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EDITORIAL NEW WINE IN OLD WINESKINS

The final document of the Plenary Council of the Franciscan Order, held in Konstancin-Jeziorna, Poland (17-30 November 2013) has been published with the title “New Wine in New Wineskins”, a reference to Mt 9:17. It contains various insights regarding the Order’s quest for renewal during these last decades, and presents some conclusions and decisions taken at the same Plenary Council.

Although the document is meant to be inspirational, it does present some concrete proposals to be implemented in the near future in the Order. These include the revision of structures, the choice and qualities of the General Definitors, and the status of lay brothers in the Order, among other themes. The document has the aim of encouraging the friars to become “new wineskins” in order to be able to be filled with the “new wine” of Gospel renewal in the Order. Taking the three points we have just mentioned, however, it is necessary to question the Order’s real possibility of reaching this evangelical goal.

Revision of structures in the Order. For some decades we have been hearing the term *ridimensionamento* (re-dimensioning). Many provinces and conferences of the Order have felt the need for a new restructuring as a result of the dwindling number of friars and the new needs of our evangelising ministry. Some solutions have already been proposed or are underway, and they are mentioned in the document. But will this material restructuring be sufficient? When will we come up with a logical explanation as to why our Order has seen one of the most dramatic drops of numbers within its ranks when compared to other religious Orders? Something is going evidently very wrong, since young men are less inclined to join the Franciscan Order, and if they do so, a good percentage of them abandon Franciscan life, sometimes with deep wounds and hard feelings against our religious family. Maybe we can concentrate less on changing structures in continuation, and start thinking about changing our attitudes to Franciscan values. If, for example, restructuring means letting go of the healthy “conventual” structures of Franciscan religious life present for centuries in our Order in favour of some dreamy “prophetic” innovations and experiments, then we are in for a bleak future. A Franciscan fraternity that does not pray the liturgy of the Catholic Church, that does not live, work and minister as a fraternity, that never has a spiritual retreat, that abandons the priestly ministry of preaching and of the confessional, is sadly far away from what true Franciscan renewal on the part of great saints gave to our Order. The lack

of knowledge of our history and traditions has sadly eroded our own Franciscan identity.

The qualities of those responsible for the “ministerium fratrum”. The General Minister and his Definitors, the Provincial Minister and his Definitors, certainly need to have some basic qualities to merit their being chosen for such a difficult task. They need to be open-minded, to have a sense of belonging to the entire Order, to favour international fraternities and inculturation in evangelisation. They need to be close to the brothers. So far so good. But what about the need to be authoritative in the right sense? To be capable of applying the Order’s legislation and implementing it? What has happened to collaborative obedience in the Order? What levels of exercise of authority must the Ministers Provincial respect vis-à-vis the authority of the Minister General? And, above all, why is our Order lacking so much the gift of leadership? A glance at our history shows that true reform has occurred only when we had inspirational and strong leaders whose vision was clear. True prophecy does not consist in listening endlessly and never moving forward. True prophecy implies a risk, even the risk of being seen as a failure and becoming unpopular. If friars need to toe the line in our Order, they need to have capable leaders, with foresight and vision, based on the sound tradition of values that we have cherished for centuries.

The status of all brothers in the Order. We are sick and tired of our Order’s insistence upon the “equality” of all brothers and the possibility of becoming a “mixed” Institute and not a “clerical” one. In the meantime, the number of lay brothers in the Order has not only dwindled, but there are evident signs of frustration as many lay brothers strive to attain the priestly ministry. Why has this happened? My inkling is that we have done a disservice to the noble vocation of lay brothers in the Order by insisting upon rights and duties that are secondary, if not irrelevant, to the genuine call of a Franciscan. Again, we are proving ignorant of our Order’s history. Why is it that the majority of canonised saints were lay brothers? Simply because they were left to live their vocation to holiness in their specific identity as lay brothers. What is wrong about being a “clerical” Order? What good have we gained from abandoning parish ministry? Why have we retreated to the large anonymous cities and abandoned the small fraternities in the countryside from where the majority of our vocations came? What was the role of lay brothers in vocational animation in these rural areas?

Are we truly ready to become “new wine in fresh wineskins” without forgetting that “nobody who has been drinking old wine wants new. ‘The old is good,’ he says?” (Lk 5:39).

Noel Muscat ofm

FRANCISCAN MOUNT ZION: THE PILGRIM HOSPITAL AND THE SHRINE OF THE CENACLE

Narcyz Stanislaw Klimas ofm

[*Frate Francesco*, 79 (Novembre 2013), n. 2, 373-424]

The causes for the loss of the Cenacle

The events of 1563 have a long history behind them, and they seem to have been the result of small facts that do not present themselves linked one to the other. Here we have to begin to understand what we mean by “custody”, taking care and being vigilant on what one is called to care for.

As we have already underlined in the case of preceding events, the Popes often made reference to the state of affairs in the Holy Land. On 27 October 1428, a recommendation was forwarded to Pope Martin V in favour of the Franciscan friars of Mount Zion: “It is highly convenient to come to the aid of the venerable guardian and friars of the Order of Minors of Mount Zion, because of the various offences and extortions they suffer because of the Jews, who are trying to take away from them the monastery and the chapel of David in contempt and offence of Our Lord Jesus Christ and of the Christian faith. May the authority of the councillors of this domain write to the Supreme Pontiff in favour of the said friars, and in the form which is more expedient.”¹

1429, 4 June: “Brother Giovanni Belochio, guardian of the convent of the friars minor of Mount Zion, has presented an apostolic bulla in which, among other things, it is said that the Jews of the Holy Land, with the silent approval of the sultan, had seized from the monastery of the friars the chapel of David and of the other kings and prophets, trying to convert it to the ‘use of Judaic superstitions’. Because of this fact, the Pope, under penalty of excommunication, has prohibited to whoever navigates to take Jews on board or to carry any goods to those places, and also asks

Venice to do the same: the answer is positive. This intention is also passed on as information to the governments of Cofrù, Modone and Corone, Crete, Canea, Retimo, Negopronte and their successors.”²

15th century: Francesco Suriano, missionary and explorer of the 15th century, in his *Treatise*, chapter LIX, wrote: “Here I write notes regarding the Church of Mount Zion and the Chapel of the Holy Spirit. Of that edifice nothing is left except the canopy of the main altar, and the Cenacle of Christ, and the Chapel of the Holy Spirit. In 1460 that chapel was dismantled through the anger of the crowd and was completely ruined. It was rebuilt by the Grand Duke (Philippe) of Borgogne who was a bellicose man, and who spent 14 thousand gold ducats to make it more beautiful than it had been before [...] This chapel, which was so beautiful and adorned, because of envy and hatred against the Christian religion, was ruined yet once again by the anger of the crowd, and together with it the crowd broke down all the rooms and cells of the cloister of that place. The reason for this destruction were those dogs, the Jews, since they told the Saracens that underneath that same chapel there was the burial place of the prophet David. When the Lord Saladin heard this, he ordered that this tomb be taken away from the Friars and dedicated to their (the Muslim) cult, and this order was executed. The Saracens then began to protest that the Friars were celebrating above their place of worship, and since they considered this an insult of inferiority, they destroyed it (the chapel of the Holy Spirit). When news of this fact arrived in Spain in front of Their Majesties the King and the Queen, who were most faithful and Catholic, they ordered the destruction of all the mosques of the Saracens who were under their dominion, except for the case of Toledo and another case. He also sent a message to the Sultan through the

Saracens that were the King's vassals, that if our Friars on Mount Zion were molested once again in the future, he would see to it that more than 800 thousands Saracens under his dominion would be put to death. This made the Saracens refrain from molesting the friars any longer."³

After the loss of the Cenacle there were many attempts to regain this sacred place. A witness to this is provided by a series of documents published both by the local authorities of Jerusalem as well as by those of Damascus. We will quote some of them, beginning from 1538, where we find the *Command*, which ordered to hand back to the friars all their belongings that the Turks had seized from them when the family of the Friars of the Holy Land had been taken in prison in Damascus.

In 1542, a *Scriptura* gave permission "to the friars to be able to defend themselves with the use of arms against robbers, and if necessary even to kill them!" A *Command* of the same year certifies that a certain field on Mount Zion that the friars used to work and in which they would plant seeds was theirs. A new *Command* in 1561 asked that the friars would be given back their orchards, and other plots of land on Mount Zion. 18 years later (1579) another *Command* ordered that the place called *Forno* should be handed back to the friars, since they had lived there for a time, together with the orchard, and the field in which they buried their dead.⁴

A list of documents regarding forceful extortions would be too long to narrate, since the references to the properties of Mount Zion are not always so explicit.

1631-1636: Brother Roger Eugene, *La Terre Sainte*. The convent of the Franciscans on Mount Zion was taken away from them by the Turks. In 1559 the Turks offered to give them back their convent if the religious would pay a hefty sum in order to be able to live there. But on account of their poverty the Franciscans were not able to provide the sum. In this way the Turks said that it was the Christians who did not want to defend the place and drove out the friars, in such a way that they had to move to another place.⁵

It is Pietro Verniero, a faithful writer of the *Croniche o Annali di Terra Santa*, who gives us a detailed description of the events that regard Mount Zion. The Chronicle was written in 1634-1636 and in chapter 51 it speaks about what happened in 1547: "How the Convent of Mount Zion was divided, half to the Friars and half to the Turks:

There were many new quarrels and disputations, since the friars, having been deprived of their lower church, were very angry at this injustice." After the intervention of the ambassadors, the Cadi "ordered and commanded that the convent and the churches of Mount Zion should be justly divided, and that the part of the church, where the tomb of the Royal Prophet David is found, underneath and above, should belong to the Turks, while the other part, where there is the Cenacle, underneath and above, should belong to the friars. These, being the true and real proprietors, should not be harassed any longer in the future, but they should be left to live peacefully in their possessions. He also declared which lamps should be lit by the Saracen *Santone* (head of the mosque), and which by the friars."

1548, chapter 53: Verniero writes: "How the *Santone* of Mount Zion tried once again to drive the friars out of that most holy place: The *Santone* [...] made an agreement with the Cadi of the Holy City in order to expel the friars not only from the lower church, but from the entire convent, by offering to him a generous bribe." Thanks to the quick intervention of the guardian Father Bonaventure in front of the Cadi, who handed to him the same amount that the *Santone* wanted to offer, the Cadi "did not introduce any new ruling for the moment."

Nevertheless, the problems continued. Chapter 57 (1549) speaks about another trial: "How the *Santone* of Mount Zion convoked in Divan the Cadi, the Bascià and the *Santoni* of the Holy City, so that they would expel the Friars from that holy place." The *Santone* took the advantage of the occasion of the absence of the guardian of Mount Zion, who had gone to Aleppo in front of the Grand Visir in order to defend the rights of the friars. Thus he convoked the *Santoni* of the City and the Cadi, and explained to them all the falsities invented by the friars, who according to him had stated that they wanted to leave the convent in order to go to Bethlehem and to the Holy Sepulchre. This sentence was immediately sent to the Grand Lord for the confirmation. The sentence was confirmed with an order to the Cadi and to the Bascià that, as soon as they would receive it, they should immediately expel the friars from Mount Zion and give their property in possession to the *Santone*." The friars did not want to leave the place saying that their guardian was not present. After his return from Aleppo "with the

confirmation of the documents that he had brought with him, he found the surprise of the sentence of the Cadi and of the *Santoni* of the city, which had been confirmed by the Grand Lord. He presented to them the confirmation that the friars had received regarding their possession of half of the convent, but he received the answer that this confirmation was not valid any longer, because the order had been given by the Grand Visir, acting upon the decision of the Grand Lord, and also because the order was older than his confirmation, since he had received his confirmation on 3 October of the year 1549, while the confirmation [of the Grand Visir] had been published in September of the same year.” The sentence was carried out in 1551. “Thus the poor friars, with unheard of sorrow and an abundance of tears were forcefully expelled from their convent and had to go and live in a nearby house, called *il forno* (the Furnace), which belonged to the same friars, and where they continued to live for another eight years, until the Grand Lord assigned to them a dwelling in the city, and that most holy convent became a mosque [...] and what is worse is that neither the friars nor our pilgrims can go to see it, to pray in it according to their request.” Verniero, in chapter 58 describes: “How the Christian Princes wrote to the Grand Turk to restore the Sacred Mount Zion to the friars, and what he answered.” Things, however, changed nothing in favour of the friars.⁶

Francesco da Serino wrote a contested interpretation in 1638, in which he affirmed that the Franciscan Order lost the entire convent of Mount Zion “because the friars did not want to donate a vestment in Damascus to the one who could give the order to hand it back to them; this is what one reads in the documents of this archive.” In a marginal note we find the addendum: “Our chronicler is incorrect since he affirms that the entire Mount Zion was lost just because the friars denied to donate a vestment in Damascus! Nevertheless he had the *Chronice* of Verniero under his eyes, where one finds the true causes as to why the Holy Cenacle and then the Convent were lost.”⁷

The Furnace Tower (La Torre del Forno)

After the friars had been expelled from their convent at the Cenacle, they transferred

to the place known as “Forno” or “Torre del Forno” that had been acquired by Fr. Bonifacio da Ragusa.⁸ The Chronicler Verniero states: “In 1559, on 8 August, we went to the house of the friars, close to the Cenacle, which is called *il Forno*. We religious together with the Friars went to sleep at the “Forno”, whereas the other pilgrims went to sleep in the convent of Saint Saviour, which had belonged to the Greek nuns (!), and that Fr. Bonifacio da Ragusa had acquired from the Turks instead of the Cenacle.” After having described the celebration of the vigil of the Assumption and after the visit to the House of Caiaphas, which was under the care of the Armenians, he adds: “When the low Masses and the sung Mass were finished we returned to eat, and this house of the convent (del Forno) is distant about ten or twelve paces.”⁹

Father Vincente Juhasz ofm documents a tradition according to which the Franciscans during those years had been guests at the Armenian monastery, and precisely in the Chapel of Anna;¹⁰ whereas Perotti writes: “On 2 April 1561 we arrived in Jerusalem, and we went to lodge at the Forno. We went with the Friars to the celebration of Wednesday of Holy Week in the convent of Saint Saviour (called the Casa Nova) and after the celebration we returned to the Forno with the friars.”¹¹

We continue to read in the *Croniche* of Verniero who, in volume I, year 1551, writes: “As Guardian of Mount Zion was sent Fr. Bonifacio da Stagno, of the Province of Ragusa, who found that those barbarians had already been expelled the seraphic family from the convent of Mount Zion. The friars had to live in an orchard, which was a narrow and dangerous place, close by, known as the Torre del Forno. So he procured and obtained from the Grand Turk the convent of Saint Saviour within the Holy City of Jerusalem, where our friars live nowadays.”¹² In a note to this text, the editor – Golubovich – documents the following variant of the 1st redaction of the *Croniche*: “These lived at the Forno, as the place is called, close to the convent of Mount Zion, but that place only had some rooms.”¹³ He also specifies: “The poor friars had unwillingly been constrained to leave the convent and retreat with their belongings in a small and confined house close [to the Cenacle], which is mentioned by Nehemiah (3:11) as the Furnace Tower, of which some vestiges are still present, since it is all ruined. The friars lived there in great suffering and privations for a period of eight years,

until they succeeded in buying with their own money the convent of Saint Saviour, where they live at present.”¹⁴ For the year 1563 he adds: “As Guardian of the Holy Land Father Bonifacio di Stagno was sent once more. Regarding this friar there is no written memory during these last three years, except for the fact that since the Turks in 1563 took that house, namely the Torre del Forno, from the friars, where they had lived as a family for the space of eight years, the same Guardian succeeded in bringing from Constantinople the order of the Grand Turk to have it given back to them.”¹⁵

In volume IV, Verniero uses words which are very similar in order to explain the events of 1551,¹⁶ and regarding 1558 he adds: “This good Father [Bonifacio da Ragusa], considering that the place where they were dwelling, namely the Torre del Forno, was not suitable, both for the restricted and uncomfortable space, as well as for the dangers to which the friars were exposed day and night, since they were living outside the walls of the city in such a house, which was undefended by walls, and where they had been living for roughly eight years, during which they had suffered many hassles from Turkish and Arab thieves; he procured with exact diligence to buy a house within the Holy City in a comfortable place [namely the Convent of Saint Saviour].”¹⁷

In volume V the *Croniche* speak about Mount Zion departing from the events that occurred in 1520, when “the friars had already freed the convent [of the Cenacle] from all the furniture upon orders of the Bascia of Damascus and of the Cadi of Jerusalem, and had transported them to another nearby house called ‘il Forno’, which still belongs to the friars.”¹⁸ But since, in practice, the friars had been usurped of the so-called “Tomb of David” and of some rooms in the vicinity, they could not return to the Cenacle and in the greater part of the convent. Indeed: “In the year 1551 the friars were expelled [from the Cenacle]. Thus the poor friars, with unspeakable sadness, were constrained to leave that place and go to live in a nearby house, called ‘il Forno’, which belonged to the same friars and where they lived for eight years, until the Grand Turk assigned to them a house within the city, and that most holy convent [Cenacle] became and remained a mosque, until this very year 1634.”¹⁹ Regarding 1558-1559 he repeats what he had already written in volume IV.²⁰

We now continue with the witness of

the pilgrims, in which we find a confirmation of what Verniero had gathered in documenting his *Croniche*.

1562: the famous chronicler Juan de Calahorra writes regarding the Custos Father Bonifacio da Ragusa: “without entering in the City [Jerusalem] he took the road to Mount Zion, and in that house where our religious still used to dwell, close to the most holy Cenacle, he thanked the Divine Mercy and entered the Holy City at sunset in the Convent of Saint Saviour, welcoming the Religious with the usual ceremony and solemnity.” He also states that when “those Religious had left that most sacred Convent [of the Cenacle] they retreated to a nearby house, which is called ‘il Forno’.”²¹

1564: Brother Pantaleo d’Aveiro wrote that the ancient monastery of the holy Cenacle was a large building and that the Guardian of Jerusalem used to carry its title, namely that of Mount Zion. The friars, however, were not living in it any longer, but at the Forno, since because “of our sins” the Turks snatched the holy Cenacle from the friars, who having no other place where to go finally went to the monastery of Saint Saviour.²²

In other diaries of journeys of pilgrims we find different references for the same places. Among these indications the diaries mention the house where the Virgin Mary used to dwell. Pietro Della Valle (1616) says: “Among this Temple (sic!) [Cenacle] and the city walls, there is a field where at present the Christians are laid to rest. Here one can see a few remains of a building that used to be the House in which the Virgin Mary lived for many years until her old age, and where she finally died. Some distance away we also saw the House of Caiaphas, which is nowadays a Church belonging to the Armenians.”²³ Maybe here he refers to a preceding pilgrim – Radziwil – who visited the Holy Land in 1583 and who writes: “On 6th July, having worn the habit of a pilgrim, which is similar to that of the monks, we went out of the city through Zion Gate, and then we went to the Catholic cemetery, where the souls and bodies of the faithful rest, and then we offered prayers to God, first in the aforementioned holy Cenacle, where the Turks, who mistook us for Monks, made us enter without any difficulty.”²⁴

But after just some years, in 1598, we find the interesting note regarding the area of Mount Zion documented by Cotovicus, where he speaks about the Cenacle, the House of Caiaphas and the

Catholic Cemetery. But he does not indicate any buildings between the Cenacle and the House of Caiaphas, but records only an empty terrain! And in the area of the Cenacle he makes note of the minaret!²⁵

The “Scriptorium-Bibliotheca” on Mount Zion

In 1559, when referring to the Cenacle and the house of the friars, Luca da Gubbio indicated also the place of the *Dormitio*: “We also visited, close to this convent which is separated from it only by a street, the place where the glorious Virgin Mary died. That place had been a most noble and venerable church, as the Father Guardian told us, according to what he had found in the catalogue of the properties of the friars, which speaks about those holy places. The Turks have torn this church apart in order to use its stones for the building of the walls of Jerusalem.”²⁶

It is interesting to note the reference to a catalogue: was there a *scriptorium* in the convent of Mount Zion? The Franciscan convent of Mount Zion, or the Cenacle, as such, has not yet been studied (1335-1552).

Baldi speaks about this in one of his studies.²⁷ He comments the text of Juan Perera – for him it is the text of an anonymous Franciscan of 1553/6 – and says: “It is probable that [the so-called Forno] had been a monastery of the Sisters of the Third Order.” In order to prove this possibility Baldi quotes Suriano and Luca da Gubbio.²⁸ Another author, B. Collin, also presents similar ideas.²⁹ Both these studies, even though they are relatively detailed, always speak of the matter in function to the Shrine.

The building should have been a convent that was fully furnished with its various environments and typical services: a small cloister, which is still visible nowadays; a refectory and a kitchen [not far from the garden?]; the door that probably opened on the public street: “The door of this humble hospice is so low that no one can go in and out of it without first having to bend down his head and back. The door is made of wrought iron and is strong. It is closed by chains and by iron locks. This is necessary because of the fury of the infidels, who if they can would try to break it down and go in to ransack the Convent, as they did once. For this reason the friars take refuge in the

dormitory close to the rose garden and the library. In that place there used to be beautiful rooms and arches, but they have been destroyed by human stubbornness and cannot in any way be repaired according to their pristine splendour.”³⁰

The same text speaks about a dormitory for pilgrims: “underneath the church [Cenacle?] there is another chapel [...] Adjacent to it there are the beds for the guests, where I slept in my first pilgrimage. There is also the room for the friar sacristan ... From that place we went up by stone steps to the church [...]” The Chapel of Pentecost above the Tomb of David had been destroyed in 1460 “and together with it were destroyed and ruined all the rooms and cells of the internal cloister inside that place.”

“Directly underneath the Cenacle one finds the Chapel dedicated to Saint Francis. In this Cenacle there is a triple door: 1 – To the right towards the west (nearly always closed because of fear of the Arabs); 2 – To the south, leading towards the beautiful dwellings of the friars, which are found close to the aforementioned Cenacle, and underneath these rooms one finds the refectory; 3 – The dormitory of the Pilgrims, whose door is underneath the Cenacle close to the aforementioned Chapel of Saint Francis, where there is also the dormitory of the pilgrims.” Then the author indicates the “Sacristia fratrum” close to The tomb of David.

We find other indications by Paul Walther who, when he was ill, stayed for fifteen days in the “infirmaria” [25 February – 9 March 1483] and was cured “through the medicines, that the devout and studious brother Baptista administered to me.”³¹ Fabri, who was also ill, wrote: “The nurse, namely brother Baptista, took great care of me [...] On that day I did not go out of my cell.”³²

In 1461 we find another reference to the library of the convent of Mount Zion in the description given to us by Rochechouart: “I found out about Mount Zion from the book of the bishop of Acco [that is, Jacques de Vitry, *Historia Orientalis*]. One should note that many have written regarding this holy city, among whom Bede, who wrote about the sacred passage, and the bishop of Acco [Jacques de Vitry] who was there during the time of Geoffrey de Bouillon, and wrote about the entire Syria, and whose writings can be read at Mount Zion in the Friars’ convent.”³³

Another more exact description of the whole compound of the convent on Mount Zion

can be found in Quaresmius, author who quotes and describes various parts of the same convent: "The Convent of this church (Cenacle) which is adjacent to it is not too large and sumptuous, but it is nevertheless suitable for the friars Minor, and it was once comfortable for their dwellings, having a cloister at ground level and a dormitory in the first floor. It also has many rooms, and among these there are two in the cloister. The first one of them is found close to the entrance to the cloister. In it the lamb for the last supper of the Lord Christ was prepared, while in the other Christ appeared to Saint Thomas after his resurrection. The superior of this Convent of the Holy Land is known as the Guardian of the holy Mount Zion. Now, however, neither the guardian nor the friars live there any longer. They used to live there once, and it was a most suitable place for them, and was given to them in a unique way. It still belongs to them by right, since it has been taken away from them unjustly by the Turks. With great sorrow I saw that that most holy church of the Cenacle has been transformed into a sacrilegious mosque, and that the monastery has now become an impure dwelling place for Turks."

Certain civil representatives of Jerusalem went to the convent of Mount Zion in order to negotiate the departure of the pilgrims from Jerusalem: "When we entered the convent we went to the infirmary of the friars in a large hall, which the friars call the hall of the Venetians, together with the father Guardian and father John of Prussia and other senior friars, whom pilgrims consider with great honour." "The gardens of the Convent of Mount Zion are very small, and there is a small church, restricted space, and tiny rooms. Although the convent is small, 24 friars can live there fairly comfortably. Because of the insults and anger of the pagans they have an iron door, and outside it there are infuriated and rabid dogs, which guard the friars from the robbers that try to break into the convent day and night."

To a group of pilgrims who arrived in Ramleh, the Custos said: "The sick and frail pilgrims will be ministered to with every care and diligence, and we will receive them and refresh them charitably in the infirmary."

The descriptions of Fabri and Quaresmius illustrate the details of the convent of Mount Zion, the problems and the situations that could be created in this environment that became hostile on account of the Turks.³⁴

We lastly have the testimony of Pietro Casola who went to Jerusalem in 1494: "Now [Mount Zion] is the dwelling place of the friars of Saint Francis of the Observance, and they live in a restricted environment, and as the same friars say, if it were not for the prohibition of the Moors who do not give them permission to build, they would be able to build it in a more elegant style; the convent is not too large. They say that this Church was the Cenacle. The monastery is very restricted and cannot take a large community of friars; they say that there are continually 20 friars who live there and who minister both the Holy Sepulchre and even Bethlehem. As I have said above, if it were not for the prohibitions of the Moors the friars would do many beautiful things: regarding building, however, they cannot undertake any initiative, and if they do some repairs for the house they have to do them very secretly. The same friars also possess some fields around the monastery."³⁵

The Bizzocche or Franciscan female Tertiaries – Domus Martharum on Mount Zion during the 14th – 16th centuries

The female Catholic presence on Mount Zion from the mid-14th century to the mid-16th century is divided into two moments: - the foundation of the hospital of Sofia of the Archangels (documented only in pontifical documents); and the presence of the Franciscan female Tertiaries in the same building for more than a century and a half.

Regarding the first period we know of the activity in favour of pilgrims; regarding the second period their activity is well documented, especially their stable presence in that place. The misadventures suffered by the friars during the first half of the 16th century had such a negative impact that already during the first quarter of that century the Tertiaries or *Bizzocche*³⁶ had to leave, and they would never return, also because the friars now needed the convent of the sisters as a dwelling place after their expulsion from the Cenacle.

The first period has been described in the beginning of this study, when we spoke about the Franciscan presence on Mount Zion, about the hospital or infirmary for pilgrims. During this period 10 different papal *bullae* were published,

starting from 1354, in favour of the hospital or the Sofia of the Archangels. We also have a reference to the style of life and the services required. In 1377 we find this norm prescribed in the *Statutes*: “No more than ten women can be accepted in the female Hospital on Mount Zion; in that of Bethlehem four at the most. No woman can be admitted without the permission of the Guardian and after having spent a year of probation. Those living in Jerusalem cannot dare to transfer to the hospice of Bethlehem without having acquired the licence of the Guardian, or that of the Friars in urgent cases. All those women who are unstable, negligent, lazy in their work, or who fall under any form of censure, should immediately be expelled from the Holy Land. No women should be admitted if they do not lead praiseworthy lives, give an exemplary witness and be of a mature age, at least being fifty years of age.”³⁷

Where was the hospital to be found? The following is a description made by a pilgrim in 1427: “Beside the southern flank of the house of Caiaphas, being built as if it were part of it, there is the hospital of the Catholic women. There is a tiny church held by the Abyssinians, and in the precincts of that house there is a certain small grotto, in which it is believed that David composed the Miserere.”³⁸

1467: Brother Cristoforo da Varese writes: “It is to be known that after the Friars had for a long time dwelt in those places of the Holy Land, a certain Lady Sofia, wife of a certain Philip de Arcangelis, with the consent of Innocent VI, founded a hospital, in which presently [1467] reside the Sisters of the Third Order. After the death of the foundress the direction and care of the same hospital pertains to the Guardian and Friars of Mount Zion [...] When the Friars saw that, because of the poverty of the hospital, as well as because of other just causes, sick persons could not live in that place, they rather chose that the sick would be better off in that convent than in the hospital. So they admitted some women in that hospice, to minister to the necessities of the Friars.”³⁹ In the preceding page we find another precious information by the same pilgrim, who states: “Towards the north outside the open space of the ruined church and just a stone’s throw away from the church of the Friars Minor, there used to be a beautiful chapel. This was the house of the High Priest Caiaphas.”

On 10 February 1448 a *hogget* was



The minaret on Mount Zion

published, which gave the faculty to the religious to restore the wall of the monastery of the nuns who lived on Mount Zion.

From 1483 we find more abundant information regarding the house of the sisters of Saint Clare. In other documentary sources this house was called *Domus Martharum*.

The first witness is that of Paul Walther: “We passed the street along the *Domus Martharum*, which is a large building opposite the church of Zion. In that monastery live some Italian Christian women, belonging to our rite, who are called the *Marthae* of the Friars; since they minister to the Friars in the name of God, washing, mending and taking care of house work, and they frequent the church of the Friars. They are rather elderly, but very mature and honest, and they live according to the rule of Saint Francis, giving witness of much patience and endurance.”

Later on he describes an assault by the Saracens: “In that same night the Moors or the pagan robbers invaded in a rude manner the monastery of the nuns. They violently broke down the door of the monastery, and then compelled the nuns, under pain of death, not to raise the alarm. Then they despoiled the nuns and the entire monastery and left [...] One reverend father came to inform me regarding the violence that the nuns

suffered. When we arrived at the monastery we found everything exactly as the messenger had informed us. The loss was great for the friars, since all that which the nuns possessed was administered by the friars.” The author, after having listed the convents or residences of the friars in Jerusalem and Bethlehem, writes: “[...] the fathers have a poor monastery for the sisters and the devout women which is not far away from Mount Zion. There I found five nuns who provide those who come in great need, and there I could refresh myself with a phial of oil.”⁴⁰

The second witness is that of Felix Fabri who uses the same name – *Domus Matharum* – to describe the monastery of the nuns, and seems to paraphrase Paul Walther when he says: “Then we went along the road and arrived at the *Domus Martharum*, which is a large monastery, and is found opposite the church of Zion. There are some women in that monastery.” Then he repeats the text of Walther, with the only difference regarding the denomination of the invaders: he does not call them Moors but Arabs. “Not a year had passed since I was living in Jerusalem, when one night the Arabs broke down the door of that female monastery with great fracas and broke into the building, and they stole all they could lay their hands on, leaving the monastery despoiled. When I was staying there, these women washed my tunic, and the scapular, and also showed me other gestures of charity. With them remained also that woman from the palace of the queen of Cyprus, of whom I spoke in fol 69.a.”⁴¹

In the same year (1483) Bernhard Breydenbach speaks about the sisters of Saint Clare! “The friars live in the monastery of Mount Zion, and normally twenty-four Friars live in community in that place and pray to the Lord most holy. Not far away from that place they take care and provide with all necessities the convent of the Poor Ladies of Saint Clare. There are at least six nuns in that monastery.”⁴²

Two years later, in 1485, Francesco Suriano describes the place of the convent of the “Bizoche” and their work. The editor of 1514 adds an important note that describes the place where the ancient monastery of the female Tertiaries was found with particular precision.

Suriano dedicates a brief account, chapter LXII, to the “Bizoche”: “Here we speak about the Bizoche who live in Jerusalem and who minister to the Friars of Mount Zion: and how they are

revered and honoured by those infidels. In that place [Cenacle] at present the friars celebrate the office and the divine lauds. Close to that place is the monastery of the Bizoche.” In an editorial note there is an addition: “The codex n. 58 [red. A. 1485] states: ...the chapel of the Cenacle is where the Friars Minor celebrate the divine offices. Close by is the Monastery of those women, which is fifty cubits far away.” The author then explains the reason as to why the Tertiaries were staying on Mount Zion, besides the fact that they ministered to the friars: “Although the principal cause is that of ministering to the Friars who take care of their material needs, they are also there because of the female pilgrims who continually come to Jerusalem. These Bizoche [...] are very honoured and revered by the Saracens [...] For this reason the Bizoche can go safely in *Montana Iudea*, in Bethany, in Bethlehem and in all the city, without anyone to guide them or accompany them. Nevertheless, in that place, for reasons of honesty and all good respect, and to keep at bay all suspicion, the only women who are admitted to the monastery are those who are rather elderly, who live a good life, and have excellent moral behaviour.”⁴³

Brother Antonio de Medina left again from the Holy Land in 1514. According to the laws of that time, it is legitimate to assume that he had been “in service” to the Holy Land for three years. Speaking about the “Franciscan Monastery and Shrine of Mount Zion” he writes: “At a stone’s throw away from the Cenacle to the north is the other monastery of the Blessed ladies of the Third Order of our glorious father Saint Francis, in which live from four to six nuns, who are very devout persons and friends of God. These religious take care of the Christian women to go to visit the holy places, and they also do housework and cook for the friars. The guardian of this convent takes the responsibility of caring for all that is necessary for the livelihood.”⁴⁴

Barbone Morosini (1514) speaks about Mount Zion and the surroundings of the House of Caiaphas on the same Mount: “At this same place, not far from the other buildings found on Mount Zion, through a street one finds a large monastery of penitent women of the Third Order of Saint Francis. At present there are three of these women who are very solicitous and serve with all devotion. In the monastery there is nothing worthy of memory.”⁴⁵

The famous Fr. Verniero is author of the *Croniche o Annali di Terra Santa*, written in 1646. They were published for the first time by Golubovich in 1929: the editor presents the original title of the chapter regarding the foundation of the hospital by Sofia de Archangelis, and then transcribes this note of the chronicler, referring to 1551: "Nowadays in the Holy Land our Tertiaries are not to be found any longer, and the hospital is so ruined that no traces of it remain; when women pilgrims arrive they are received by the other secular women in their own houses and they are provided for in their needs by our friars."⁴⁶

In 1553, Juan Perera gives us the following information: "We arrived in Jerusalem on 28 June [1553] and we were given hospitality on Mount Zion together with the Religious of Saint Francis, but not in the monastery, since the friars have been expelled from that place, and now the Turks and Moors are keeping it as a Mosque. The sacred Cenacle and the chapel of the Holy Spirit who descended upon the Apostles on the day of Pentecost, and the other mysteries that are venerated in that same monastery, all these are now under their possession, and the poor religious have been expelled in 1552 and had to go to live in a place called the *Forno* and where they used to bake bread; this is their dwelling place, where they celebrate and where they sleep, and where they bake the bread for the religious who stay at the Holy Sepulchre and in Bethlehem."⁴⁷

The already quoted and famous chronicler Juan de Calahorra, when he describes the situation and state of things on Mount Zion, in book III, chapters VI-VII of his *Chronica*, reports: "How a Hospital was founded on the Holy Mount Zion in order to receive and cure sick Pilgrims, and how its Administration was entrusted to the Friars Minor." Then he adds: "How the aforementioned Hospital became a Monastery of Religious Tertiaries, and regarding some Persons of the Third Order who flourished in virtue and holiness in the Holy Land."⁴⁸ In book V of the same *Chronica*, he writes: "During these last three years Father Bonifacio has been assaulted by the Turks, who were not content enough that they had changed the Convent of Mount Zion into a Mosque, but even went as far as to take away from the religious also that House, which we have already mentioned above, and which the same religious had in that Holy Place, which was for them a great consolation, since from it they could venerate from that house the most

holy Cenacle, and there also celebrate in order to satisfy the devotion of the Pilgrims. In spite of this, it was very difficult for them to take that place back, since the Grand Turk had commanded that the Franks had to leave the Tomb of the Prophet David. But the Superior [Bonifacio da Ragusa] worked so hard and with such diligence, that in spite of the efforts of that cursed *Santone* [head of the Mosque] and of the members of his party, he succeeded in having that house restored to the Religious. But after the departure of this Father, the same Religious lost that house once again, and they have never been able to regain it. Since the Religious could not negotiate any longer to get that Convent back in their possession, the Enemies of our Holy Faith let it fall in ruins, and they did the same in the case of the Monastery of the Religious women of the Third Order, and they destroyed it systematically in such a way that not even a sign of where it used to stand remains today."⁴⁹

A last and precious witness, even if it was written only during the 20th century, is to be found in a publication by Lemmens. He speaks about the Franciscans of Mount Zion between 1336 and 1551, and shows a map of the place, which gives an indication of the various buildings that used to belong to the friars (letter B), to the Armenians (F), to the Convent of the Nuns (E), and to the compound of the Cenacle (A).⁵⁰

1 G. FEDALTO, *La Chiesa Latina in Oriente*, III, *Documenti veneziani*, Roma 1979, 209-210.

2 Ibidem, 211.

3 FRANCESCO SURIANO, *Il Trattato di Terra Santa e dell'Oriente*, 110-111; see also 111, note 1, where the destruction of the Chapel of the Holy Spirit is described in detail.

4 Cfr. CASTELLANI, *Catalogo dei firmani*, 16, 23, 28.

5 E. ROGER, *La Terre Sainte ou description topographique très particulière de saint lieux et de la terre de promission*, Paris 1664, 118.

6 VERNIERO, *Croniche*, V, 15-19.

7 FRANCESCO DA SERINO, *Croniche ovvero Annali di Terra Santa*, I, edito da T. Cavallon, Firenze 1939, 270 and 271, note 1.

8 VERNIERO, *Croniche*, I, 197-198.

9 LUCA DA GUBBIO, *Viaggio in Terra Santa (a. 1559)*, in *Bessarione* 12 (1907-1908) 58, 78-79.

10 V. JUHASZ, *Donde se refugiaron los Franciscanos del Monte Sion desde el año 1551 hasta el año 1559 en que adquirieron el convento de San Salvador?*, in *Tierra Santa*

(1951) 346-350.

- 11 P. PEROTTI, *Monte Sion*, in *Le missioni francescane in Palestina ed in altre regioni della terra* 2 (1892) 172.
- 12 VERNIERO, *Croniche*, I, 10.
- 13 Ibidem 165.
- 14 Ibidem 158.
- 15 Ibidem 197.
- 16 Ibidem IV, 10.
- 17 Ibidem 184.
- 18 Ibidem V, 10.
- 19 Ibidem 19.
- 20 Ibidem 24.
- 21 JUAN DE CALAHORRA, *Chronica de la provincia de Syria y Tierra Santa de Gerusalem, contiene los progressos que en ella ha hecho la religion serafica, desde el año 1219 hasta el de 1632*, Madrid 1684; italian translation: *Historia cronologica della provincia di Syria, e Terra Santa di Gerusalemme...*, tradotta nella lingua italiana dal M.R.P. Angelico di Milano, Venetia 1694 (from which I quote), lib. V, cap. XXVII, 472; lib. V, cap. IV, 394.
- 22 PANTALEO DE AVEIRO, *Itinerario da Terra Santa*, 48-49.
- 23 *Viaggi di Pietro Della Valle, il pellegrino, con minuto ragguaglio di tutte le cose notabili osservate in essi, descritti da lui medesimo in 54 Lettere familiari da diversi luoghi della intrapresa peregrinatione...*, Roma 1650, 519.
- 24 C. RADZIWIŁ, *Jerosolymitana Peregrinatio*, Antverpiae 1614, 109-110.
- 25 I. COTOVICUS, *Itinerarium Hierosolymitanum et Syriacum*, Antverpiae 1619, 282.
- 26 LUCA DA GUBBIO, *Viaggio in Terra Santa*, in *Bessarione* 12 (1907-1908) 87.
- 27 D. BALDI, *La tomba di David e il S. Cenacolo. (Studio critico-storico)*, in *Studi Francescani*, s. III, 10/3 (1938) 193-233; 211-232.
- 28 D. BALDI, *Enchiridion Locorum Sanctorum. Documenta S. Evangelii loca respicientia*, Jerusalem 1955, 530; see pages 771-778 in which he presents many useful texts and documents regarding this argument.
- 29 B. COLLIN, *Les Frères Mineurs dans le Cénacle*, in *Storia Orientalis* 2 (1957) 19-34.
- 30 FELICIS FABRI, *Evagatorium in Terrae Sanctae*, I; BALDI, *Enchiridion Locorum Sanctorum*, 517-518.
- 31 PAULI WALTHERI GUGLINGENSIS, *Itinerarium in Terram Sanctam*, 136-137.
- 32 Regarding fr. *Baptista infirmarius* cfr. FELICIS FABRI, *Evagatorium in Terrae Sanctae*, II, Stuttgartiaw 1843, 115.
- 33 COUDERC, *Journal de Voyage à Jerusalem de Louis de Rochechouart, évêque de Saintes*, in *Revue de l'Orient Latin* 1 (1893) 269.
- 34 FELICIS FABRI, *Evagatorium in Terrae Sanctae*, I, 99, 217, 280-281; QUARESMIUS, *Historica, theologica et moralis Terrae Sanctae Elucidatio...*, Venetiis 1881, II, 97.
- 35 *Viaggio di Pietro Casola a Gerusalemme*, 68.
- 36 In Italian the term *bizzoco* or *bizzochero* has assumed the modern meaning of a bigot. In the Middle Ages the term was more akin to the word *pinzochero*, which

indicated Franciscan penitents or Tertiaries who led a life of ascetism and poverty. The term is found in a Florentine document of 1244.

- 37 GOLUBOVICH, *Biblioteca Bio-bibliografica della Terra Santa*, V, 218. This is the first time that history records another hospice for women in Bethlehem, besides that on Mount Zion.
- 38 *Descriptio T. S. del Minorita anonimo del 1427*, in MARCELLINO DA CIVEZZA – T. DOMENICHELLI, *Cronaca delle Missioni*, 1895, 261; GOLUBOVICH, *Biblioteca Bio-bibliografica della Terra Santa*, V, 64.
- 39 Manuscript of the 15th century in Jerusalem. *Biblioteca Bio-bibliografica della Terra Santa*, V, 63.
- 40 PAULI WALTHERI GUGLINGENSIS, *Itinerarium in Terram Sanctam*, 163-164, 309.
- 41 FELICIS FABRI, *Evagatorium in Terrae Sanctae*, 259.
- 42 BERNARDI BREYDENBACH, *Transmarina peregrinatio*, in *Le missioni francescane in Palestina ed in altre regioni della terra* 1-2 (1891) 46.
- 43 FRANCESCO SURIANO, *Il Trattato di Terra Santa e dell'Oriente*, 110, 118.
- 44 *Tratado de los Mysterios y estaciones de la Tierra Santa: Compuesto y ordenado por Antonio de Medina de la orden del glorioso padre sant Francisco en Salamanca 1523*, 71-72; A. ARCE, *Documentos y Textos para la Historia de la Tierra Santa y sus Santuarios, 1600-1700*, Jerusalem 1970, 75.
- 45 BARBONE MOROSINI, *Viaggio in Terra Santa an. 1514*, 4 (a typewritten copy).
- 46 VERNIERO, *Croniche*, I, 77.
- 47 JUAN PERERA, *Camino y peregrinacion desde Roma a Jerusalem y toda la Siria hasta Egipto*, in A. ARCE, *Itinerarios raros y preciosos de Palestina*, Jerusalem 1963, 7; the same account is also published in *Tierra Santa* (1959) 15.
- 48 JUAN DE CALAHORRA, *Historia cronologica della provincia di Syria, e Terra Santa di Gierusalemme...*, lib. III, cap. XXVII, 475.
- 49 Ibidem, lib. V, cap. XXVII, 475.
- 50 L. LEMMENS, *Die Franziskaner auf dem Sion (1336-1551)*, Münster 1919, 76.

THE DONATION OF MONTE DELLA VERNA

(8 May 1213)

Noel Muscat ofm

On the occasion of the 800th anniversary of the donation of Monte della Verna to Saint Francis of Assisi, on the part of Count Orlando di Chiusi della Verna, the Commune of Chiusi della Verna, together with the Franciscan Friars of La Verna, have published a commemorative volume entitled: *Io ho in Toscana un monte divotissimo. Gli ottocento anni della donazione della Verna a san Francesco d'Assisi (1213-2013)*, con un saggio di Luigi Pellegrino (Collana Tesori della Verna, 3), Edizioni Studi Francescani, Firenze 2014.

It was on 8 May 2013, according to the First Consideration on the Stigmata of Saint Francis, in the *Fioretti*, that Saint Francis met Count Orlando di Chiusi della Verna, who generously donated to him and his friars the entire mountain of La Verna, standing above the medieval castle of Chiusi where Count Orlando lived. In English the account has been published in the parallel text of chapter 9 of *The Deeds of Blessed Francis and His Companions (Actus Beati Francisci et Sociorum eius)*, in *Francis of Assisi, Early Documents*, Vol. III: The Prophet, 452-454. We shall here present this text, which is an abridged form of the more detailed account in Italian in the *Fioretti*, that can be read in *Fonti Francescane. Nuova Edizione*, Editrici Francescane, Padova 2011, numbers 1897-1899.

The Finding of Mount La Verna according to Actus Beati Francisci, 9

Francis, that most faithful servant and friend of Jesus Christ, through himself and others honoured his Creator and Saviour with all his strength. Therefore, our most gracious and kind

Saviour Jesus in turn honoured him, for *whoever glorifies me, I will glorify him* (Mt 10:32), says the Lord. For that reason wherever Saint Francis went, he was held in such veneration by people that it was as if the whole world ran together towards such an amazing man. Whenever he approached a place, a town or a village, a person considered himself fortunate if he would touch or see him.

At one time before he received the stigmata of our Saviour, it happened that he left the Valley of Spoleto and went to Romagna. When on his journey he came to the town of Montefeltro, a celebration for a new knighting was being held there with great solemnity. When our holy Father learned about this from the inhabitants, he said to Brother Leo, his companion: "Let us go to these people, because with the help of God we will make some progress among them." In the celebration there were many noblemen gathered from various regions. Among them was a lord named Orlando from Tuscany. He was very rich and noble, and because of the wonderful things he had heard about Saint Francis, he conceived a great devotion for him and wished to see and listen to him.

When Saint Francis entered the town, he climbed a wall in order to be more easily heard by the throng and he preached there to the multitude. In the local idiom this was the theme he set forth: *Tanto è il bene ch'io aspetto, ch'ogni pena m'è diletto*.

The sense of this is: Such is the good which I await, that every pain delights me. On these words the Holy Spirit poured forth divine declarations through the mouth of Saint Francis by referring to the pains of the martyrs, the martyrdoms of the apostles, the severe penances of the confessors, and the many tribulations of holy men and women. He did this so devoutly that the people stood there

in rapt attention as if listening to an angel. Among these people was Orlando who rejoiced in the desired presence of Saint Francis and was inwardly touched by his wonderful sermon. He proposed for the salvation of his soul to discuss a transaction with our holy Father.

Therefore, when the preaching was finished, he said to Saint Francis: "Father, I would like to speak to you about the salvation of my soul." However, Saint Francis, totally grounded with the salt of discernment, said to him: "My lord, go this morning and honour your friends since they invited you to the celebration, and after your meal we will talk as much as you wish." Orlando agreed to this and after his dinner he fully set forth before Saint Francis the matter of the salvation of his soul. At the end he said: "Brother Francis, I have a very abandoned and solitary mountain in Tuscany which is called Mount La Verna. It is very suitable for those who wish to live a solitary life. If this mountain pleases you and your companions, I would very willingly give it to you for the salvation of my soul."

Saint Francis was thoroughly inclined and desirous of finding a solitary place where he could more completely give himself to divine contemplation, so that when he heard this offer, he first gave praise to God who through his faithful people provides for his little sheep, and then he gave thanks to Lord Orlando, and said: "My lord, when you return to your region, I will send you two of my companions. You show them this mountain and, if it seems suitable, I most willingly accept your charitable offer." Orlando lived in a castle near Mount La Verna.

After the celebration was finished and Orlando returned to his home, Saint Francis sent him two of his associates who looked for him, but because that area was unknown to them it was with great difficulty that they found Orlando's castle. When they found him, he most willingly and charitably received them as though they were angels of God. With about fifty men, heavily armed for fear of wild animals, they were led to Mount La Verna. Looking for a place where they could prepare a home to live in, they finally found there a small piece of level ground where in the name of the Lord they decided to stay. Those laymen who came with the brothers built a hut of branches which they had cut from the trees with their broad swords. After they accepted the place there, they went for Saint Francis and told him that

the place was very remote and suitable for divine contemplation.

When he heard this, Saint Francis gave praise to God. He then took Brother Leo, Brother Masseo and Brother Angelo, a former knight, and together they went to La Verna.

The Finding of Mount La Verna according to the First Consideration on the Sacred Stigmata

(*The Little Flowers of St. Francis*, tr. by W. Heywood, [1906], pp. 143-146, at sacred-texts.com)

As to the first consideration, it must be known that, in 1224, Saint Francis, being then forty-three years old, was inspired of God to depart from the Val di Spoleto and to go into Romagna, with Friar Leo his companion; and as he went, he passed at the foot of the Castello di Montefeltro; in the which town there was then being held a great banquet and festival for the knighting of one of those Counts of Montefeltro; and Saint Francis, hearing of this festival, and that many gentlefolk were gathered there from diverse lands, said unto Friar Leo: "Let us go up thither unto this feast, since by God's help we shall gather some good spiritual fruit." Now among the other gentlemen, who had come thither from that district to that ceremonial, was a great and rich gentleman of Tuscany, by name Messer Orlando of Chiusi in Casentino, the which, by reason of the marvellous things which he had heard touching the sanctity and miracles of Saint Francis, bore him great devotion and had very great desire to see him and to hear him preach. Saint Francis then, having arrived at this town, entered in and went to the piazza, where were assembled all the multitude of those gentlemen; and, in fervour of spirit, he climbed upon a little wall and began to preach, taking as the text of his sermon these words in the vulgar tongue: *So great the bliss I hope to see, that every pain delights me.*

And from this text, by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, he preached so devoutly and so profoundly, proving the truth thereof by diverse sufferings and torments of holy apostles and of holy martyrs, by the severe penances of holy confessors, and by the many tribulations and temptations of holy virgins and of other saints, that every man stood with eyes and mind fixed upon him, and hearkened unto him as if it were

View of La Verna



an angel of God that spoke; among whom, the said Messer Orlando, being touched in the heart by God, through the marvellous preaching of Saint Francis, was minded to consult and speak with him after the sermon concerning the affairs of his soul. Wherefore, when the preaching was done, he drew Saint Francis aside and said unto him: "O father, I would take counsel with thee touching the salvation of my soul." Saint Francis made answer: "Well content am I; but go thou this morning and do honour to thy friends who have invited thee to this festival, and dine with them; and, after thou hast dined, we will talk together as long as thou shalt please." Messer Orlando, therefore, went to dinner; and, after dinner, he returned to Saint Francis and laid before him fully all the affairs of his soul and took counsel with him concerning the same. And finally this Messer Orlando said to Saint Francis: "I have in Tuscany a mountain most apt for devotion, the which is called the mountain of Alvernia, exceeding solitary, and passing well fitted for such as would do penance in a place remote from men, and desire a life of solitude. If it pleases thee, gladly would I give it to thee and to thy companions for the

salvation of my soul." Saint Francis, hearing so liberal an offer of a thing which he much desired, was exceeding joyful thereat; and praising and thanking first God, and then Messer Orlando, he spoke unto him thus: "Messer Orlando, when you shall have returned to your home, I will send unto you some of my companions, and you shall show them that mountain; and, if it shall seem to them fitted for prayer and for the doing of penance, even from this moment do I accept your charitable offer." And, when he had thus spoken, St. Francis departed; and after he had finished his journey he returned to Santa Maria degli Angeli; and Messer Orlando likewise, when the festivities for the making of that knight were ended, returned to his castle, which was called Chiusi, and which was distant a mile from Alvernia. Saint Francis, then, having returned to Santa Maria degli Angeli, sent two of his companions to the said Messer Orlando, who, when they were come unto him, welcomed them with very great joy and charity: and, desiring to show them the mountain of Alvernia, he sent with them fully fifty armed men, to the end that they might defend them from the wild beasts; and thus accompanied those friars went up into the

mountain and explored it diligently; and at last they came unto a part of the mountain exceeding well fitted for devotion and for contemplation; in the which part there was some level ground; and that place they chose for their habitation and for that of St. Francis; and with the aid of those armed men which were in their company they made a little cell with the boughs of trees, and on this wise, in the name of God, they accepted and took possession of the mountain of Alvernia and of the Place of the friars in that mountain, and departed and returned to Saint Francis. And, when they had come unto him, they told him how and in what manner they had taken the said Place upon the mountain of Alvernia, well fitted for prayer and contemplation. Now, when Saint Francis heard this news, he rejoiced greatly, and, giving praise and thanks to God, spoke unto those friars with happy face, and said: "My sons, we are drawing nigh to our forty days' fast of Saint Michael the Archangel; and I firmly believe that it is the will of God that we keep this fast in the mountain of Alvernia, the which by Divine dispensation hath been made ready for us, to the end that we may, through penance, merit from Christ the consolation of consecrating that blessed mountain to the honour and glory of God and of His glorious mother, the Virgin Mary, and of the holy angels." And then, having said these words, Saint Francis took with him Friar Masseo da Marignano of Assisi, the which was a man of great wisdom and eloquence, and Friar Angelo Tancredi da Rieti, who was a man of very noble birth, and who in the world had been a knight, and Friar Leo, who was a man of very great simplicity and purity; for the which cause St. Francis loved him much. And with these three friars Saint Francis betook himself to prayer, and commended himself and his companions aforesaid to the prayers of the friars which remained behind, and set out with those three in the name of Jesus Christ the Crucified, to go to the mountain of Alvernia.

The historical memories of the donation of Monte della Verna

The account in the *Actus-Fioretti* provides us with some interesting details regarding this unique event in the life of Saint Francis. The anonymous author of *The Considerations on the Stigmata* places the event of the finding of La Verna in 1224, as if everything occurred during the same

year in which Francis received the stigmata during the famous retreat he made on the mountain. We know that, in fact, the episode recounted above happened eleven years earlier, in 1213, on 8 May, when Francis was on a preaching tour in Romagna, and came to the medieval castle of San Leo, in the Montefeltro region, close to the Republic of San Marino.



Castle of San Leo

The circumstances of this event concerned a medieval celebration of knighthood in this medieval castle. Francis and his companion, Brother Leo, went up to the castle in order to assist at the celebration, with the aim of preaching to the knights there present. The castle of San Leo (583 metres above sea-level), lies about 32 kilometres from Rimini in the Val Marecchia. It stands as an indomitable fortress on an enormous rocky outcrop, which falls in steep cliffs all around. At its very top stands the unconquerable fortress, scene of the encounter of Francis with Count Orlando. The medieval fortress was restored in the 15th century by Francesco di Giorgio Martini, on orders of Federico III da Montefeltro. The ancient castle was the principal fortress of Montefeltro and many battles took place in it. With Berenagius II it assumed the title of Capital of Italy (962-964). The castle had been evangelised by Saint Leo in the 4th century. Among the personages that were welcomed in San Leo we mention Dante Alighieri and Saint Francis of Assisi, who met Count Orlando di Chiusi della Verna in this castle. The room in which the two men are said to have met is still conserved.

Who was Count Orlando di Chiusi della Verna? His ancient medieval castle still stands in ruins to this very day under the holy mountain where Francis received the stigmata. It is a typical



Panorama of the Shrine of La Verna

medieval castle, with an ancient chapel dedicated to Saint Michael the Archangel, a typical patron saint for knights.

The origins of the ancient castle, which today stands in ruins in the tiny hamlet of Chiusi della Verna, go back certainly before 1000. Emperor Otho I, in a document of 7th December 967, records the existence of the castle that at the time belonged to Geoffrey of Ildebrando. The property of the Counts of Chiusi in the Casentino region of Tuscany was a sign of the power that this noble family of knights enjoyed for 4 centuries, during which the Cattani Counts were proprietors of the castle.

Count Orlando Cattani donated the mountain of La Verna to Saint Francis at the castle of San Leo on 8th May 1213. Francis went up to La Verna the first time in 1214, and as *The Considerations on the Stigmata* recount, he was personally welcomed by the Count, who offered him and his friars expert guides and soldiers to protect them on the mountain against brigands and wild animals. The sons of Count Orlando, Cungio, Bandino, Guglielmo and Francesco, confirmed the donation of the mountain to Francis by a notarial act drawn on 9th June 1274. The same document specifies that the extension of the territory donated included the entire mountain, with its cover of trees, its cliffs and fields, departing from the summit of the mountain (Mount Penna, 1289 metres above sea-level), down to the very base, all around.

With a notarial deed drawn on 29th October 1261, Guglielmo degli Ubertini, bishop of Arezzo, declared that the Counts of Cattani were no longer in condition to be proprietors of the castle, and thus placed the castle under the direct dependence of the the bishop of Arezzo. In 1324 Bishop Guido Tarlati took the castle under his possession, and

donated it to his brother Angelo Tarlati and his wife the Countess Giovanna di Santa Fiora. These took care of the building of the Basilica of the Shrine of La Verna, and they also built the ancient medieval chapel of Saint Michael the Archangel in the hamlet close to their castle. On the façade of the chapel there is an inscription which commemorates this noblewoman: *Anno domini MCCCXXLVIII domina comitissa Johanna uxor domini Tarlati de Petramala fecit fieri hoc opus*. In 1385 the castle of Count Orlando di Chiusi della Verna passed to the property of the Republic of Florence.

The castle eventually fell into a state of abandonment in the 15th century. Its imposing masonry was taken away and utilized to build other edifices. In 1486 the chronicler Mariano da Firenze wrote that the nobleman Domenico Bartoli from Florence, took away the stones of the “palace of the most devout Count Orlando” in order to build the new bell tower of La Verna.

Count Orlando di Chiusi della Verna was a great benefactor of Francis and the friars. He not only built for Francis and the brothers the cells in which they could retire to pray on the holy mountain, but he also built the tiny chapel of Saint Mary of the Angels, which is the nucleus of the Shrine of La Verna. Although the chapel was enlarged later on by Saint Bonaventure, the inner part is still the original chapel built by Count Orlando, who was buried in a simple tomb in front of the main altar of this chapel. A short inscription on the tomb commemorates this great man who donated La Verna to Francis in 1213.

The chapel of Saint Mary of the Angels, where the body of Count Orlando rests, was built in 1216-1218 according to the wish of Francis himself. It was dedicated to Saint Mary of the Angels, in order to remind Francis and the brothers on La Verna of the chapel of Portiuncula below Assisi, which was so dear to the man of God. The chapel was enlarged in 1260 and was consecrated during the generalate of Saint Bonaventure, who spent the autumn of 1259 on La Verna, and was there inspired to compose his famous mystical treatise *Itinerarium mentis in Deum*. The chapel is divided into two sections. The older section, where Count Orlando is buried in front of the altar, is the original part, containing the altar and choir. On the main altar there is a terracotta bas-relief depicting the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the work of Andrea Della Robbia (1535-1528). The



*Interior of St. Mary of the Angels.
Count Orlando is buried in front of the altar.*

bas-relief also features Saint Francis and Saint Bonaventure on the right, and Saint Thomas the apostle, who receives a belt from the Virgin Mary, together with Saint Gregory the Great, Pope. The chapel has a tiny bell tower with one bell. It was built in 1257 by Leonardo Pisano, and the bell was probably a gift of Saint Bonaventure to the shrine.

The tiny hamlet of Chiusi della Verna still conserves the medieval core of small houses, clustered together under the imposing remains of the medieval fortress that was once the home of Count Orlando di Chiusi. This generous man was not only one of Francis' close friends, just like the noblewoman Jacopa dei Settesoli from Rome, but

he was instrumental in donating to Francis and the brothers the holy mountain of La Verna, where on 14th September or whereabouts Francis received the gift of the stigmata of Christ's passion, during the apparition of the Crucified Seraph, and where Franciscans of every generation have lived and prayed in the silent woods, cells and chapels that they built. Among them we find famous mystics, saints and hermits, who would become reformers of the Order and authors of mystical treatises, such as Ubertino da Casale, author of the *Arbor Vitae Crucifixae Iesu*, and other holy Franciscans mentioned in the *Actus-Fioretti*.

SAINT JOHN XXIII

FRANCISCAN TERTIARY

The joyful occasion of the canonization of Pope John XXIII on 27th April was the crowning celebration of the journey towards sainthood of this humble and good Pope. John XXIII was Pope from 28th October 1958 to 3rd June 1963. Angelo Roncalli was born on 25th November 1881, the

son of humble parents from Sotto il Monte near Bergamo. After becoming a priest in 1904 he was secretary to Bishop Giacomo Radini Tedeschi, and subsequently became papal delegate to Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey and Apostolic Nuncio in France. He became Cardinal and Patriarch of Venice



in 1953. After the death of Pope Pius XII on 9th October 1958, Cardinal Roncalli was elected Pope during the Consistory. Although he was elderly, Pope John XXIII accomplished great deeds during his short pontificate. He not only convened the Second Vatican Council on 29th January 1959, but was also a man who worked hard in favour of peace, and is author the famous encyclical, *Pacem in Terris*. On 3rd September 2000 Pope John Paul II, who has also been declared a Saint, officially beatified John XXIII.

John XXIII visited the town of Assisi on 4th October 1962, in preparation for the opening ceremony of Vatican Council II. It was the first papal journey outside Rome, and John XXIII visited Loreto and Assisi where he prayed on the tomb of Saint Francis.

Indeed, John XXIII had been a member of the Secular Franciscan Order (Franciscan Tertiary). On 26th January 1955 he wrote: "I love Saint Francis and his sons from my childhood. I have been a Franciscan Tertiary since I was fourteen years old, when I received the sacred tonsure. Although I took the way of the secular clergy, nonetheless, Saint Francis has always been with whom I was most familiar. With him, I was in good company along with other saints who were his friends. Oh! What a comfort to my spirit when, in my explorations around the globe, everywhere I

met Francis in the homes of his sons in Europe, in the land of Asia, and Africa. I like the memories of the places where he passed through as well as the churches and altars erected in his honour; but most of all I like his sons, who are humble, talented, hard working, peaceful, joyful and intent in the works of peace and goodness as co-operators in my busy pastoral activity.

It was in the crypt of the Basilica, where John XXIII paused to pray in front of the tomb of Saint Francis, that he spoke about the teachings of Francis of Assisi. He said: "Saint Francis teaches us how we should enter into communication with God and our brethren. When I arrived in Assisi the first time as Cardinal in 1953, I felt that here, with Saint Francis, I had truly arrived at the gates of Paradise. A Paradise on earth means a moderate and wise use of the beautiful and good things that Providence has endowed the world with. These goods are not exclusive to anybody, and they are useful to all. We should ask ourselves: what did God give to Assisi this natural way of enchanting us, this splendour of art, this attraction towards holiness that seems to hang in the same air we breathe and which pilgrims and visitors sense in a visible way? The answer is easy. Because all men, through a common and universal language, may learn how to recognise their Creator and to recognise themselves as brothers."

CHURCH OF SANTO STEFANO, ASSISI

Many pilgrims or tourists who visit the town of Assisi stop maybe for one day to admire the Basilica of Saint Francis and to stroll along the winding streets to Piazza del Comune. They might also visit the Basilica of Santa Chiara and the Cathedral of San Rufino, and then go downhill to the Church of San Damiano. One can take a taxi up to Mount Subasio to visit the Eremo delle Carceri. For those who arrive by train a stop at the Basilica of Saint Mary of

delve into the hidden alleyways of Assisi and discover hidden gems of medieval architecture in churches and palaces. Indeed, the beauty of Assisi lies in these secluded places from where one can get a glimpse of the panorama on the Umbrian plain beneath, particularly on days when it is shrouded in mist and low clouds and the town of Assisi seems to emerge as a fortress without foundations to enjoy the sun's benevolent rays and resplendent light.



Facade of Santo Stefano

the Angels (Portiuncula) is another important moment of the pilgrimage.

Few persons have enough time to

One of these hidden gems of Assisi is the tiny church of Santo Stefano. It can be reached either from Via San Francesco, the

street leading from San Francesco up to Via del Seminario, Via Fortini and Via Portica to Piazza del Comune, or else down from Via San Paolo, which leads you from Piazza del Comune to San Giacomo de Murorupto and hence to San Francesco. In both cases you will have to enter and go up or down a tiny alleyway called Vicolo Santo Stefano.

The Church of Santo Stefano is found right in the heart of the medieval town of Assisi. Indeed, some historians claim that it is the oldest standing church in Assisi. Although it is first mentioned in archival documents in 1192, as pertaining to the vast properties of the Monastery of Saint Benedict of Mount Subasio, its date of foundation antecedes for at least one century this documented record. There were many such chapels in Assisi and in its *contado* that belonged to the Benedictines of Mount Subasio. The Portiuncula chapel was one of them, for example.

Santo Stefano eventually passed under the jurisdiction of the Benedictine Monastery of Farfa, which was also the proprietor of the nearby Church of San Giacomo de Murorupto. The Church probably became a parish in 1255-1260, when San Giacomo de Murorupto was ceded to the canons of San Rufino. Its first parish priest is mentioned in a document of 1264 as Don Villanus. However, it seems that after him the priests responsible for the Church were called simply rectors.

A document of 1665 speaks of the *Ecclesiae parochialis Sanctorum Stephani et Fortunati Assisii*. On 15 May 1747 the Bishop of Assisi Ottavio Ringhieri asked Pope Benedict XIV to declare the Church of Santo Stefano as pertaining to the churches under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Assisi.

Going up the alleyway which bears the name Vicolo Santo Stefano one notices first the Romanesque façade of the Church, with its pointed archway on the door and a walled in window to the left hand side of the central window. A tiny cross surmounts the tympanum of the Church. The Church is built of typical Assisi stones cut from Mount Subasio and shows the usual whitish and reddish colours of this rock. On its side overlooking the Umbrian

valley a flying buttress props up the sidewall, resting against one of the interior archways that support the roof. Going up further along the alleyway one notices the apse of the Church, which is the oldest part of the building. Indeed it can be a sign of the ancient traces of the first Romanesque chapel built in this place. On the left hand side of the apse there is a small and slender bell tower in the form of three arches, the top one resting upon the two lower ones. Three bells stand in the archways. The topmost bell is the most important and ancient of the three. It is an oblong bell dating from the first half of the 13th century. According to a well-founded tradition in Assisi it was this bell that started to sway and ring out of its own accord for a long time during the last hours of Francis' agony at the Portiuncula on the evening of Saturday 3rd October 1226, hereby announcing the death of the Poverello to the Assisi populace. Another bell is dated 1732 and bears the images of the Virgin Mary and Saint Stephen. The third bell, which is more recent, was the gift of a benefactor.

The interior of the Church is very simple. It is built of four stone archways supporting the wooden roof. The main altar stands underneath

Santo Stefano, interior





Statue of Santo Stefano

the Romanesque apse, which has a central slit as a window from which light can penetrate in the semi-darkness of the Church. A medieval crucifix hangs above the altar. There are two statues on both sides of the altar, both in medieval style. On the left there is the statue of Saint Stephen, titular saint of the Church, wearing a red dalmatic. On the right side of the altar there is a terracotta statue of the Virgin with Child, the work of Francesco Prosperi.

On the left wall of the Church there is a fresco dating from the first decades of the 14th century. It represents a *Madonna in trono col Bambino tra San Francesco e Santo Stefano*. Its style resembles that of the *Maestro delle Vele* of the Basilica of San Francesco. There is also a fresco of the Crucifixion, attributed to the artist Dono Doni.

The modern furnishings of the Church,

including the tabernacle, are the work of the architect Giuseppina Ciampani (1963).

The Church of Santo Stefano is truly a tiny paradise in Assisi, a place where to spend some quiet time in prayer. A glance at its round apse and slender bell tower reminds you that those stones were already there when Saint Francis was alive, and that maybe it might have been one of the favourite places for his quiet moments in Assisi, particularly during the years of his conversion. The Saint lived quite close to the *Badia* or Abbey of San Paolo, and from Via San Paolo he could easily descend to this Church, which still conserves an aura of contemplative solitude in the midst of trees and surrounded by ghostly alleyways and tiny medieval houses.

One can imagine the dusk of Saturday 3rd October 1226, the moment of Francis' death down at the Portiuncula, when the larks flew in joyful circles announcing his entry into eternal life. It was at that moment, when the curfew bells would announce the moment of retreating into one's lodgings for the night, that the tiny bell of Santo Stefano began to swing wildly and joyfully ring to announce that that night was to be a night of vigil and praise, as indeed happened when the Assisi townsfolk hurried down to the Portiuncula to assist at the vigil of prayer and praise before bringing the body of the Saint up to burial at San Giorgio on the morning of Sunday 4th October. That small bell still stands silent in its place like a sentinel overlooking the Umbrian plain and reminding the pilgrims who have time to stop and reflect that the Saint's predilection for the poor and tiny churches becomes an invitation to the fervent prayer that he would recite every time he would kneel down before a bare altar in a Church like Santo Stefano: "We adore you, Lord Jesus Christ, in all your churches throughout the whole world, and we bless you because by your holy cross you have redeemed the world."

Two men of courage

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Saint John XXIII and Saint John Paul II were not afraid to look upon the wounds of Jesus, to touch his torn hands and his pierced side. They were not ashamed of the flesh of Christ, they were not scandalised by him, by his cross; they did not despise the flesh of their brother, because they saw Jesus in every person who suffers and struggles. These were two men of courage, filled with the 'parrhesia' of the Holy Spirit, and they bore witness before the Church and the world to God's goodness and mercy.

They were priests, bishops and popes of the twentieth century. They lived through the tragic events of that century, but they were not overwhelmed by them. For them, God was more powerful; faith was more powerful – faith in Jesus Christ the Redeemer of man and the Lord of history; the mercy of God, shown by those five wounds, was more powerful; and more powerful too was the closeness of Mary our Mother.

In these two men, who looked upon the wounds of Christ and bore witness to his mercy, there dwelt a living hope and an indescribable and glorious joy. The hope and the joy which the risen Christ bestows on his disciples, the hope and the joy which nothing and no one can take from them. The hope and joy of Easter, forged in the crucible of self-denial, self-emptying, utter identification with sinners, even to the point of disgust at the bitterness of that chalice. Such were the hope and the joy which these two holy popes had received as a gift from the risen Lord and which they in turn bestowed in abundance upon the People of God, meriting our eternal gratitude.

This hope and this joy were palpable in the earliest community of believers, in Jerusalem, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles. It was a community which lived the heart of the Gospel, love and mercy, in simplicity and fraternity.

This is also the image of the Church which the Second Vatican Council set before us. Saint John XXIII and Saint John Paul II cooperated with the Holy Spirit in renewing and updating the Church in keeping with her pristine features, those features which the saints have given her throughout the centuries. Let us not forget that it is the saints who give direction and growth to the Church. In convening the Council, Saint John XXIII showed an exquisite openness to the Holy Spirit. He let himself be led and he was for the Church a pastor, a servant-leader. This was his great service to the Church; he was the pope of openness to the Holy Spirit.

In his own service to the People of God, Saint John Paul II was the pope of the family. He himself once said that he wanted to be remembered as the pope of the family. I am particularly happy to point this out as we are in the process of journeying with families towards the Synod on the family. It is surely a journey which, from his place in heaven, he guides and sustains.

May these two new saints and shepherds of God's people intercede for the Church, so that during this two-year journey toward the Synod she may be open to the Holy Spirit in pastoral service to the family. May both of them teach us not to be scandalized by the wounds of Christ and to enter ever more deeply into the mystery of divine mercy, which always hopes and always forgives, because it always loves.

Pope Francis
Homily at the Canonization Mass
of Pope John XXIII and Pope John Paul II
Vatican, 27 April 2014

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Abbreviations

Writings of St. Francis

Adm	Admonitiones.
CantAudPov	Cantico Audite Poverelle.
CantSol	Canticum fratris Solis.
LaudDei	Laudes Dei Altissimi.
BenLeo	Benedictio fratri Leoni data.
EpAnt	Epistola ad sanctum Antonium.
EpCler I	Epistola ad Clericos (Redactio prior).
EpCler II	Epistola ad Clericos (Red. posterior).
EpCust I	Epistola ad Custodes I.
EpCust II	Epistola ad Custodes II.
EpFid I	Epistola ad Fideles I.
EpFid II	Epistola ad Fideles II.
EpLeo	Epistola ad fratrem Leonem.
EpMin	Epistola ad Ministrum.
EpOrd	Epistola toti Ordini missa.
EpRect	Epistola ad populorum rectores.
ExhLD	Exhortatio ad Laudem Dei.
ExpPat	Expositio in Pater noster.
FormViv	Forma vivendi sanctae Clarae data.
Fragm	Fragmenta alterius RegulaeNB.
LaudHor	Laudes ad omnes horas dicendae.
OffPass	Officium Passionis Domini.
OrCruc	Oratio ante crucifixum.
RegB	Regula bullata.
RegNB	Regula non bullata.
RegEr	Regula pro eremitoriis data.
SalBMV	Salutatio beatae Mariae Virginis.
SalVirt	Salutatio virtutum.
Test	Testamentum.
UltVol	Ultima voluntas S. Clarae scripta.

Sources for the Life of St. Francis

1C	Tommaso da Celano, Vita Sancti Francisci.
LCh	Celano, Legenda ad usum chori.
2C	Celano, Memoriale in Desiderio Animae.
3C	Celano, Tractatus de Miraculis S. Francisci.
LJS	Julian of Speyer, Vita Sancti Francisci.
OR	Officium Rhythmicum S. Francisci.
AP	Anonimo Perugino.
L3C	Leggenda dei Tre Compagni.
CA	Compilatio Assisiensis.
LMj	S. Bonaventura, Legenda Maior S. Francisci.
LMn	S. Bonaventura, Legenda minor S. Francisci.
SP	Speculum Perfectionis.
SC	Sacrum commercium S. Francisci.
ABF	Actus Beati Francisci et Sociorum Eius.
Fior	Fioretti di San Francesco.

Sources for the Life of St. Clare

BICl	Blessing of St. Clare.
1-4LAg	Letters to St. Agnes of Prague..
LCl	Legend of St. Clare.
PC	Acts of the Process of Canonization.
PrPov	Privilege of Poverty.
RegCl	Rule of St. Clare.
TestCl	Testament of St. Clare.

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Cover picture:

Chapel of St. Mary of the Angels, La Verna