

PROVINCE OF TANZANIA

1 February 1996

1. Greetings

Your Grace Polycarp Pengo,
Archbishop of Dar es Salaam

Your Eminence Laurean Cardinal Rugambwa
Archbishop-Ermeritus of Dar es Salaam

Your Grace Francisco-Javier Lozano
Titular Archbishop of Penafiel
Apostolic Nuncio to Tanzania

Your Excellency Telesphor Mkude
Bishop of Monogoro

Your Excellency Agapiti Ndorobo
Bishop of Mahenge

Br. Paul Hinder and Br. Thaddeus Ruwa'ichi, General Definitors

Provincial Ministers of the Founding Provinces

Br. Mauro Jöhri, Provincial Minister of Switzerland
Br. Werenfried Van Venrooij, Provincial Minister of the Netherlands
Br. Lorenzo Pasquini, Provincial Minister of Tuscany

Other Provincial Ministers

Br. Philip Cutajar, Provincial Minister of Malta
Br. Anastasio Kahango, Vice Provincial Minister of Angola

Vice Provincial Ministers and Regular Superiors of the SEACA Region:

Br. Noel Winston, Vice Provincial Minister of South Africa
Br. Pilagio Bilocca, Regular Superior of Kenya
Br. Pascal DeGasparis, Vice Provincial Minister of Madagascar
Br. James Connolly, Vice Provincial Minister of Zambia
Brothers representing the circumscriptions of Eritrea, Mozambique,
Uganda and Zimbabwe.

Br. Isidor Peterhans, Provincial Minister and all the brothers of Tanzania

**I greet all of you in the name of St. Francis, our General Definitory
and all the brothers of the Order:**

MAY THE LORD GIVE YOU PEACE!

Introduction

Universality: Particular and unique characteristic and gift of our modern Order.

- We have always had friars throughout the world -- but not Provinces!
- Province means we have taken root among a new people/Culture.

In order to appreciate the unique gift of universality which the Holy Spirit has made the particular characteristic of our modern Order, I wish to remind you of a few facts:

- Capuchin reform began in Italy in 1525.
- It took approximately 60 years before the first Province was created outside of Italy, in Northern Europe, in the 1580's.
- The first Province founded outside of Europe was established almost 250 years later, the Province of Calvary in the USA, founded in the 1840's.
- It took a further 100 years before the first Province was established South America, Rio Grande do Sul, in Brazil, 1947.
- The first Province in Asia was established in India in 1962.
- The first Province in Africa, in Ethiopia in 1970.
- In the past thirty years we have become **universal** brotherhood including 10 Provinces in Asia and Oceania; 13 Provinces in South America and, now, two in Africa.

By the grace of the Holy Spirit, the Capuchin Order is numbered among the very few truly world religious communities with brothers in 92 countries.

The Province of St. Francis in Eritrea has the distinction of being the first Capuchin Province in Africa. The new Province of Tanzania has the distinction of being the first Province in the young Churches of Africa. There is every indication that the coming years will see fifteen or more additional Provinces created in Africa. For this we give thanks to God and to the brothers who have laboured to begin this process so important to our Order and the Church we serve. Br. Thaddeus Ruwa'ichi is General Definitor with special responsibility for Africa, member of the new Province and living symbol of the maturing presence of our African fraternities within our world brotherhood. I wish to invite Br. Thaddeus to express the gratitude of our international brotherhood to those who have created this new Province.

Franciscan Evangelization

- Pope John Paul II and the new evangelization as we approach the millenium.
- We cannot speak of Francis without speaking of the gospel and evangelization. We cannot speak of the "Franciscan method of evangelization" without speaking of Fraternity.

- Two moments in the conversion of Francis:
 - Francis encounters Christ in leper/cross of San Damiano.
 - Poverty/Deep contemplative prayer/ the poor.
 - Francis discovers the gospel (today's reading from Mark!)
 - synonymous with brotherhood (Testament)
- Francis' conversion and the origins of the Franciscan brotherhood give us a unique method of evangelization which we can better understand when we compare it with that of many other founders of religious congregations.
 - Societies founded in order to send missionaries to Africa (Spiritans, Missionaries of Africa etc.)
 - Present missionary ideal, recruit ministers of gospel
 - Form these ministers
 - give them the tools for their ministries
 - sustain them spiritually and materially
 Community exists to sustain the ministers.
 - Francis called men of every category together to form brotherhood, to form, not community, but **fraternity**. Instead of filling the world with ministers of the gospel, he sought to fill the earth with **fraternities of gospel witness**. (Example of Italy)
 - Where other congregations can describe with great precision their **ministerial charism and purpose**, a Capuchin can describe with great precision and clarity **the gospel characteristics of fraternity**.
 - A Franciscan fraternity is not a generic fraternity, it is a **gospel fraternity**:
 - **Incarnational**: deep redeemed human values (Rule)
 - **Contemplative** (inculturated prayer/meditation/etc)
 - **Poor** (austerity/simplicity of life)
 - **Minoritic**: lesser brothers/quality of servant
 - **Inserted among the poor**
 - **Justice/Peace/Ecology**

4. Challenge of our new Province of Tanzania

4.1 Look to the Gospel Quality of Fraternal life

- You have taken first step. "Fraternity" is organizing principle of your ministries. Now "Fraternity" must become the **driving force** of your ministries. "Parking Lot" vision of fraternity vs. "Power plant" vision of fraternity

4.2 Create a “Capuchin” model of Parish Ministry

Reflect upon and implement those aspects of our charism which can give new dynamic life to our parishes:

- Collaborative ministry vs. individualism
- Inculturated prayer.
- lesser brothers: servant model of ministry/work with hands
- special love for the poor

4.3 Favour emergence of new ministries to reveal other aspects of our charism

- spirituality centre/ministry to handicapped/the sick etc.

4.4 Favour and enable the full development of the Lay Expression of Capuchin Fraternal and Ministerial Life.

4.5 Reawaken Your Missionary Heritage

- Favour parishes which extend the Church (fits charism -- lay catechists!)
- Collaboration with SEACA region for Formation.
- Look beyond Tanzania to missionary work in Africa.

5. Conclusion

As the first of many Provinces among the young Churches of Africa, the Province of Tanzania is called to be a role model for the rest of Africa for Franciscan evangelization.