

All Brothers. Patton (Custos of the Holy Land): “Breaking new ground through human fraternity”

“The encyclical does not offer solutions but guidelines and values to be embraced. Every person, in his or her own ambit, is called to welcome fraternity, dialogue and reconciliation in their lives.”



" (All brothers) released by Pope Francis on St. Francis' Feast Day, "helps us reflect while simultaneously challenging us". Moreover, the Franciscan Father told SIR, echoing the words of the Pope, "the pandemic exposed our false securities and our inability to live together, making us discover that we need, and are all beholden to, one another". Father Patton highlights the Franciscan inspiration of the Encyclical: "Fraternity is not mentioned abstractly but in concrete terms. 'Brother' and 'sister', in fact, are recurring terms in the vocabulary of the Saint of Assisi." The Good Samaritan, quoted in the second chapter of the text, the Custos says, "epitomizes the concept of 'becoming brothers' or, in the words of Father Thaddée Matura, a leading scholar of Franciscan thought, of 'brotherly humanity'. Pope Francis' idea of human fraternity, expressed in the Abu Dhabi document recalled in the encyclical, reflects the way we enter into a relationship with people and Creation. As did St. Francis, who embraced with a fraternal disposition the socially excluded of his time, the poor and lepers, thieves and robbers, and those belonging to different cultures or religions, like the Sultan Malik-al-Kamil he met in Egypt." Such is the "inclusive and concrete" language of the Saint of Assisi, taken up by the Pontiff: *"To proclaim the leper as his brother he embraces him, so does he with the thief, the robber. This exemplifies the establishment of relations with all categories of persons. It paves the way to human fraternity, it is fraternity elevated to culture, to modus vivendi. Saint Francis extends this gaze to Creation, to the point of calling the sun brother, the moon sister, and even death."*



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