



INTERNATIONAL FRANCISCAN CONFERENCE

of the Brothers and Sisters of the Third Order Regular

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Dear Brothers and Sisters,

May the Lord give you peace!

This was the greeting of Francis of Assisi and it has echoed through the centuries. This year we celebrate the 800th anniversary of Francis' pilgrimage of peace to the Sultan Malik el-Kamil in Damietta. The gift of Francis which we call the Franciscan charism is a source of joy, as well as a challenge in our times.

On March 24, our brothers and sisters of OFS, the Secular Franciscan Order, celebrated the closing of the 40th year of the approval of their Rule. It was a great celebration with talks by several leaders of OFS, past and present: Benedetto Lino, Encarnación del Pozo Martinez, Fra Rainero Cantalamessa, OFM Cap. There was such a great enthusiasm and expression of joy, it was wonderful to represent all of you. I promised our prayer for them as we together live and proclaim: Peace and all good!



On March 29, there was another celebration of the desire for peace for all creation in the giving of the Lamp of Peace to His Majesty King Abdulla II of Jordan. The day was filled with an atmosphere of wonder and awe as we listened to the inspiring words of King Abdulla II, Angela Merkel, Chancellor of Germany and recipient of last year's Lamp of Peace, Fra Mauro Gambetti, OFM Conv., and the *Ave Maria* sung by Andrea Bocelli. After the ceremony, there was a meeting with youth, a festive meal and the blessing of a piece of the Berlin Wall, which is now in front of the Upper Basilica of St. Francis.



There is no way to adequately share the joy of these events nestled in the last week of March in our journey toward the fullness of life in the Resurrection of Jesus. May this be our prayer for one another, for all seekers and proclaimers of peace, for all men and women, for all of creation: May the fullness of life and joy be yours. And, may what we have on our lips be made concrete in our reaching out and embracing all in love. Wishing you a blessed Easter season,



Sr. Deborah Lockwood, President IFC-TOR