



# To the **Capuchin General Chapter**

**R**ome. From August 27 to September 16, 2018 our Order will celebrate the 85th General Chapter in order to elect a new General Minister and Council. The Chapter will be held in Rome at our International College 'San Lorenzo da Brindisi.' 188 capitulars will take part, representing all the circumscriptions of the Order. Along with the capitulars, there will also be forty-eight officials and other friars assisting in various ways.

The calendar of the Chapter work foresees various reports for the first week, in particular that of the outgoing General Minister, Br. Mauro Jöhri, which will cover the current state of the Order. There will also be the report of the General Bursar on the economic situation.

The election of the General Minister is scheduled for September 3. Following this will be reflection and discussion of the Ratio formationis, and then the elections for the General Councilors.

Also scheduled is the traditional pilgrimage of the capitulars to Assisi (September 8) and an audience with Pope Francis at the Vatican (September 14). Already on Saturday, August 25 the capitulars were beginning to arrive little by little from all over the world: Europe, Asia, Africa, North America, Latin America, and Oceania. The rest will arrive on Sunday the 26. Right away they will have a chance to get familiar with the Chapter 'technology', which is particularly demanding this time. In fact, each capitular will be working with a tablet on which they will be able to read the documents in

all of the Chapter languages, participate in the liturgies, and vote.

Everyone can follow the Chapter events with videos, photo galleries, and news on the website of the Chapter [www.capitulum2018.ofmcap.org](http://www.capitulum2018.ofmcap.org) or through the 'OFM Cap App' on Android, Apple iOS and Windows.

The Communications Office will be following the work of the Chapter step by step with informative texts, photos, and video.

Let us wish the brother capitulars good work. See you on the various social networks!

[Fotogalleria - Arrivi](#)



## INDEX

- 01 To the Capuchin General Chapter
- 02 Monday  
The 85th General Chapter has Begun  
The Chapter Invokes the Holy Spirit on its Work
- 04 Tuesday  
General Minister's Report
- 06 Wednesday  
An Inseparable Triptych
- 08 Thursday  
A world of initials
- 10 Friday  
The Greatest Love
- 12 Saturday  
End of the First Week of General Chapter

## First week

27.VIII-01.IX  
2018

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Chapter Catalogue 2018



# The 85th General Chapter has Begun

Rome (International College 'San Lorenzo da Brindisi'), August 27, 2018. The days of the General Chapter have finally come! The 188 capitulars, representing all the circumscriptions of the Order, and the 48 other friars working at the Chapter have all arrived. Today, Monday, July 27, at 9 a.m., they filled the ample and beautiful space of the Collegio chapel for the celebration of the Eucharist. Most Rev. Andrés Stanovnik, OFM Cap., Archbishop of Corrientes, Argentina, presided.

In his homily the Archbishop recalled to the capitulars "the central axis around which the heart of a friar should revolve," namely, as St. Francis writes in the Earlier Rule, "to treat of those things that regard God" and inspire the brothers to "live the gospel life in the world in truth, simplicity, and joy." (Const. 147, 2) Explaining his point further, Br. Andrés quoted St. Bonaventure in the Itinerarium: "We must abandon every speculation of the intellectual order and concentrate

all our aspirations in God. This is something mysterious and secret, and only the one who receives it can know it, and he will not receive it unless he desires it, and he will not desire it unless he is on fire inside with the fire of the Holy Spirit which Christ has sent upon the earth. This is why the Apostle says that this mysterious wisdom is revealed by the Holy Spirit." Therefore, we are all called to adoration, contemplation, and prayer. Br. Andrés concluded by recalling that the key to renewal for our form of life in the Church and in the world today is mercy: "That mercy that we experienced when the Lord gave us, as he did to St. Francis of Assisi in his time, to begin a life of penance and then be led among the lepers, to practice mercy

among them, not as a duty, but as a debt that we can never pay, for the infinite mercy of the Father has come also to us."

At the end of his homily Br. Andrés recommended to all the capitulars to entrust themselves to the Virgin Mary, our Mother and Advocate, that she might obtain for the Order the grace of a good Minister who might guide the brothers with mercy and wisdom.

## [Photo gallery](#)

- Opening Eucharist



## [Video](#)

- Opening Eucharist



MONDAY

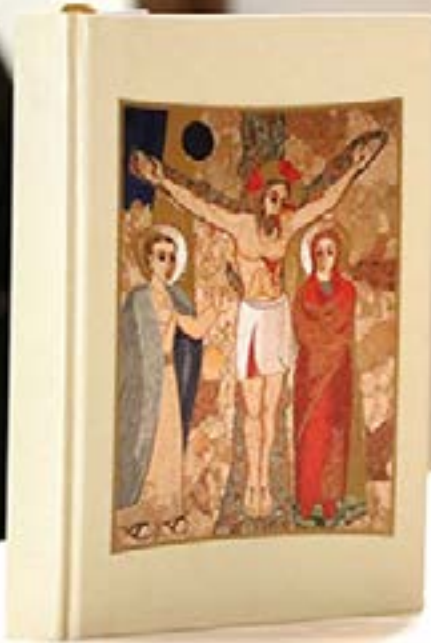
TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY



# The Chapter Invokes the Holy Spirit on its Work

Rome. The first important moment of the General Chapter's first day was the celebration of the Eucharist at which our brother Archbishop, Andrés Stanovnik, presided.

After Mass the capitulars gathered again in chapel to begin their work. They invoked the Holy Spirit with the *Veni Creator Spiritus*, intoned by the General Minister Br. Mauro Jöhri. Immediately following, while singing the litany of the saints, the friars processed from the chapel to the auditorium, where the Minister enthroned the Book of the Gospels and pronounced the formu-

la of the rite: "Brothers, I declare the 85th General Chapter of the Friars Minor Capuchin officially open."

At this point there were various technical announcements for the use of the Chapter equipment: headphones for simultaneous translation, the use of the tablets, logistical instructions, etc. Then each capitular was called by name and announced his presence. The Minister then pointed out certain variations to the Chapter procedures deriving from the renewed Constitutions, and proposed these for approval by the capitulars. Voting was by a show of hands, the variations were approved unanimously.

Given the many languages and the diversity of the participants, it is

necessary to work in geographic or language groups. The compositions of the groups is based on the Conferences, but also by language or other factors. Thus, leaving the auditorium around midday, the capitulars then met in different rooms. There they got to know each other and were able to form their own coetus. They were to elect a president, a secretary, and nominate a candidate for the Council of the Presidency.

When the capitulars returned to the auditorium in the afternoon, the composition of the various coetus having been completed and made known to the full assembly, there began the formation of the other Chapter structures, such as the Council of the Presidency, moderators, secretariat, scrutineers, etc.



Video - Beginning of the General Chapter



Photo - Procession and beginning of the Chapter



Photo - Meeting of the capitulars for the coetus

# General Minister's Report



Rome, August 28. Today was the day for the General Minister's report, which aims to outline for the brother capitulars the current state of the Order. Br. Mauro presented his report with mostly spontaneous remarks and with help of PowerPoint images.

The text of the report is divided into twelve sections plus a conclusion. Given the limited space for this news item, we will mention only the principal points. The third section sketched a big picture of the Order with reference to PCO VIII, held in 2015, on 'The Grace of Working.' Here the General Minister observed that "the search for union with God is the first work of the friars." He therefore invited them to search their souls on "the primacy of the life of prayer in the life of the friars." Continuing on the same theme of the PCO, Br. Mauro recalled that the brothers must work together in a spirit of minority and in the service of all.

The General Minister also gave some time to speaking on changes and developments in the Order in recent years, using statistical data to which he also gave his interpretation. At the end of 2017 there were 10,127 friars, 237 fewer than six years ago. The decrease in the number of friars has various causes – death,

leaving the Order, transfer to the secular clergy, dismissals, etc. On the other hand, the number of friars in formation has increased, above all in Asia (+381) and in Africa (+138), where the Order is betting on its future. The situation in Eastern Europe is stable (+32), but in Western Europe and the Americas there is a decrease. The Italian Capuchins remain the largest single group with 1,855 all together, followed by the Indian Capuchins with 1,792.

The Order also has many bishops. Fifteen of them, from all over the world, have been appointed during this last sexennium. Seventeen retired during the sexennium and twelve died.

In these past six years we have also had brothers beatified and one canonized. Let us recall Blessed Thomas of Olera (2013), Blessed Andrew Palazuelo and thirty-two Companion Martyrs (2013), Blessed Frederick of Berga and thirty-six Companion Martyrs (2015), Blessed Arsenius of Trigolo (2017), St. Angelo of Acri (2017), and Blessed Solanus Casey (2017).

The General Minister's report also touched on many other points, such as the administration and animation of the Order, the General Curia, the institutions of cultural heritage, the houses dependent on the General Minister, and finally the journey of the Franciscan Family.



MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

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SATURDAY



# Photo

General Minister's report



Evening Prayer



# Video

General Minister's report



MONDAY

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SATURDAY

# An Inseparable Triptych

Rome, August 29. On the schedule for the third day of the General Chapter was the Economic Report and the Eucharist with Most Rev. José Rodríguez Carballo, Secretary of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life.

The first part of the morning was given to hearing the Economic Report presented by the General Bursar of the Order, Br. Alejandro José Nuñez Ennabe. Br. Alejandro emphasized how economic realities in the Order must be marked by the transparency that should also characterize our personal and fraternal lives, and by the co-responsibility of all the friars in the management of the goods of the Order.

The text of the report was divided into three parts. The first part dealt with the organization of the Office of the General Bursar, its various entities, houses and institutions, accounts, and office management. The second part treated the economic figures and administrative acts of the sexennium. The third part offered some recommendations for the future. Br. Alejandro presented with clarity and competence, making use also of figures and graphs projected with PowerPoint. The warm applause at the



Economic Report

end of the presentation showed the approval of the capitulars for the precision of the report and the work it represented.



Economic Report and Eucharist



Later in the morning, after the Economic Report, was the time for the Eucharist with Most Rev. José Rodríguez Carballo, Secretary of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life and General Minister of the OFM (2003-2013) before his current appointment. The liturgy today recalls the martyrdom and beheading of St. John the Baptist. The readings, perhaps out of respect for the presider, were proclaimed in Spanish. The homily, however, was given in Italian, with simultaneous translation into English. Taking inspiration from the two readings, the homily can be summed up in the triptych: truth, prophecy, and hope. Truth, as John always announced in his preaching, courageously and without regard for human respect, and which led him to martyrdom



Eucharist, Archbishop Carballo OFM



Evening Prayer - 28.08.2018.

by Herod. Prophecy, to which the Forerunner witnessed with his life and not with the chatter of ideology. Hope, which must always accompany the announcement of the Gospel of Jesus, which is a Gospel of joy, never allowing itself to be overcome by pessimism or fatalism. May truth, prophecy, and hope be with our capitulars as they work, that they may be guided by the Spirit.



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SATURDAY



## A world of initials

Rome, August 30. The Capuchin General Chapter, having reached its fourth day, began today to discuss the report of the outgoing General Minister, Br. Mauro Jöhri, as well as the economic report given by the General Bursar, Br. Alejandro Nuñez Ennabe. Interventions could be given by individuals or by a coetus.

What are the coetus? (from co- “together” + itus “going”, from eō “I go”). These are the smaller groups that form at the Chapter according to language, conference of major superiors, or geo-

graphical area. These coetus are usually indicated by their initials: ASMEN, CCA, CCB, CCMSI, CECOC, CENOC, CIC, CIMPCap, CONCAM, CONCAO, EACC, NAPCC and PACC. The groups reflect on their own and then each group secretary prepares a synthesis to present in the plenary session of the Chapter. Following the interventions from the various coetus there can be time for personal interventions; that is to say that each capitulum can express himself on the matter at hand.

The interventions today were broadly positive: the texts of the reports seemed balanced and cle-

[All video](#) 

[All photos](#) 



ar, rich with reflection and open to the future. Discussion was more animated on the topics of the institutions of cultural heritage (the International College ‘San Lorenzo da Brindisi’, the Historical Institute, the Franciscan Institute of Spirituality at the Pontifical University ‘Antonianum’, the Capuchin Central Library, and the eventual inauguration of the united Franciscan University in Rome), the many houses directly dependent on the General Minister, and the current expansion of the Order in certain parts of the world and its downsizing in others.

The interventions of the friars illustrated the shades of meaning and different accents deriving from our diversity of perspectives and location. Nevertheless, the discussion was always serene and constructive, peaceful and open to listening.



Discussion of the General Minister's report



Meeting in groups



Flash



MONDAY

TUESDAY

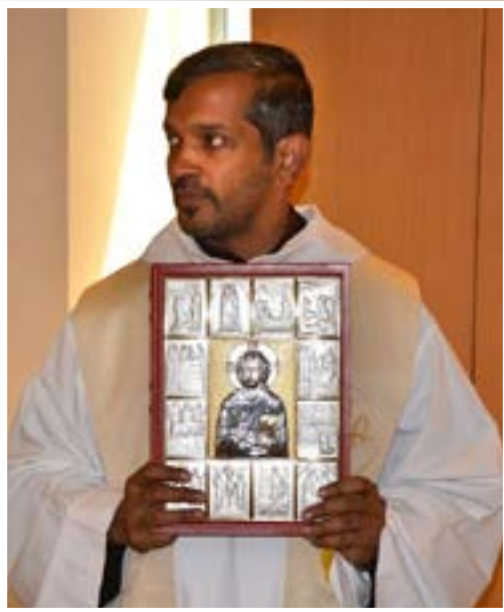
WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

# The Greatest Love



Rome, August 31. General Chapter is already in its fifth day, having started this past Monday. Today's agenda was to continue discussion on the Economic Report presented by the General Bursar, Br. Alejandro Núñez Ennabe, followed by midday Mass with Cardinal João Braz de Aviz, Prefect of the Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life.

Discussion on the Economic Report showed that it was generally appreciated both by the coetus and by individuals, especially in the clarity of the text and the transparency of the figures. Questions brought up in discussion received immediate responses that were balanced and calm. At the end of the discussion the

Economic Commission was established to further study Br. Alejandro's report.

The celebration of the Eucharist began at noon. The Cardinal, flanked by the General Minister, his Vicar, and some members of the General Council, began the solemn event. In respect for the presider, the readings were proclaimed in Portuguese. Right from the beginning everyone was pleasantly surprised by the Cardinal's amiability and simplicity. At the time for the homily he put aside any prepared text and spoke spontaneously in Italian, which Br. Charles Serignat masterfully translated into English.

"Consecrated life in the Church," the Cardinal exhorted.

[All video](#) 

[All photos](#) 



Photo - Discussion of the Economic Report



Photo - Eucharist



Photo - Presentation of the Ratio formationis

ted, “has a very important place. God has arranged for the Spirit to speak to the Church through the multiplicity of charisms. And this journey in the life of the Church will never end. The charism does not come from human beings, but from God. God knows how long it will remain in the Church. The Franciscan charism, instead of declining, grows and multiplies into other charisms. This is a great gift for the Church. This Chapter of yours is perhaps the largest among those I have been able to visit during my seven years in Rome.” The Cardinal then cited the prolo-

gue of St. Bonaventure’s Itinerarium: “No one enters into God except through the Crucified. Paul reminds us that he doesn’t preach worldly wisdom but the foolishness of the Cross. Why does one enter into God only through the Cross?

Not because God needs victims; God doesn’t even need worship. He is perfect in himself. He acts among us through the Cross because it is the greatest sign of love. Where reason fails because it is not able to give any further answer, love remains. No one has greater love than the one ca-



pable of giving his life for his brothers. This is a very important teaching for us ...”

After Mass, the Cardinal stayed for lunch with the capitulars.



Video - Work in groups 2018.08.30.

Video - Eucharist



MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

# End of the **First Week** of General Chapter

**R**ome, Saturday, September 1. The General Chapter's first week of work concluded at the end of this morning. On the schedule for today was the Minister General's presentation on, "The task and open questions regarding the role of the General Councilor."

The General Councilors make up the Council that assists the General Minister in the administration of the Order. In his talk Br. Mauro explained the task of the Councilor, recalling what is provided in the Constitutions, the Ordinances of the General Chapters, and the Statutes of the General Curia. He also touched on various aspects of the service that the Councilors are called to do both with regard to the General Minister and to the various circumscriptions of the Order. He



also spoke on the question of the number of Councilors and how, in his estimation, the two African Conferences would have need of a General Councilor each. On this last and on many other topics regarding the General Council, there was an open discussion in which many voices from all over the world were heard.

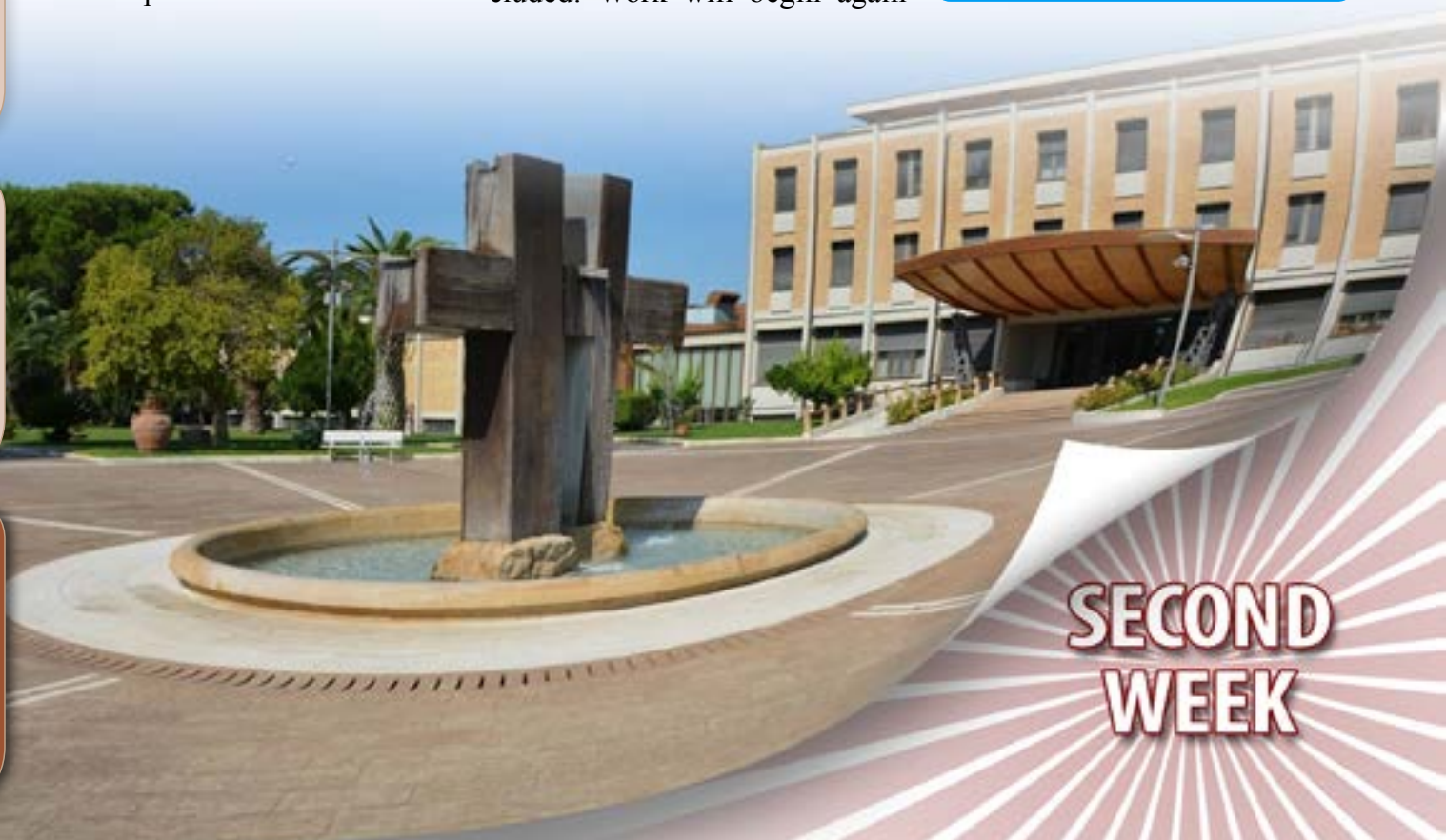
At noon the Chapter session concluded. Work will begin again

on Monday, when the election of the new General Minister is scheduled.

This sixth day of General Chapter also happened to be the birthday of Br. Mauro Jöhri, the outgoing General Minister. In celebration, Br. Mauro presided at the morning Mass and there was also a festive lunch in his honor. The capitulars offered their best wishes and even gave Br. Mauro some gifts. Ad multos annos!



Presentation of the role of the General Councilor



**SECOND  
WEEK**

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY