



CUSTODIA TERRÆ SANCTÆ

1226 — 2026

Franciscus

Eight hundred years since the death of Saint Francis

Prot. BA-120-RT/26

Guidelines for the Celebration of the Eighth Franciscan Centenary (2026–2027)

1. Preface

The recent conflict has profoundly modified the programs originally designed and developed by an ad hoc commission, in which our Capuchin brothers of Jerusalem also participate.

During the Custodial Discretorium of March 16–18, 2026, the present guidelines were outlined to guide the decisions and creativity of each individual fraternity.

If conditions permit, liturgical, cultural, and academic initiatives may be scheduled at the custodial level. However, the presence of the Custody in very different geopolitical contexts and in objectively diverse situations does not allow for common initiatives for everyone.

Therefore, the task of planning and implementing local initiatives is left to the creativity and concrete possibilities of each location, while respecting the following common indications.

2. Purpose of the Centenary

The eighth centenary is a favorable occasion to rediscover the spiritual legacy of Saint Francis—a legacy that still speaks today to the hearts and minds of the men and women of our time, helping us to believe in the Gospel, to "have the Spirit of the Lord and His holy operation," and to become credible signs of peace.

In a particular way, this anniversary represents an opportunity for Francis's message of peace to resonate within the Church and society, especially here in the Holy Land, which is marked by conflicts and divisions.

With the papal decree proclaiming a special Jubilee Year with an annexed plenary indulgence, this time also becomes a providential opportunity to be instruments of the Lord's infinite mercy, animated by the same desire as Saint Francis, who wished to lead everyone to salvation.

3. Official opening

The official opening of the centenary year will take place on:

Monday, March 23, 2026, at 5:30 PM at the Church of Saint Saviour – Jerusalem

4. Jubilee Year and plenary indulgence

As indicated in the decree of the Apostolic Penitentiary, His Holiness Pope Leo XIV has decreed that from January 16, 2026, to January 16, 2027, a special **Year of Saint Francis** be proclaimed, so that every member of the faithful, following the example of the Saint of Assisi, may become a model of holiness of life and a constant witness to peace.

In all our churches, it will be possible to obtain a **plenary indulgence** under the usual conditions: sacramental confession, Eucharistic communion, and prayer for the intentions of the Holy Father.

The faithful may obtain the indulgence by "visiting as a pilgrim any Franciscan friary church, or place of worship dedicated to Saint Francis or connected to him, devoutly participating in the jubilee rites or spending a suitable amount of time in prayer and meditation, offering supplications to God for peace and Christian charity, concluding with the Our Father, the Creed, and invocations to the Blessed Virgin Mary, Saint Francis, Saint Clare, and all the saints of the Franciscan Family." (Decree of the Apostolic Penitentiary)

Practical guidelines / suggestions

- In every friary or parish church, clearly communicate the times and methods for approaching the **Sacrament of Reconciliation**.
- Prepare, as appropriate, resources for the **examination of conscience** and for preparation for confession.
- Make available materials explaining the **meaning of the Indulgence**, including the Holy Father's prayer for the Centenary and other helpful prayers.

- In the coming days, the Custody will provide digital files for banner graphics that each community can print in the most suitable format and display in a visible location at the church.

5. The Spiritual Legacy of Saint Francis

The Centenary year is also an opportunity to share and deepen the knowledge of the spiritual legacy that Francis left to the Church and to humanity.

Practical guidelines / suggestions

- Where possible, organize meetings, conferences, formation sessions, and events to explore the Franciscan charism and its significance today in the Holy Land.
- Parishes within the same region, friaries, and shrines are encouraged to promote joint initiatives and share materials and experiences.
- Useful resources are available at the following link:
<https://www.ofm.org/centenary-francescano-la-pasqua-di-francesco-d-assisi.html>
- The Custody is preparing a traveling exhibition in several languages dedicated to Saint Francis, based on his writings. This exhibition can be requested by different communities; further details will be shared as soon as they are available.

6. Celebrations

Throughout the jubilee year, particular care is recommended for liturgical life and for moments of prayer linked to Franciscan spirituality.

Practical guidelines / suggestions

- In all fraternities, the Transitus of our Seraphic Father Saint Francis should be celebrated with particular solemnity on the evening of October 3, 2026, involving, wherever possible, all Franciscan entities present in the territory.
- Where conditions allow, penitential celebrations, jubilee rites, and moments of prayer should be organized to help the People of God undertake authentic journeys of conversion.

7. Communication

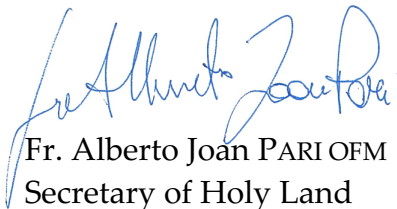
Despite the variety of initiatives and the specificity of different regions, it is important to maintain the unified character of the Franciscan Year.

For this reason, all initiatives, materials, events, and schedules should be promptly communicated to the Custodial Secretariat, so they may be disseminated, documented, and shared. In this way, a network of events will be created to testify to the richness of our custodial fraternity and foster communion among the various communities.

8. Conclusion

We hope that this centenary year, despite the increasing difficulties the Holy Land is experiencing, will become an opportunity for each person to rediscover Saint Francis as a companion on the journey and as a source of renewed desire for holiness.

May the Lord grant us all the grace to live this time in a spirit of conversion, fraternity, and peace, so that today, following in the footsteps of the *Poverello* of Assisi, we may be credible signs of the Gospel in the land that saw the birth of the Prince of Peace.


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