



ORDO FRANCISCANUS SAECULARIS

Consilium Internationale

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Piliscsaba, 2014. november 29<sup>th</sup>  
Feast of All Saints of the Seraphic Orders

To all National ministers  
To all National councils  
To all International councilors

To all the members of the Secular Franciscan Order all over the world

My dear Sisters and Brothers all over the world!

May the Lord give you his peace!

The International Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order (OFS) has celebrated its XIV<sup>th</sup> General and VI<sup>th</sup> Elective Chapter in Assisi, next to the Porziuncola basilica, in the Domus Pacis. The Chapter has discussed the major questions of the life of the OFS on the international level, and a particular attention has been paid to the major topic of the Chapter: "How to manage an international order like OFS?".

Valuable round table discussions were being heard on the importance of the family, the prayer life in the secular state of life, and the importance of the local fraternity. The capitulars have worked in workgroups on these topics, giving precious contributions to the work of the entire chapter. A true fraternal dialogue has characterized the whole event.

The almost 80 voting members from all over the world took the decision on the respective areas of responsibility for the presidency councillors and by the election the Lord has given new servants to the entire Order.

You might have heard reports on the General Chapter from your international councillors. The final document of the General Chapter, which gives orientations and determines the priorities for the Order for the next six years is being edited and will be published soon.

Today we celebrate the Feast of All Saints of the Seraphic Orders. Let this feast encourage us to learn from the example of our predecessors, strengthening our commitment to deepen our knowledge on the history of our Order. This day is also the last day of the ecclesiastic year, and tomorrow we celebrate the first Sunday of the Advent, the beginning of the new ecclesiastic year. May this make us contemplate also the beginning of this new six years in the life of the OFS, with new challenges, new priorities. While on one hand there's a natural continuity, on the other hand many things have changed, and we can look at this moment as a new beginning.

I also invite and exhort you to join the Church in celebrating the Year of Consecrated Life.

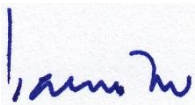
Let us *look to the past with gratitude*<sup>1</sup>, giving thanks to our predecessors who have lived the same secular franciscan vocation, giving us their radiant example, particularly those, who have guided and animated our fraternities on the different levels. Also let us give thanks to those who have been helping OFS, particularly our spiritual assistants.

Let us *live the present with passion*<sup>2</sup>, giving thanks to the Lord for the grace of the moment. I invite you to re-discover who we are, rather than what we do, being *true worshipper of the Father*<sup>3</sup>, *pilgrims and strangers on the way to the home of the Father*<sup>4</sup>. Let us live the communion with God and with each other. Let us strengthen the fraternal bonds and the sense of belonging, particularly in our local fraternities. I also invite you to experience the grace of the Lord through the solidarity with the fragile, with the poor, with the outcast, both inside the OFS and also in the world around us. Let us respond to the call of God by the text of our Rule: *This sense of community will make them joyful and ready to place themselves on an equal basis with all people, especially with the lowly for whom they shall strive to create conditions of life worthy of people redeemed by Christ.*<sup>5</sup>

Let us *embrace the future with hope*<sup>6</sup>, looking bravely at the challenges we are facing, and *let us make definite choices in harmony with our faith*<sup>7</sup>. We have a deep spirituality, firmly based upon the person of St. Francis, st. Claire, St. Elisabeth, St. Louis, and many others, who are our intercessors in the house of the Heavenly Father. When we look to the future, we look at the pathway laid ahead of us. Let us courageously set out and respond bravely to the call of God, knowing that our hope is not in assets and provisions but in the promise of God, that Christ will be with us *always, until the end of the age*<sup>8</sup>.

Finally, I recommend the members of the new Presidency into your prayers. We need your prayer and need your support, so that our witness may be authentic and visible. We journey together as we strive to make present the Kingdom of God in our midst.

Your brother



Tibor Kauser  
General Minister



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1        Apostolic letter of His Holiness Pope Francis, to all consecrated people on the occasion of the Year of Consecrated Life 1.  
2        Apostolic letter of His Holiness Pope Francis, to all consecrated people on the occasion of the Year of Consecrated Life 2.  
3        OFS Rule 7.  
4        cf. OFS Rule 11.  
5        OFS Rule 13.  
6        Apostolic letter of His Holiness Pope Francis, to all consecrated people on the occasion of the Year of Consecrated Life 3.  
7        cf. OFS Rule 15.  
8        Mt. 28.20.