

April 01, 2008

## **General Minister's Address at SBU Academic Convocation**

**by Jose Rodriguez Carballo, OFM**

Your Most Excellent, Reverend and esteemed Academic authorities,  
Dear Brothers and Sisters,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,  
May the Lord give you peace!

It is a joy and an honor for me to be here today to receive this prestigious recognition on the occasion of the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the foundation of the St. Bonaventure University. I accept it as a sign of your gratitude for all the Friars have done, and continue to do, for this University since Father Pamphilo da Magliano was sent by the then Minister General to give birth to this glorious institution in 1854 (eighteen fifty four).

While the Order of Friars Minor prepares to celebrate the Eighth Centenary of its birth, our presence in this University gives honor, as Sister Margaret Eletta Guider has underlined, to the great intellectual tradition which characterized Franciscanism from the beginning. It is a commitment sustained and animated by love for the beauty of truth, and lived as a service to the Church and to men and women of all times. I take advantage of the occasion, therefore, to thank this faculty and its Administrative Council because they continue, through their commitment and their sacrifices, not only of the work initiated by Father Pamphilo but also of that passion and love which had pushed him to cross the ocean. Indeed, only when a human being is moved by love can the greatest obstacles be overcome. However, history teaches us that even when the greatest results are achieved when men and women unite and put their gifts together, just as was done by Fr. Panfilo, he could have done nothing if it were not for the Bishop of Buffalo and the Devereux family. It was this collaboration between the Church, the laity and the Franciscans which is one of the strong points of this University and, certainly, one of its reasons for pride. My thanks extends, therefore, to all those who, in different ways, collaborate in giving ever-greater quality to this University and in sustaining it by their help.

Love of research and working together are, certainly, the two characteristics which make this University a Franciscan University. It is in a climate such as this that the message of solidarity, acceptance of differences, service to the poor, and love for creation, which St. Francis drew from the Gospel and brought to the world, can increase and be transmitted. Initiatives like Warming House [the first dining room for the poor in the United States managed by students] or the BonaResponds [help in reconstruction after hurricane Katrina] are the best indicators that this University could have of the quality of the formation it offers to its students.

I feel, therefore, that I should encourage the activity of the retreat center of the University, Mount Irenaeus, which, alongside the work of the Faculty, improves even more the offering of formation by integrating the intellectual and the spiritual.

Finally, allow me to make special mention of, and express a particular thanks to, the Holy Name and the Immaculate Conception Provinces of the Order of Friars Minor for having always believed in and supported this Institution and, in particular, the Franciscan Institute.

May St. Francis reward you all for the good you have done and will do in the future.