly 50,000 fires had been recorded by August, burning close to 3 million hectares—an area burned about 170% more than the average for the last ten years. In the EU, some 616,000 hectares had burned by August 19, more than double the average for that time of year.

Over several days in July, millions of people in Canada and the United States were exposed to unhealthy or dangerous levels of pollution caused by wildfire smoke. We do not yet know the final global toll, but in Europe alone, the successive heatwaves this summer have

already been linked to tens of thousands of excess deaths.

Latin America

In Mexico, a lack of rainfall has reduced water reserves intended for irrigation and affected grain planting in key producing regions in the north of the country. Meanwhile, some 21 million people live in the so-called Central American Dry Corridor. In parts of Guatemala and El Salvador, rainfall this year fell to less than 30% of normal levels. For thousands of farming families, the lack of rain means losing their corn and bean crops, losing income, and ultimately having less food on the table.

In Uruguay, the drought affected the 2026 harvest. Further south, Argentine Patagonia began the year in flames: some 32,000 hectares burned in Chubut alone, in a region already suffering from years of rainfall deficits. Chile also experienced severe fires.

Africa

In Somalia, the April–June rains ...were below normal, and by mid-June, severe drought affected between 25% and 70% of cultivated land in some major producing areas. In Tanzania, prolonged dry spells caused losses that the FAO describes as irreversible in certain areas. In Sudan, rainfall between June and mid-August was approximately 20% to 30% below average in two major

sorghum-producing states. The persistence of these conditions could deepen economic and social crises in these countries, increasing the vulnerability of millions already living in food insecurity.

Asia

In Asia, a lack of rainfall directly threatens food production. The FAO warned that some agricultural and pastoral areas in South and Southeast Asia face a greater than 50% probability of drought. The situation is particularly concerning in countries where agriculture relies heavily on available water, such as Afghanistan, Nepal, Vietnam, and Thailand. Less rainfall therefore means less water for farming and a greater threat to communities that depend on the land for their livelihoods.

For the June–August 2026 period, the regional forecast anticipated above-normal temperatures across most of Southeast Asia and below-normal precipitation in parts of the Philippines, Brunei, Singapore, Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam. The FAO warns that droughts, floods, and heatwaves in this region are disrupting crop cycles and affecting the livelihoods of millions of farmers and fishers.

For us Franciscans, behind every scorched hectare, every lost harvest, and every family waiting for rain that never comes, we hear that same cry that Francis of Assisi recognised in creation—a cry that today is inextricably linked to the cry of the poor.

Our Common Home is burning. It is burning because of extreme temperatures and wildfires; it is drying up as rain no longer falls as it once did; and, meanwhile, millions of people are

beginning to experience the consequences of a crisis they did not cause.

Pope Francis's question continues to resonate powerfully: "What kind of world do we want to leave to those who come after us, to children who are now growing up?" (LS 160). It is a question addressed above all to governments and major corporations, whose political, economic, and production decisions play a decisive role in the response to the climate crisis. It is also a question for us—for our fraternities and for our daily way of relating to creation.

In any case, we are not condemned to passively watch a world on fire. Pope Francis reminds us that "humanity still has the ability to work together in building our Common Home" (LS 13). To do so, we must move from concern to conversion, from words to concrete decisions, and from feeling like spectators of the crisis to recognising ourselves as brothers and sisters responsible for caring for the Common Home we share.

Fr. Daniel N. Rodríguez Blanco, OFM

General Office of JPIC – OFM



JPIC ANIMATORS FROM AFRICA STRENGTHEN THEIR COMMON MISSION IN RWANDA

From 22 to 26 September 2026, the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) animators from the Anglophone and Francophone Franciscan Conferences of Africa gathered in Kivumu, Rwanda, for the JPIC Continental Meeting to share experiences, identify the continent's main challenges, and strengthen collaboration in the JPIC mission.

Hosted by the Custody of Our Lady of Kibeho, the meeting also brought together representatives of the General Government of the Order, the General Secretariats for Formation and Studies and for Missions and Evangelization, as well as the Franciscan Network in Africa.



A JPIC Mission Rooted in the African Context

Throughout the meeting, participants shared the work being carried out by different Franciscan Entities in areas such as assistance to migrants and refugees, care for creation, peacebuilding, support for young people and students, and initiatives addressing poverty and situations of vulnerability.

These experiences provided an opportunity to recognize both the progress made and some of the major challenges facing the continent: conflict and social and political instability, migration, extreme poverty, exploitation and competition for natural resources, limited resources to sustain projects, and the need to ensure greater continuity in JPIC processes.

In this context, Fr. Siphelile Gwanisheni, OFM, General Definitor for Africa, encouraged participants to embrace the JPIC mission with a prophetic and creative attitude, with particular emphasis on strengthening communication, collaboration and peacebuilding.

Collaboration, Formation and Evangelization

One of the main themes of the meeting was the need to further integrate Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation into the different dimensions of Franciscan life and mission.

Fr. Daniel Rodríguez Blanco, OFM, Director of the General Office for JPIC, addressed the importance of strengthening collaboration between JPIC and the General Secretariats of the Order.

This perspective was further explored from the standpoint of formation by Fr. Edson Nhaturu, OFM, Vice-Secretary General for Formation and Studies, and from the perspective of evangelization by Fr. Francisco Gómez, OFM, Secretary General for Missions and Evangelization, who participated online and guided a reflection on the *Ratio Evangelizationis*.

The meeting highlighted a shared conviction: JPIC is not an isolated area of Franciscan mission, but a dimension that permeates formation, evangelization and the presence



of the friars in the different realities of the continent.

The value of networking was also explored through the participation of Sr. Mary W. Sebastian, LSSJ, who presented the experience of the Franciscan Network in Africa and emphasized the importance of connections, information sharing and mutual support in strengthening common initiatives.

Memory, Peace and Hope in Kibeho

The meeting concluded with a pilgrimage to the Kabgayi Genocide Memorial and the Shrine of Our Lady of the Word in Kibeho.



At Kabgayi, the friars paid tribute to the victims of the genocide and renewed their commitment to working for reconciliation and peace. The subsequent visit to Kibeho provided a time for prayer and spiritual renewal, culminating in the celebration of the Eucharist.

After several days of dialogue, reflection and fraternity, the JPIC animators returned to their Entities with the challenge of continuing to build a more connected and collaborative mission, capable of responding, through the Franciscan charism, to the social and environmental realities facing Africa.

OFM JPIC





JPIC GENERAL OFFICE PARTICIPATES IN INTERFAITH DIALOGUE MEETING IN NAIROBI

From the 18th to the 19th September 2026, the General Office of Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation (JPIC) of the Order of Friars Minor participated in a meeting in Nairobi, Kenya, dedicated to interfaith dialogue, peace-building, and renewable energies.

Fr. Daniel Rodríguez Blanco, OFM, Director of the JPIC General Office, and Fr. Taucen Girsang, OFM, Vice Director, represented the Office at this initiative held at the Catholic University of East Africa. His participation reflects JPIC's commitment to strengthen collaboration with the University, JPIC Franciscans of Africa, the Franciscan Family Association, the Franciscan Network for Peacebuilding and Environmental Justice in East Africa, and the Laudato Si' Africa movement.



More than 300 young people for peace and care for the common home

The Interreligious Youth Forum, organised by Sr. Mary Wangari Sebastian, LSSJ, director of JPIC Franciscans of Africa, brought together more than 300 young people from different educational institutions in Nairobi, along with local JPIC religious and animators, including Br Francis Mbuvi, OFM.

Under the theme “Young people build a world of peace and justice for our Common Home for the benefit of future generations”, representatives of different religions and organisations found themselves united in diversity.

The meeting allowed them to share a common commitment to building peace, environmental justice, and renewable energy, placing young people as protagonists in the challenges affecting the present and future of the common home.

New possibilities for collaboration in Nairobi

During the visit, Fr. Daniel, and Fr. Taucen also met with the new rector of the Catholic University of East Africa, Fr. Elias Omondi Opongo, SJ.

The meeting allowed dialogue on collaboration between the Franciscan Network and the





University on initiatives related to caring for the common house. Among them are the creation of a “*Laudato Si*” garden and tree planting.

They also visited the Centre for Justice and Ethics, a collaborating institution with which they talked about the implementation of a project called Centro “*Laudato Si*”, aimed at helping people.

A March for Peace, Climate Justice, and Renewable Energy

One of the meeting’s central moments was a march in which more than 300 young people participated alongside representatives of the different organisations present.



The mobilisation began at the Nairobi Animal Orphanage and, after about two hours of travel, reached the Catholic University of East Africa.

Through banners and different materials, young people expressed their commitment to climate justice, peace, and renewable energy. At the end of the march, they presented a statement to the press calling for a full transition to green energy.

JPIC as a Franciscan lifestyle and mission

The visit to Nairobi also allowed them to meet young Franciscan friars from the Langata training house who study at Tangaza University College.

During the dialogue, Fr. Daniel, and Fr. Taucen presented the work and functions of the JPIC





General Office in Rome and invited students to deepen their knowledge and commitment to Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation.

The meeting recalled that JPIC is not limited to certain activities or projects. For Franciscan friars, it is an open invitation to recognise justice, peace, and care for creation as part of their lifestyle, witness, and mission.

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READY TO CELEBRATE THE SEASON OF CREATION: LITURGICAL AND PASTORAL RESOURCES FOR THE CARE OF OUR COMMON HOME

With just a few days to go before the **Season of Creation** begins, dioceses, parishes, and Christian communities around the world already have access to a **wide range of resources** to prepare for the World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, celebrated every year on September 1, as well as for the entire season dedicated to the care of our Common Home. The website WorldDayCreation.com, developed by **continental episcopal bodies and various ecclesial networks**, brings together in one place **liturgical texts, pastoral materials, and formation resources** to help communities celebrate this season. The materials are **available in Spanish, English, Italian, French, and Portuguese**.

One of the most noteworthy resources is the **complete Mass formulary for the Care of Creation**. This document, which **includes the corresponding liturgical prayers and biblical readings**, was incorporated into the Roman Missal last year and, for the first time, makes it possible to commemorate the September 1 observance using a **formulary specifically dedicated to the care of creation**. Following the warm reception it received during its first celebrations in 2025, the formulary **is now being translated into the various languages of numerous episcopal conferences**.

Alongside the liturgical formulary, **the website also offers pastoral resources** designed to facilitate preparation in each parish, including **suggested hymns, homily ideas, prayers of the faithful, and ideas for activities to organize after Mass**. These are complemented by **formation materials** for priests, diocesan leaders, and parish teams, covering the history of the World Day, its theological and pastoral significance, and practical aspects of the new formulary and lectionary.

This year's preparations are also accompanied by the message published by Pope Leo XIV for the 11th World Day, entitled **"They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks" (Is 2:4)**. In the text, **he links armed conflicts with the environmental crisis and calls for a personal and collective conversion capable of sustaining both peace and the care of creation**.

From the Eastern Church to the Universal Church

The World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation, **instituted for the Catholic Church by Pope Francis in 2015**, draws inspiration from an **ancient liturgical tradition of the Eastern Church**, which associates this date with the **symbolism of God's act of creation**. The observance had previously been embraced by the Ecumenical Patriarchate and other Christian Churches, as well as by various continental episcopal conferences since the **late 1990s**. **Its celebration marks the beginning of the Season of Creation, which continues until October 4, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi.**

For those who wish to use these five weeks to go beyond the liturgical celebration and deepen the spiritual roots of this commitment, **OFM JPIC** offers the free course ***Integral Ecology: Franciscan Roots of Laudato Si'***. This complementary resource explores, over eleven modules, the relationship between Christian faith, Franciscan thought, and care for our Common Home. It is especially intended for **pastoral workers, religious men and women, educators, students of theology or environmental sciences**, and, more broadly, **anyone who wishes to live out their ecological commitment on a solid foundation of faith and Franciscan thought**. You can access it free of charge by registering on our website before or during the Season of Creation.

OFM JPIC



FRANCISCAN NOVICES FROM CENTRAL AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN DEEPEN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF JPIC AND COMMIT TO THE REALITIES OF THEIR COMMUNITIES

Dominican Republic. JPIC and Franciscan formation converged in the experience of the twelve brothers who make up the Novitiate of the Franciscan Province of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Central America, Panama, and the Caribbean. They participated in a workshop on Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation (JPIC), led by Fr. Daniel Nicolás Rodríguez Blanco, OFM, from the JPIC General Office of the Order of Friars Minor.

The novice friars, from five countries, shared a space for reflection, dialogue, and fraternal work aimed at discovering that JPIC, more than an area of activity or a specialised task within the Order, is a transversal dimension of the spirituality and way of life of the Friars Minor.

JPIC and Franciscan Formation: A Cross-Cutting Dimension

The workshop articulated diverse experiences and content that allowed participants to move from their own history to reality, and from contemplating that reality to taking action.

The starting point was the conviction that, to hear the cry of the poor and of creation, we must also learn to listen to our own history and recognise how God has made himself present in it through people, events, encounters, and processes of reconciliation.

Within this framework, “The Forgotten Leper” allowed participants to revisit a fundamental event in the conversion of Saint Francis of Assisi: his encounter with the lepers. The experience helped them to ask themselves who the forgotten lepers are today, what realities we prefer not to see, and how encountering those who live on the margins can also transform our own lives.

Laudato si’ and the Cry of the Earth and the Poor

Another resource used was the documentary *The Letter*, linked to Pope Francis’s encyclical *Laudato si’*. Based on the stories and issues presented in the documentary, the novices discussed the socio-environmental crisis and the profound interdependence between the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.

This reflection also included an exploration of the Assisi 2025 Declaration, Article 1 of the General Constitutions of the Order of Friars Minor, and other elements of Franciscan spirituality. These elements helped them understand that the commitment



to justice, the building of peace, and the care of creation all stem from the same evangelical profession.

This experience was expressed in the words of one of the novices:

“JPIC is more than just an initiative: it is experience, witness, denunciation, and charity.”

An experience nourished by the charism received from Saint Francis and called to become visible in every brother who desires to be a sign of peace and hope amidst wars, hunger, migration, and despair.

JPIC Novitiate Manifesto 2026

As part of this JPIC and Franciscan formation process, the novices also undertook a fraternal reflection on some of the social and environmental situations in the Province’s territories.

This discernment culminated in the drafting of the JPIC Novitiate Manifesto 2026, with the motto:

“To be brothers to all, walking in love and joy.”

In the Manifesto, the brothers acknowledge, among other situations, the reality of



migrants in the provincial territory and, particularly, the situation of Haitian migrants in the Dominican Republic, often affected by discrimination, xenophobia, and racism. They also expressed concern about the normalisation of drug use among young people and the criminal structures linked to its trafficking, gambling addiction, the social and environmental consequences of mining, femicides, and other situations that violate human dignity and the integrity of creation.

From Analysis of Reality to Commitment

After acknowledging these realities, the novices were invited to ask themselves: What are we committing to?

In this way, the Manifesto became a communal expression of the desire to adopt concrete attitudes and choices from their current stage of Franciscan formation.



The workshop also took place within the context of the celebration of the eight hundredth anniversary of the death of Saint Francis of Assisi, offering an opportunity to revisit the experience of the Seraphic Father and reflect on what it means to be lesser brothers in the face of the wounds of our time.

The JPIC Manifesto of the Novitiate 2026 thus remains as a record of a workshop, an expression of a formative process, and leaves a question that will accompany the journey of these twelve brothers:

How can we be brothers to all today, walking in love and joy, amidst the concrete realities of our peoples?

OFM JPIC



COLOMBIA EMERGENCY 2026 – THE APPEAL OF THE MINISTER GENERAL

Extraordinary fundraising for the people affected by the earthquake

After the magnitude 7.4 earthquake that struck western Colombia on 10 August 2026, the Minister General, Br Massimo Fusarelli, OFM, made an emergency appeal to the whole Franciscan Family on 11 August, the feast of Saint Clare of Assisi: “Br Richard Paúl Cortés López, Minister Provincial of the Province of Saint Paul the Apostle, sent me a photograph of an elderly woman sitting on a piece of cardboard, on the plank floor of her house left without a roof, with a bottle of water next to her. That woman is, today, for us, the face of Colombia asking for help.”

The Minister General has asked every fraternity of the Order, the monasteries of the Poor Clare Sisters and the entire Franciscan Family to remember in the Eucharist and in the Liturgy of the Hours the deceased, the injured and the displaced people of Colombia, and the brothers and sisters who serve them.

Br Massimo has also commissioned the Fondazione OFM Fraternitas ETS, a body of the General Curia, to open an extraordinary fundraising campaign, “Colombia Emergency 2026”. Every donation will be allocated entirely to water, food and safe accommodation for the Poor Clares and the postulants of Montenegro, to humanitarian aid for the families of the parish of Buenaventura, to the safety works on unsafe buildings and to the restoration of the damaged churches, convents and colleges of the Provinces of Saint Paul the Apostle and of Holy Faith – Santa Fe.

It is possible to donate by credit card through the link:

[Donate here](#)

It is also possible to contribute by bank transfer to:



Fondazione OFM Fraternitas ETS – Bank Intesa Sanpaolo

IBAN EUR €: IT15 T030 6909 6061 0000 0168 958

IBAN USD \$: IT22 V030 6909 6061 6100 9304 690

BIC/SWIFT: BCITITMM

Reason: “Colombia Emergency 2026”

“God always provides, and very often provides through our hands. Let us not let the trust of the poor fall on deaf ears.”

With these words the Minister General concludes his letter, making his own the appeal of the two Colombian Provinces and inviting the whole Franciscan Family to pray and to donate.

[The full text of the appeal is available here in PDF](#)

OFM





ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION ON THE DIGITAL WORLD, ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE, AND CARE FOR OUR COMMON HOME

Under Ten, July 9, 2026

Thursday July 9, the sixth day of the Under Ten Chapter of Mats, began with the celebration of the Eucharist in language groups, nourishing in prayer the fraternal spirit that sustains the chapter process.

Afterwards, Br Juan Isidro Aldana Maldonado, OFM offered a presentation on the preparation of the General Chapter 2027, providing an overall view of the horizon and the methodology of the journey leading to that gathering. It was reported that the General Chapter will be held in 2027 in Vietnam, with a synodal, fraternal, and spiritual emphasis, and with an approach that invites the Order to look at its life and mission from diverse contexts and cultures.



The heart of the morning was the round table discussion moderated by Br Daniel Rodríguez Blanco, OFM, Director of the JPIC General Office, dedicated to three themes closely linked to the new frontiers of mission: the digital world, artificial intelligence, and care for our common home. In different ways, the interventions underlined that the task is not only to understand tools or trends, but to discern how to proclaim the Gospel today with fidelity to the Franciscan charism and attentiveness to real questions of real people.

In the reflection on digital evangelization, it was emphasized that the digital environment cannot be reduced to a simple instrument: it is a “place” where many people live, search for meaning, and hope to be accompanied. A genuine “digital inculturation” was therefore proposed, capable of communicating the Gospel with understandable language, with

a meaningful presence, and with a style that privileges closeness and listening.

The presentation on artificial intelligence highlighted the anthropological, social, and ethical challenges posed by these technologies, especially regarding democratic life, the distribution of power, and the meaning of work. It was recalled that the decisive question is not only technical, but moral: responsibility remains in human hands, and for this reason it is necessary to form criteria and to foster a culture of evaluation, transparency, and correction.

The reflection on care for our common home placed the socio-environmental crisis within the context of the cry of the earth and the poor, and highlighted the call to a conversion of heart as the foundation of any coherent response. It also underlined the importance of recovering practices and sensitivities rooted in the Franciscan tradition, as well as the value



of celebrating and supporting processes that integrate liturgy, spirituality, and commitment into the care of our common home. In the dialogue, the need for a sober and discerning use of artificial intelligence was also noted, mindful of its energy and environmental impact, in harmony with the Franciscan principle that “less is more.”

After the coffee break, the brothers continued with spiritual conversation by Conferences, following the planned methodology for sharing

resonances and contributions in a spirit of prayer and fraternity.

The day’s program also included free time in the afternoon, understood as an opportunity for the brothers to visit individually those Franciscan places that could not be seen during the group visits. It is an appropriate time for contemplation, silence, and gratitude, strengthening the living memory of the charism and interior openness.

OFM JPIC





HOPE FLOWED DOWN THE CILIWUNG: A FRANCISCAN EASTER IN JAKARTA

On June 27, 2026, the Ciliwung River flowed with a serenity that seemed to contradict the history written in its waters. It moved slowly through lush vegetation, as though the greenery itself were reluctant to leave that corner of Jakarta. No one would have imagined the decades of pollution, urbanization, and neglect the river had endured. Yet it had learned the most difficult of virtues: to continue giving life even after being wounded.

Starting at eight o'clock in the morning, the sky covered the riverbank with a blanket of clouds. A gentle breeze made the thirty-degree heat and tropical humidity bearable. Everything in that place was green, marked by Franciscan simplicity and restraint. Wherever the eye rested, creation seemed to move forward with quiet strength.

An hour later, nearly three hundred people had gathered on the riverside esplanade, which is also home to a small Muslim community. There were young Buddhists, Protestants, Muslims, Hindus, Confucians, and Catholics. No one had come to convince anyone else. Everyone had come to hear the cry of a land that could no longer bear to be called a "resource" when, in reality, it is our shared home.



During the opening ceremony, all the friars participating in the Asia–Oceania Continental JPIC Meeting were invited onto the stage. Each received a small bird that, after a brief countdown, was released simultaneously. The gesture symbolized freedom, fraternity, and the shared desire to care for creation as one human family.

The simultaneous release of the birds perfectly captured the theme of the gathering: **“Interreligious Youth Dialogue for the Care of the Environment,”** organized by the OFM JPIC Office of Indonesia as the closing event of the Sixth Asia–Oceania Continental JPIC Gathering.

As the morning progressed, it was heartening to see young people from various religious traditions take the stage one after another. Each poetic, musical, or testimonial

presentation reminded everyone that the Earth is not an object to be exploited, but a gift to be received and a responsibility entrusted to humanity.

It was not only a dialogue among religions; it was also a dialogue of hope that creation might once again unite a humanity all too accustomed to division. Through songs, moments of silence, and shared words, care for creation became a language capable of bringing together what had remained separated for centuries.

At noon, the participants made their way to the place where a statue of St. Francis had been erected on the riverbank in preparation for its blessing. There, a meaningful ecumenical prayer brought together representatives of different religious traditions in a shared act of gratitude and commitment to creation.

The blessing of the statue was led by Br. Lino Gregorio Redoblado, OFM, Provincial Minister of the Province of San Pedro Bautista in the Philippines and President of the East Asia Conference (EAC). The trees to be planted as signs of hope and ecological restoration were also blessed. Likewise, the fish that would later be released into the river received the blessing.

Following the prayer before the image of St. Francis, the participants planted trees as signs of hope and the restoration of nature. Afterwards, lunch brought together people of different religions and Christian traditions around the same table. Without changing seats, the tables became spaces for dialogue. In an atmosphere of respect and mutual listening, participants shared experiences and reflected on the challenges of integral ecology, discovering that care for creation is one of the most powerful common languages for interreligious encounter and collaboration.

Once the group work had concluded, the participants boarded small boats and travelled along a stretch of the river. The boat ride allowed them to witness firsthand the reality of the Ciliwung. Its waters are still marked by pollution and the waste accumulated over many years, but also by the many community initiatives working tirelessly to restore the river to life. Along the way, participants witnessed various clean-up efforts, particularly those focused on removing plastics and other debris that continue to threaten the ecosystem.

Midway through the journey, a symbolic gesture took place: the release of the fish that had been blessed earlier in the day. The bags

were gently opened, and hundreds of small fish returned to the river as a sign of hope and a commitment to restoring life where deterioration had prevailed for so long.

Upon returning to the meeting point, the working groups presented their conclusions. Between presentations, Franciscan sisters involved in JPIC ministry performed songs accompanied by graceful choreography. For a few moments, dialogue gave way to beauty.

After several hours beneath overcast skies, the clouds finally parted, and the afternoon light illuminated the lush green vegetation, revealing a landscape of unexpected colours. Nature seemed to respond with its own harmony to the gestures of care and hope sown throughout the day.

Before the gathering concluded, all the participants assembled for the official group photograph—a keepsake preserving the memory of an event in which people of different religions walked together in support of the care of creation. Shortly afterwards, a traditional dance brought the gathering to a joyful close. Through it, the host community once again expressed the richness of its culture and the warmth of its hospitality.

As the Ciliwung continued its journey toward the heart of Jakarta, hope continued to flow within all who had shared that day. The newly planted trees, the fish returned to the river, and the dialogue among people of different religions all served as reminders that life always finds a way to be renewed, even where it once seemed diminished.

Perhaps the true Franciscan Easter experienced in Jakarta was the realization that caring for creation is itself a proclamation of

hope: that, in the light of faith, life can always find a way through the world's wounds.

Br. Daniel Rodríguez Blanco, OFM
JPIC General Office Director





VI JPIC ASIA-OCEANIA CONTINENTAL MEETING CONCLUDED

The VI Continental Meeting of Franciscan JPIC Animators of Asia and Oceania concluded in Jakarta, Indonesia. The aim of the meeting was to evaluate and to reflect on JPIC activities in the region under the theme “Caring for People, Caring for Creation”. Also, they shared on how JPIC Animators can implement the values of JPIC through explicit commitments in Asia as Franciscan witness.

From listening to the reports from both the South Asia and Oceania Conference (SAAOC) and the East Asia Conference (EAC), it can be concluded that each Entity has been working to make JPIC values present in the various ministries of the friars in Asia. These include eco-pastoral initiatives, advocacy for human dignity and the right to a healthy environment, different forms of dialogue, solidarity with victims of natural disasters and violence, and assistance to refugees and displaced persons. At the same time, many challenges continue to confront the friars, such as the extractive economy, armed conflict, forced migration, environmental degradation, human trafficking, and other related issues.

By examining the realities of Asia, the participants believe that these are not only signs of the times but also indications of an uncertain future to which Franciscans are called to respond. For this reason, new approaches are needed to provide insight into how we can better understand these realities and respond effectively. A delegate from *Franciscan International*, Budi Tjahjono, offered practical guidance on defending the rights of Indigenous peoples, victims of conflict, and the right to a healthy environment at the grassroots, national, conference, and international levels. Br. Mikhael encouraged the friars to initiate various eco-pastoral projects, drawing from his many years of experience as a pioneer of eco-pastoral ministry in Indonesia. Hendro Sangkoyo also gave a comprehensive presentation on extractivism in South Asia



and the impact of multinational corporations in the region.

The realities of Asia are a call for Franciscans to respond and collaborate. Returning to the Franciscan origins, spirituality and charism, Br. Derrick Yap led the participants in reflecting on formation and inspired them through Pope Leo's new encyclical "*Magnifica Humanitas*" on human dignity and its implications for formation. Br. Lino Gregorio Redoblado encouraged the participants to become Easter people as instruments of hope, especially as the Franciscan family celebrates the 800th anniversary of the Transitus of St. Francis of Assisi. Then, Br. Peter Beto shared his experience as a missionary in Myanmar, where he witnessed armed conflict, human rights violations, and extreme poverty. He reflected that, when confronted with such realities, people often feel hopeless and powerless. Although we know that peacebuilding, dialogue, and assistance to refugees are necessary, the challenge remains: what can we do as Franciscans?

Reflecting on Br. Agustinus Lorensius Ngggame reminder at the beginning of the meeting that JPIC is not merely a program



but a way of life, and on Br. Ignacio Ceja (the Vicar generale) emphasis that JPIC is a constitutive dimension of Gospel life through which the friars remain relevant and offer a prophetic alternative, the participants arrived at a common statement, resolutions, and commitments.

Finally, the VI Continental Meeting concluded with a visit to the Ciliwung Community, where a statue of St. Francis was blessed, fish were released into the

river, and trees were planted. Through the many messages shared by the young participants in the interfaith dialogue and the JPIC Animators of the Franciscan family in Jakarta, one message stood out clearly: Franciscans should be at the forefront of caring for creation and caring for people, and they do believe that they do not stand alone. As one area of concern, the environmental crisis is being addressed not only by the JPIC Office of the OFM but also through interfaith dialogue among young people from different religious traditions in Indonesia, including Catholics, Protestants, Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, and Confucians.

[Read the Final Statement](#)

OFM



INTERNATIONAL DAYS – October / December, 2026

2 October — International Day of Non-Violence

16 October — World Food Day

17 October — International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

27 October — Day of the Spirit of Assisi

6 November — International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict

16 November — World Day of the Poor

25 November — International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

2 December — International Day for the Abolition of Slavery

5 December — World Soil Day

10 December — Human Rights Day



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