



**FRATRES ORDINIS PRÆDICATORUM
CURIA GENERALITIA**

2 February 2008

The Feast of the Presentation of the Lord

TO ALL THE BROTHERS OF THE ORDER

Ref: Our Letter on 'Formation for Justice,' of 5 June 2006

Dear Brothers,

In June 2006, we wrote a letter to provincials, vicars, regents, and masters of novices and students on *Formation for Justice*, taking as our reference RSG 14:4: *particular attention should be given to social questions and to the economy, from initial formation, so that brothers may be able to understand the conditions of life of those to whom they will announce the Word of God and the promotion of justice and peace*. Some entities in the Order have been working on this. There have been some very good discussions and many excellent proposals. Some novitiates have taken up issues of poverty, employment, and income. Students have discussed the North-South dialogue, human rights and the environment. This you can see on the webpage: web <http://jp.op.org>.

Since that letter, the Order met in General Chapter in Bogotá from 18 July to 8 August. The brothers gathered there had much to say about our involvement in justice and peace. And it is this that has prompted us to write to you, all the brothers of the Order. It is significant that the chapter on Apostolic Life is entitled **Aimer le Monde ('Loving the World')**. The Chapter calls us to renewal, describing the preacher as *'a man of meeting and dialogue'; he is 'sent on mission to love the world following Christ who desires to reveal his presence'; 'the preacher has the world for his cloister,' and 'preaches as a member of the Dominican Family' (ACG Bogotá 46-50)*.

There are several levels of our involvement: the local level and the structural level. At the local level we have many projects and many good examples of charitable actions. These are good and should be seen as works of justice. But we need to work more, with others, at the structural level. We are also present as a delegation to the United Nations and have a permanent delegate in Geneva and, through DLC, in New York, as well as being participants in the World Social Forum.

How can we form brothers not only to work collectively for justice, but to look on this world as a *locus theologicus*, where God invites us to the questioning and theological reflection needed to bring about structural change?

One way of stimulating collective action and analysis is through the preparation of DVDs, CDs and films for different groups of brothers and communities. The Justice and Peace Commission of the Order is working on this at present, focusing on the issues raised by the General Chapter of Bogotá (ACG Bogotá 69-77, 80-85, 87-96, 98).

We have examples of brothers in action for justice and peace: Henri Burin des Roziers, working with landless peasants in Brazil to secure their rights; Pedro Meca, working with the homeless in Paris, in advocacy and reflection; Déogratias Banzirumuhito, involved with street children in Burundi; Nzamujo Ugwuegbulam and the Songhai agricultural development project in Benin; the joint project in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, which provides shelter and legal aid to migrants, in a community involved in ongoing analysis and theological reflection on the phenomenon of migration. . In North America, Chuck Leute has spent his whole priestly life with the Oglala

Sioux in North Dakota. In Asia, Pedro Salgado works for farmers' rights in the Philippines, and in Japan, Nobuaki Tanaka, with migrants. These are just a few examples of brothers living – in our martyred brother Pierre Claverie's words – '*on the lines of brokenness*' – providing a creative response to some of today's needs.

How can we creatively respond to the needs of the poor who live next door to our convents? How, in this, the 40th anniversary of *Populorum Progressio*, can our mission as preachers, with a message of peace for the earth, be incarnated in this work for development (ACG Bogotá 78-81)?

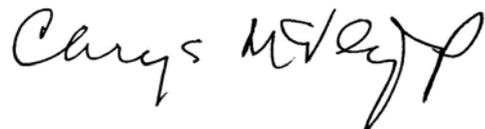
Can we not read and discuss in house chapters the priorities that were emphasized during the last Chapter? Out of this might come a better plan of the apostolate recommended by LCO 311,I,3°, with concrete programmes and action. We would be most interested to know how this is being done, and will happily communicate this to the rest of the Order.

During the last year we have seen and met with many of you. Each of us has been humbled and encouraged in seeing where you are and what you are doing in your living out a compassionate Dominican religious life. We hope to see more of you in the coming years for sharing and mutual enrichment.

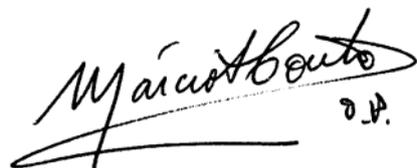
Your brothers in Dominic,



Prakash Anthony Lohale OP
General Promoter for Justice and Peace



Chrys McVey OP
Socius for Apostolic Life



Márcio Couto OP
Socius for Intellectual Life