

August 4, 2016

Celebration of the Jubilee Year of Mercy  
at the Portiuncula

Dear Brothers and Sisters,  
Pace e bene from Assisi!

On August 1, the 800th Anniversary of the Feast of the Pardon of Assisi began in great jubilation with the celebration of the Eucharist in Santa Maria degli Angeli. Later that day Franciscan youth groups from all over Italy and beyond, ended their peace marches by kissing the holy ground of Santa Maria degli Angeli and walking through the Portiuncula as all pilgrims seeking peace and reconciliation. On August 2 the celebration continued with the celebration of Eucharist. Sprinkled between the days were prayers and songs and processions – all testimonies of the great love of St. Francis when he cried out to the people of Assisi, "I want to make all of you go to heaven!" – that through reconciliation, his vision of a universal fraternity of love and peace could be real even here with Mother Earth.



On August 4, Pope Francis came as part of the Jubilee Year of Mercy to pray in the small chapel of the Portiuncula. He spoke of mercy and reconciliation and showed us ways of mercy and reconciliation through the spontaneous time for the sacrament of reconciliation, through the songs and prayers offered, through visiting the sick in the infirmary of the Friars, through his smile, ready embrace and greetings for all. Toward the end of his time in Assisi, the General Ministers of the Franciscan Family were invited to greet Pope Francis. I was there as the President of the IFC-TOR.

My conversation with him was:

*Pace e bene, Papa Francesco!*

*I greet you in the name of all the Sisters and Brothers of the Third Order Regular of St. Francis in the whole world (and we are many!)*

*We want to thank you and tell you that we pray for you.*

*He said to me, to us: Thank you! I need it.*

*So, sisters and brothers,*

*let us continue to pray for our good Pope Francis.*



May the Lord give you peace,  
S. Deborah Lockwood, President IFC TOR