



- **Message for Christmas 2012 and the New Year 2013 Looking Forward To the Preparation of the Dominican Jubilee 2016**

Dear brothers and sisters,

On 22nd December 1216, just before Christmas, Pope Honourius III gave to St Dominic “Religiosam Vitam”, the Bull of Confirmation of the Order of Preachers. At the beginning of the new year, 18th January 1217, the same Pope wrote to St Dominic and his brothers: “He who never ceases to make his church fruitful through new offspring wishes to make these modern times the equal of former days and to spread the Catholic faith. So he inspired you with a holy desire to embrace poverty, profess the regular life and commit yourselves to the proclamation of the word of God, preaching everywhere the name of our Lord Jesus” (LCO 1, §1). This is the vision of evangelisation in which we celebrate our Jubilee of 800 years since the confirmation of our Order.

Through this message, we invite you to celebrate Christmas 2012 and the New Year 2013, with fervour. The Jubilee celebration has been planned from 2007, giving us nine years to dedicate to its preparation. Now, we begin the final stage of this great moment for the Dominican Family and also our mother, the Church. The preparation and celebration of the Order’s Jubilee promise to be privileged moments of grace. They are opportunities to take stock, a time of personal and communal renewal. This time will give an apostolic momentum to the mission and to the new evangelisation. The Jubilee also encourages in us a certain strength and the courage to hope in the future without fear.

Our proposal is a Jubilee celebration at four levels: 1) local community level 2) at the level of the province and related entities, 3) at a regional level around the world and finally, 4) at the level of the Order in general. From the New Year, 2013, we will begin to contact you more frequently, directly or virtually, about the work that has already begun in our entities and our suggestions for this great celebration. We would also welcome your ideas and we shall collect them into an overall Jubilee project, not only with the celebration in mind, but also the renewal of the life and mission of the Order in the contemporary world. The Master of the Order has asked each entity to nominate a Promoter for the Jubilee. We shall start our work of preparation with them in the New Year.

This is a unique and extraordinary opportunity to develop all our initiatives, to proclaim the Gospel, to promote life, truth, justice and peace as the family of St Dominic in the world. It is an opportunity for the Order to be renewed. It is an immense, yet marvellous work, in which brothers and sisters can find their own place, living an experience that allows them to achieve these goals. Perhaps we should also ask forgiveness for our sins, of yesterday and today, in order to heal the wounds of history and strengthen our humility, which is the secret to good preaching. We should also remember the teaching of Pope John Paul II when we celebrated Jubilee 2000, the jubilee of Christianity, that we should not be afraid.

Pope Benedict XVI has just opened the Year of Faith. We have also begun the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Second Vatican Council in which many brilliant Dominicans took part and were involved in the preparation of many documents. This is why we can make our own the words of the Pope, proclaimed on 11th October 2012: “If today the Church proposes a new

Year of Faith and a New Evangelization, it is not to honour an anniversary, but because there is more need of it, even more than there was fifty years ago! And the reply to be given to this need is the one desired by the Popes, by the Council Fathers and contained in its documents". We must realise that this "necessity" of the Gospel is rightly put in our own path above all, the path on which the Church calls us to respond as joyous preachers of the Gospel.

Dominic de Guzmán "master of mercy" invites us to be renewed as witnesses of the Light shining in the crib at Bethlehem, in our Church which is the "mistress of humanity". God wanted to draw near to us, to each one of us, by taking flesh in Jesus, Son of the Blessed Virgin. During this Christmas and New Year may she refresh in us the words of Jesus, "Blessed are the peacemakers"! (Cf. Mt 5,9 and the Message of the Holy Father for this 46th World Day for Peace – 01 January 2013).

Merry Christmas 2012 and a Happy New Year 2013!!

With all our fraternal best wishes,

Commission for the preparation of the Jubilee OP 2016

- **The Dominican Nuns: A New Series**

The Order of Preachers was approved by the pope in the year 1216, but you could say that it began in 1206, when St. Dominic brought together a group of women in Prouille, France to take up a life of prayer, penance, and silence. These, the first nuns of the Order, followed St. Dominic's guidance and spent their lives praying for the success of his apostolate.

To this day, the Nuns of the Order of Preachers continue to carry out this same vocation. In 1971, the Master of the Order, Anicetus Fernandez, addressed the nuns regarding the revision of their Constitutions according to the teachings of the Second Vatican Council. He wrote,

"Our holy Father Dominic instituted the Dominican nuns as an essential part of the Order and an efficacious help to the life and apostolate of the brethren. This contemplative life, "the best part" of the Christian life, has always held a most important place in the Church and the Order, but perhaps today is more necessary than ever before to the Church, to the Order, and to society."

He continued,

"The contemplative life of the nuns is of the greatest benefit to the apostolate of the Order, not only because, like other contemplatives, they offer their prayers and their life to God on behalf of the apostolic needs of the Church, but also because their contemplation and their life, inasmuch as they are truly and properly Dominican, are from the beginning and by their very nature ordered to the apostolate which the Dominican family exercises as a whole, and in which alone the fullness of the Dominican vocation is to be found."

In other words, the holy preaching of the Dominican Order stems from, and is the fruit of, contemplation. This contemplation of the nuns is the foundation of the preaching of the Dominican friars, sisters, and laity, who are indebted to the secrecy of the nuns' cloister and intimate life with Christ for the fruitfulness of the public apostolate.

Yet, it is not only the nuns' prayers and penances that win souls for Christ. As their Book of Constitutions states,

By their hidden life [the nuns] proclaim prophetically that in Christ alone is true happiness to be found, here by grace and afterwards in glory.

By their consecration, the nuns set aside their whole lives for Christ, becoming living witnesses of the beauty of the Christian vocation—intimate union with God. In this way, they, too, preach for the salvation of souls.

This year, as part of its 800th anniversary celebration between 2006 and 2016, the Dominican Order is reflecting on the theme, “Mary: Contemplation and the Preaching of the Word.” St. Luke tells us that “Mary kept all these things, pondering them in her heart” (Lk 2:19). The cloistered nuns give us the best witness of this perpetual contemplative gaze, and so it seems fitting that we reflect on the role of the nuns of the Order this year.

Throughout the year, then, Dominicana will be featuring a series of posts on the Dominican Nuns, particularly those in America. With over twenty monasteries in the United States, the Dominican nuns have a long and illustrious past. As a new generation of vocations rises up, we thank the Lord for his goodness, and we pray that many young women will continue to respond to the Lord’s call, laying down their lives for Him, that they, too, might find true happiness—“here by grace and afterwards in glory.”

Br. Peter Martyr Joseph Yungwirth, O.P.

- **New Edition of the Dominican Lectionary**

Fr. Augustine Thompson is pleased to announce, in time for the memory of St. Raymond of Pennyfort, that a new edition of the 1980 Lectionary of Proper Readings for Dominican Saints and Blesseds is now available at Dominican Liturgy Publications on this page, where copies may be ordered directly:

<http://www.lulu.com/shop/proper-to-the-order-of-preachers/lectionary-for-masses/hardcover/product-20602026.html;jsessionid=6A9BDB35C1D02C1B9C6472EFED63A218>

This Lectionary includes all named Dominican saints and blessed added to the Order’s General Calendar since 1980. The biblical texts conform to those newly approved for use in the current lectionary. Display of biblical texts uses the "sense-line" format for easier reading. The volume also includes a newly translated appendix containing all traditional elements of the Dominican Rite approved for use with the New Mass in the Proprium O.P. of 1985. You can read more about this book at the above link.

Do take an opportunity to view the other items available for sale at Dominican Liturgy Publications.

- **Mother of God**

On this the Octave Day of Christmas we celebrate the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God. How often we Christians use that title and with such ease. It slips of the tongue or greets us on the page so innocently and disarmingly. We use it so often, in the rosary or at at Mass, that we can simply overlook how profound and shocking a statement it is. Indeed, to some of other faiths it would simply be blasphemous to announce that God, the eternal and uncreated, could ever lower Himself to be born of, and cared for by, one of His creatures.

In the first few centuries of the life of the Church many Christians also found it a difficult statement to accept. Even if one accepts Mary as the mother of Jesus, isn't it a bit much to go around

proclaiming a humble woman to be the 'Mother of God'? Are we not in danger of proclaiming a creature the originator of the Godhead? This title, a western derivation of the Greek theotokos, or God-bearer, was first formerly adopted at the Council of Ephesus in 431. It was used here as a way to assert the divinity of Christ against those who would emphasise a disunity between Christ's human and divine natures. The Council sought to show that Jesus was both fully divine and fully human; one person, two natures; fully God and fully man. As such it follows that what can be predicated of Jesus Christ can be predicated of God also. So it was that this highest title of honour was formerly affirmed in the Church. The Church says; the one whom Mary bore is God, not that Mary is the origin of the Holy Trinity.

We should still be shocked by this wonderful title; not to the point of disbelief, scepticism or mistrust, but in the sense of being in awe of the statement. The title can tell us much about Mary and much about her Son. It should remind us of how powerful an event the Incarnation really is and what an example of all that is faithful and holy Mary is. The courageous and humble fiat that Mary proclaimed enabled the Incarnation to occur and she became unique as 'Mother of God'. No other human would or could be as close to God as Mary is to her Son; but in this closeness we are reminded that it is Mary that enabled the Word to take flesh that He might share in our humanity and we in His divinity. We too can share in that bond between Mother and Child; we can share in His divinity because He, through Mary, was clothed in our humanity.

Amidst the excitement and anticipation of the beginning of a New Year we should take time to ponder these truths and to ask how we, with the help of God's grace, might share a greater closeness in the mystery we proclaim and at which Mary is at the heart.

Bro Graham Hunt, OP

- **The Regional Meeting of Cooperator Friars in Africa**

After the International assembly of the cooperator friars held in Lima (Peru), from 31 October to 3 November 2012, the following cooperator friars in Africa met in Kinshasa-Limete, at the Convent of Saint Dominic from 20 to 22 December 2012: Emmanuel NTENI of the General Vicariate of Saint Pius V in DR Congo; Friar Daniel-Mario Chukwuma IBEZIM of the Province of Saint Joseph the Worker in Nigeria and Ghana; Friar José BOLABOTO of the General Vicariate of Saint Pius V in DR Congo.

First day: Thursday, 20 December 2012

The opening mass and the welcoming of the friars was done by fr Justine ADRIKO, Vicar general of the General Vicariate of Saint Pius V in DR Congo. The Socius for Africa and Coordinator of IAOP, fr Gabriel SAMBA was also there to welcome the brothers.

The first presentation was on "The Historical Aspects of the Vocation of the Cooperator Friars in Africa" by the elder of the friars of the General Vicariate of Saint Pius V in DR Congo, fr Thomas KAMAINDA.

Second day: Friday, 21 December 2012

All the friars participated at the mass of ordination of deacons and priests at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Congo. 14 priests and 13 deacons were ordained by His Eminence, Laurent Cardinal MONSENGWO, Archbishop of Kinshasa;

In the evening, two presentations were given. The first one on "The Vocation of the Dominican Cooperator Friars" by the Delegate of the cooperator brothers in Africa, fr José BOLABOTO. The

second one was on “The Formation of Cooperator Friars in Africa” by the Councilor of IAOP for Formation and Students’ Master at St Dominic Priory, Kinshasa, fr Marie-Victor KISYABA.

Third day: Saturday, 22 December 2012

The presentation on “The Ministries of the Cooperator Friars in Africa” was given by the Socius for Africa and Coordinator of IAOP, fr Gabriel SAMBA.

The presentations were followed by group works with the special assistance of the following brothers; fr Roger NINONI (secretary) and fr André ADOBA (translator).

The following were identified as the challenges facing the vocation, formation and apostolates of cooperator friars in Africa:

- Scarcity of vocations to the cooperator brotherhood;
- The lack of adequate promotion of vocation to the cooperator brotherhood by Promoters of vocations.
- Lack of models for the youth, for examples Martin of Pores’ and John Macias;
- Lack of adequate information on the vocation of cooperator friars;
- The smearing and disregarding of the vocation of the cooperator friars.
- The limitation of studies for cooperator friars
- The diversity of criteria for renewal of the vows
- The reduction of the apostolates of cooperator friars to menial services (e.g. gateman, farmer, etc.);
- The lack of the involvement of cooperator friars in lay ministries;

The following suggestions were proposed:

- The presentation of a common application into the Order without any disparity of criteria.
- The appointment of qualified Promoter of Vocations with proper job description.
- The inclusion of a cooperator friar in the selection board of candidates.
- The encouragement of the apostolate of cooperator friars within IAOP’s entities.
- Studies (philosophy, theology, etc.) should be open to all and in accordance with the intellectual abilities of the friars.
- There should be similar criteria for renewal of the vows for clerical and cooperator friars.
- Qualified Masters (Postulate, Novitiate and Studentat) and Regents of studies should be appointed with job description.
- The apostolate of cooperator friars should be diversified in the community and parish.
- Except for ministries reserved for priest friars, all other ministries should be open to cooperator friars too.
- The Delegate for Africa of the cooperator friars should promote the exchange of news within IAOP’s entities where we have cooperator friars by publishing the news in Afridoms.

The closing words of the meeting were given by the frs José BOLABOTO and Gabriel SAMBA.
Friar José BOLABOTO, OP.
Delegate for Africa of the cooperator friars.

- **Lord of lords and King of kings – enthroned in a manger!**

Luke’s account of the birth of Jesus begins with a reference to Augustus Caesar (v 1). It is easy to rapidly move on to the rest of the account, and so put Augustus Caesar out of our minds, but in fact Luke’s account goes on to make a sustained comparison of the baby Jesus with the Emperor

Augustus Caesar. In doing this Luke, and more fundamentally God, critiques worldly empire and power, and shows where real power, authority and might lie.

Augustus, after a series of military campaigns, had brought a good measure of peace, the so called Pax Romana, to the Mediterranean world of his day and the Roman dominions. This followed a period of civil war and constitutional instability. Rome and the territories under its control emerged as an Empire, and no longer a republic. Power was now much more concentrated in one person: the emperor. Significant titles and claims were made for Augustus and the role he and his successors held, as emperor or 'Caesar'. Though we are used to giving many of these terms largely or exclusively religious and indeed Christian meaning, the Greek words for 'saviour' and 'lord' were also applicable in the political realm and claimed by Caesar. He had saved the Roman territories from the evils besetting them, and would do so again. He was the lord of all people in his territories and they were to live by his laws and under his authority, with a good deal of fear and respect. Additionally the emperor had a role in the religious cult of his day and was seen as a conduit of divine favour. A cult of emperor worship was developed, linked to the recognition of the emperor as in some way divine, this recognition and cult intended to encourage loyalty to the emperor, and to ensuring the stability and peace and prosperity of the empire.

In the light of this the words of the angel to the shepherds take on extra poignancy, one that has political as well as religious significance. Jesus is identified not only as the Christ (born in David's city of Bethlehem), but as Saviour and Lord, both terms that, in Jewish thought, are linked with God (v 11). Furthermore this infant, again like Caesar, brings peace (v 14). A clear link of the child with God is indicated by the presence of massed hosts (ie armies) of heaven, made visible to the shepherds (v 13). This apparition makes clear the awesome glory of the real God in a way the man-made ritual of emperor worship simply could not. The living God of the Jews, commander of heavenly hosts, is the source of authority and power that will establish this child as Saviour and Lord.

But the sign of such a royal birth, of a royal king, is not seemingly royal or powerful. It is 'a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger' (v 12). This speaks of poverty and perhaps rejection: he is located not in a palace or even a bed, but in an animal feeding trough (v 7). There was no other place for him. And, though their use was probably part of normal good parenting at that time, the swaddling bands speak symbolically of restriction of movement, even of loss of freedom. Nor is a baby naturally powerful. These signs foreshadow, and to the attentive reader suggest, his death and particularly his burial, when he was again wrapped up in cloths (perhaps by his mother) and laid in a borrowed tomb, having less movement and seemingly less influence than a baby. The sign then points to a strange victory, to strange kingship and power, at least by worldly standards. This baby came into the world specifically to die for it.

The shepherds were not perturbed by this seeming paradox. They had seen the glory of heaven, and then had seen the predicted sign in the concrete reality of the child in the manger with Mary and Joseph (v 16) and so they praised and glorified God (v 20). They may well not have understood its deeper significance, or what it indicated about how God would establish his kingdom. At any rate, we here nothing more of them. But Mary treasured and pondered it all (v 19). It probably did not make complete sense to her at the time but she kept and deepened her faith that God would fulfil his plans through Jesus.

We too are called to ponder and to grow in our faith and to see that God is bigger than worldly events and powers. Indeed God can use their actions to serve his purposes whether they intend to or not. Thus the census, an expression of power, resulted in Jesus being born in Bethlehem (vv 2-5), thus fulfilling Messianic prophecy (especially Micah 5:1-3). Later, the death of Jesus would be

ordered by the representative of Caesar and carried out by Roman law. But this did not vanquish Jesus. Rather it was the means by which he established an everlasting victory over all evil, sin and death itself, something no mere earthly ruler has ever achieved. Jesus is thus Lord and Saviour on a scale vastly beyond the scope of any emperor, and the bringer of a far deeper and more enduring peace. He can do this because he is God, and worthy of real worship, not the cheap idolatry of the emperor cult. Nowadays we tend not to worship our political leaders but we are easily seduced into participating in the cult of celebrity and fame, or longing for such celebrity, even fifteen minutes of it, ourselves.

Rather let us ponder the helpless child in the manger, and see there the power of God to save us. Let us accept him and make him our Lord and God, worshipping him alone. To those who do accept him he gives power to become children of God (Jn 1:12). And let us know that he has power over all worldly powers, even now and that one day he will judge them and that now he asks us to witness to them. According to our various vocations let us also work with them, that the political and civil realm may prepare for his coming in glory and judgement by even now ruling and governing and organising itself according to his teaching and justice and mercy. He alone brings lasting peace, for he alone is God, Saviour and Lord.

Bro. Andrew Brookes, OP

- **Gates Lift High Your Heads**

“O gates lift up your heads
Grow higher ancient doors
That the King of Glory may come in
Who is this King of Glory?
The Lord of Hosts,
He is the King of Glory! (Ps 24:7–9)”

In this psalm, as in many other Scripture passages, God is described as coming in power and strength to redeem his people from the bonds of slavery and sin. This is the God who spoke with booming voice in the storm cloud to Moses upon Mount Sinai, and the same God who descended in a pillar of fire to consume the offering made by Elijah to shame the false prophets of Baal. In comparison to these dramatic episodes, the Christmas coming of the Christ child seems a bit understated. Can this little babe really be the King of Glory come to save the world? Why not speak to the world as He had done before?

Here are some reasons why it is fitting that God became man precisely the way that he did:

To manifest his goodness (and ours): God in his very nature is perfect goodness. Even without his creation, God’s goodness is manifest in his very Being. But in his goodness, God chose to communicate himself to the world. In the fullness of time, the Son of God took for himself our common humanity in order to reconcile us with himself. By becoming part of creation, Christ re-affirmed the goodness of creation. And by becoming man, He restored the dignity of man that was once lost in sin.

To speak to us directly: Fashioned in the womb and now born of Mary, the Word of God speaks to us in a manner suited to our human nature. With human words and parables, Christ announced his kingdom and the salvation he came to bring to all men who would receive him. Speaking with divine authority, Christ taught us to be free of the fear of death and the slavery of sin, assuring us that he has won the definitive victory over Satan.

Because of our weakness: Human history reveals a constant struggle of man with frailty and sin. We do the evil we do not want and are too weak to rectify our situation ourselves. No man alone could satisfy for our sins. The Incarnation manifests God's will, not to leave man in his helpless state, but to make atonement for our sins himself on our behalf. When the Son of God became man, He set us an example by living in weakness and humility, submitting himself in humble obedience to the Father who in turn raised him up in glory.

That we may see God: Despite the many images, visions, and revelations given to the prophets and patriarchs of old, none had the experience of seeing God. On the other hand, when the Son of God took on our human nature, he walked, talked, and lived among men. By his life, death, and resurrection, he who is true God and true man opened the way for us to behold God in his beatitude, face to face, sharing in divine and everlasting life.

In ancient times, God spoke to men through the prophets, but now he has sent his Son to become one with the humanity he came to redeem. In his great goodness, God came to us, not in storm clouds or pillars of fire, but by being born of a virgin in a quiet little town, on a still winter's night, that we may be saved.

“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given;
And his name will be called “Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”
Of his kingship there will be no end,
Upon the throne of David, and over his kingdom,
To uphold it with justice and with righteousness,
From this time forth and for evermore. (Is 9:6-7)”.

Bro. Athanasius Murphy, O.P.

- **The Anniversary of the Approval of the Dominican Order**

Today, Dec. 22, marks the 795th anniversary of the approval of the Dominican Order. St. Dominic founded the first monastery of cloistered Dominican nuns in 1206. For ten years, he preached and gathered men together to live the “holy preaching” as the nuns prayed for the success of their apostolic labors. In 1216, he went to Rome to receive the Pope's approval. There Pope Honorius III issued the bull *Religiosam vitam*, formally establishing St. Dominic and his brothers as a religious order under the Rule of St. Augustine, and as an order which “should be inviolably preserved forever.”

Moreover, today gives us another reason for thanksgiving. Before the liturgical reforms of the Second Vatican Council, this day marked the Order's celebration of the Feast of the Patronage of Our Lady today (which has now been moved to May 8th in light of the observance of the Advent weekday). Yet, Dominicans around the world are offered the chance today to thank God, Our Lady, and Holy Father Dominic for providing the Church with such a beautiful and sure way of persevering in holiness and preaching Jesus Christ to the world. Please join us in our prayer of gratitude for so many graces received, these nearly 800 years.

O God,
who for the salvation of souls
didst place the Order of Preachers
under the special protection of the most Blessed Virgin Mary,
and wast please to pour out upon it her constant benefits:
grant unto thy suppliants

that we may be led unto the joy of heaven
through the aid of that same protectress
whose memory we revere today.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Here is the text of the Bull of approval:

Honorius, bishop, servant of the servants of God, to the beloved sons Dominic, prior of St. Romanus in Toulouse, and his brethren, both present and future, professed in the regular life. In perpetuum.

It is fitting that apostolic protection should be extended to those choosing the religious life, lest temerarious attacks should possibly turn them away from their purpose or, God forbid, destroy the vigour of the sacred religious institute. Wherefore, beloved sons in the Lord, we benevolently assent to your just requests. We take the Church of St. Romanus in Toulouse, where you have given yourselves to the service of God, under the protection of St. Peter and our own, and we secure it with the present written privilege.

In the first place, indeed, we decree that the canonical Order which is known to be established according to God and the Rule of St. Augustine in the said Church should be inviolably preserved forever.

Moreover, that whatever possessions and whatever goods the said church at present justly and canonically possesses or shall be able, the Lord granting, to acquire in the future through the concession of the popes, the liberality of kings or princes, the offerings of the faithful, or other just means, should belong firmly and inviolably to you and your successors. Among these goods, we have deemed it well to name the following: the place itself where the said church is situated, with its properties; the church of Prouille with its properties; the estate of Caussanel with its properties; the church of St. Mary of Lescure with its properties; the hospice in Toulouse, called "the Hospice of Arnold Bernard," with its properties; the church of the Holy Trinity in Loubens, with its properties; and the tithes which, in his good and provident liberality, our venerable brother Foulques, the bishop of Toulouse, with the consent of his chapter, has given you, as this is more explicitly contained in his letters.

Also let no one presume to exact or extort from you tithes from the fruits of the lands which you cultivate with your own hands or at your own expense, or from the produce of your animals.

Moreover, you may receive and keep, without opposition from anyone, members of the clergy or the laity who are free men and unencumbered by debt, who flee from the world to enter the religious life.

Furthermore, we prohibit any of your brethren, after they have made profession in your church to depart from it without the permission of their prior, except for the purpose of entering a stricter religious institute. If one should leave, let no one dare to receive him without the authorization of a letter from your community.

In the parochial churches which you hold, you may select priests and present them to the bishop of the diocese, to whom, if they are worthy, the bishop shall entrust the care of souls, so that they may be responsible to him in spiritual matters and to you in temporal matters.

We decree further that no one may impose new and unjust exactions on your church, or promulgate sentences of excommunication or interdict on you or your church without a manifest and just cause. When, however, a general interdict shall be laid on the whole territory, it will be permitted to you to celebrate the divine office behind closed doors, chanting in a low voice, not ringing the bells, and excluding those under excommunication and interdict.

The sacred Chrism, holy oils, the consecration of altars or basilicas, and the ordination of clerics who are to be promoted to holy orders, you shall obtain from the bishop of the diocese, so long as he is a Catholic and in grace and communion with the most holy Roman See and is willing to impart these to you without any irregularity. Otherwise, you may approach any Catholic bishop you may choose, provided he be in grace and communion with the Apostolic See; and armed with our authority, he may impart to you what you petition.

Moreover, we grant this place freedom of burial. Let no one, then, place an obstacle to the devotion and last will of those who choose to be buried there, provided they are not excommunicated or under interdict. However, the just rights of the churches from which the corpses are taken must be safeguarded.

When you, who are now the Prior of this place, or any of your successors shall go out of office, no one shall be appointed by secret craftiness or violence; but only he whom the brethren, by common agreement, or whom those brethren who are of more mature and sound judgment shall choose to elect according to God and the Rule of St. Augustine.

Furthermore, the liberties, ancient immunities, and reasonable customs granted to your church and observed up to this time, we ratify and command that they shall endure inviolably for all future time. We decree, therefore, that no one may rashly disturb the aforementioned church, take away its possessions or, having removed, keep them, diminish them, or harass them by any kind of molestation, but all these goods shall be preserved intact entirely for the control, sustenance, and use of those for whom they have been granted, saving the authority of the Apostolic See and the canonical rights of the diocesan bishop.

If, therefore, in the future any ecclesiastical or secular person whosoever, having knowledge of this our document, shall rashly attempt to contravene it, and if, after a second or third admonition, he refuses to correct his fault by fitting satisfaction, let him forfeit the dignity of his power and honor; and let him know that he shall stand guilty of the perpetrated evil before God's judgment and shall be denied the most sacred Body and Blood of our God and Lord, our Saviour Jesus Christ, and shall, at the last judgment, be delivered to strict vengeance. Nevertheless, may all those who uphold the rights of the said place have the peace of Our Lord Jesus Christ, receive the fruit of good action here on earth, and, before the Just Judge, receive the rewards of eternal peace. Amen, amen, amen.

I, Honorius, Bishop of the Catholic Church.

Perfect my steps in your ways. Fare ye well!

[Then follow the signatures of eighteen cardinals.]

Given at Rome at St. Peter, by the hand of Ranerio, Prior of Santo Fridiano in Lucca, Vice-Chancellor of the holy Roman Church, on the eleventh of the kalends of January, the fifth indiction, the 1216th year of Our Lord's Incarnation, the first year of the Lord Pope, Honorius III.

Br. Peter Martyr Yungwirth, O.P.

- **A Virgin Will Conceive ...**

It is interesting that the liturgy places the reading of Isaiah's prophecy that 'a young woman / virgin is with child and will bear a son' with Luke's account of the annunciation to Mary of the conception of Jesus. Luke's text makes clear that Mary is a virgin, and, interestingly in view of her impending marriage to Joseph, that she sees her virginity as a problem to the fulfilment of the promise of motherhood of the messiah made her by the angel (v 32-34). Luke's account goes on to make clear that it is God himself who will directly bring about the conception of the child in her womb, without the intervention of a man, God's action described in terms taken from the way God visits and fills his temple with his presence (v 35). The child will thus be holy in a special way and called Son of God. (Overtones of the language of the act of divine creation may be present as well.) But commentators in general do not think that Luke is actively drawing on Isaiah for his account. It is Matthew that makes explicit and very significant use of it, seeing the text as referring both to the virginal conception of Jesus by Mary and the fact that the child is properly called or at least described as Emmanuel, God-with-us' (Mt 1:18-25).

Why does Luke seem to omit it but Matthew use it? The decision of both authors may be based on a similar knowledge of the linguistic detail and history of the Isaian text. Their respective choices may well highlight important but different features of the nativity events. The Hebrew version of Isaiah uses the word 'almah' which in the Old Testament refers to a young woman who has reached puberty and thus is ready for marriage. The stress does not fall on her virginity though that would be expected or hoped for in such societies. The Greek Septuagint (LXX), a later translation but in common use at the time of Jesus, in Isa 7:14 uses 'parthenos' in Isa 7, a term that means a (young) woman of marriageable age but it has far more stress on virginity. The Hebrew text does not explicitly speak of or point to a virginal conception since a natural conception could be a sign of divine blessing. The LXX allows for a more supernatural interpretation of the sign of 'the virgin who will conceive', but does not linguistically demand it.

But there was no clear expectation of such a supernatural conception of the Messiah, nor of a divine incarnation, at the time of Mary. These were new actions of God in history, unprecedented. Certainly in the light of them it was possible to read the Jewish Scriptures in a new and truer way – the true way – and see the prediction of Jesus in Jewish prophecy, symbol, divine action and liturgical rite. But that interpretation was undertaken precisely in the light of this new and direct and decisive act of God. (As St Paul put it, for example in Eph 1, Jesus was the mystery, hidden from the beginning, if then prepared for, but only made known in his own day.) Jesus unlocks the secret and obscure meaning of the Scriptures that precede him.

It is because of this newness that in Luke's account Mary legitimately questions God (v 34): she is not expecting a virginal conception. And it is her simple but committed acceptance of its announcement to her, an act without precedent in Jewish history, that points to the greatness of her faith (v 38). Luke's 'non-use' of the Isaian text emphasises this point.

Matthew does things differently. In the light of the fact of the Virgin Birth he uses the providential creation of the LXX as God's way of furnishing, or at least flagging up, a prophecy about the virginal conception and Incarnation and thus of showing that they did fulfil Scripture. In this way he commends them for belief to Jewish and other audiences.

But let us focus on Luke's text, which is today's gospel reading, and on the extraordinary faith of Mary. It is a faith born of and sustained by divine grace. It was God's gift to her but was also really her own, risk-filled, but loving response. She is stepping out boldly in faith, believing God can bring about her pregnancy and make the child the saviour of Israel, the fulfilment in person of the

temple and its liturgy. As such she accepts and commits herself to this new and decisive act of God in history which is the Incarnation.

We are called to enter into the faith of Mary, so that Jesus may be formed in us, born of us (as we have first been born of him), so that we may show him, he who is God-among-us, to the world of today. Like Mary we are directly reliant on grace for this: the flesh cannot instigate it (cf Jn 1:13). In this all Christians are called to be virgins, but ones that bring forth Jesus. May we bring forth Jesus and show him to others this Christmas!

Bro Andrew Brookes, OP

- **Lets All Recommit to the Pursuit of Peace and Justice**

Recently, I had the opportunity to travel to Ghana, where I was a guest speaker at the assembly of the Theresians International—an organization of Catholic women, dedicated to the spirit of Vatican II. While there, I had a chance to see a good bit of the country, and was taken with both the poverty all around, and the beauty of the people.

As we prepare to celebrate Christmas, I offer you these few photographs. (<http://www.op.org/en/content/lets-all-recommit-pursuit-peace-and-justice>) These children of Ghana in some way symbolize the importance of the work we try to do here at the United Nations, as we advocate on behalf of human rights, and respect for the integrity of Earth.

These children also represent children throughout the world who yearn for love, for safety, for a world without violence, and for a future in which to realize their hopes and dreams.

In the wake of the tragedy that has taken place in Newtown, Connecticut (in the USA), and in anticipation of Christ's rebirth within us and among us, perhaps we can take the time to recommit ourselves to the pursuit of peace and justice right where we are, knowing that the good we do reaches out in some mysterious way to touch all of God's good people.

Wishing you a peaceful Christmas, and a New Year of great blessings.

Margaret Mayce, OP
Kati Garrison, DVUSA

- **The Inter-African (IAOP) Mini-Summit**

The major superiors of Dominican entities in Africa and members of the Co-ordinating Committee of the Inter-Africa of the Order of Preachers (CC-IAOP) gathered for a Mini-Summit in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 10 to 15 December 2012.

Present were; Gabriel Samba (Socius for Africa), Prakash Lohale Anthony (Socius for Apostolic Life), Charles Ukwe (Province of St Joseph the Worker – Nigeria and Ghana), Roger HOUNGBEDJI (Vice-Province of St Augustine, West Africa), Justin Adriko Mundua (Vicariate General of St Pius V – Democratic Republic of the Congo), Sikhosiphi Mgoza (Vicariate General of Southern Africa), Prudence Hategekimana (Provincial Vicariate of Rwanda and Burundi), Claver Boundja (Provincial Vicariate of Equatorial Africa), Martin Martiny (Provincial Vicariate of Eastern Africa), Mike Deeb (Councillor for Justice and Peace and the Dominican Family), Andre Adoba (Councillor for Intellectual Life), Marie Victor Kisyaba (Councillor for Formation) and Emil Blaser (Syndic for Africa). Miguel Chakachama of the Provincial Vicariate of Angola was unable to attend.

Br Gabriel Samba began the proceedings by reporting on the activities of the CC-IAOP since that last General Assembly in Bujumbura in August 2011. Initial formation, communication, new foundations, the daily upkeep of students, solidarity amongst the African entities and the activities of IAOP, especially Justice and Peace, were identified as priorities for discussion.

Reports from the major superiors on the state of their entities indicated a healthy flow of vocations into the Order, with several extensions to buildings underway to accommodate the growing numbers. Providing a rich formation and a vibrant experience of community life for these young brothers, however, poses a challenge due to a serious shortage of good formators.

The need for collaboration and solidarity in the exchange of students and the financial involvements were discussed. The need for brothers to be formed so that they can deal with African realities was emphasized. The realities of the African situation calls for a serious attention for Justice and Peace.

Superiors were informed of the Master of the Order's desire that the 800th Jubilee of the Dominican Order in 2016 be an opportunity for spiritual renewal and a time to revisit the Order's history and envision its future. Some good ideas for the Jubilee which will utilise modern technology – such as DVDs telling the story of Dominicans in Africa – were proposed. To improve communications, the “Afridoms”, “Afridoms Flash” and the IAOP website will all be maintained and improved.

When new foundations were being considered in Zambia, Zimbabwe and Madagascar, Br Prakash filled in the history and background and provided the perspective of the General Curia. The Province of St Joseph The Worker – Nigeria and Ghana, and the Vicariate General of St Pius V – Democratic Republic of the Congo indicated an openness to assisting.

Archbishop Buti Tlhagale of Johannesburg graced the summit with a visit and celebrated Mass with the superiors. The Archbishop shared his wisdom on the challenges facing the Church in Africa and urged us (Dominicans) to live up to their charism as the “Order of Preachers”.

The African superiors are a relatively youthful group at the moment. They appreciated the opportunity provided by the summit. Even in the midst of numerous lacks, they are ever willing to lend a helping hand.

It was decided that the next General Assembly of IAOP will take place in Nairobi, Kenya, from July 20th to 27th, 2014. As for the other meetings, the following dates and venues have been suggested: Regents of studies – February 13-17, 2013 in Abidjan, Ivory Coast; Formators- October 7-12, 2013 in Bujumbura, Burundi; Students- Easter or July 2014; Justice and Peace - October / November 2013 or January 2014.

The next CC-IAOP meeting will take place from December 27 to 31 2013 in Johannesburg.

For the Coordinating Committee
Br Gabriel Samba, op
Socius for Africa

- **The Reestablishment of the Dominican House in the Ukraine**

On the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, representatives from all the houses of the General Vicariate of Russia and the Ukraine, as well as the Provincial of the Polish Province and some student brothers gathered at Lviv (Lvov, western Ukraine) to take part in the re-establishment of our Dominican house in the centre of the city.

The Dominican priory in Lviv had existed from the XIV century to 15 May 1946 when our brothers were expelled by the Soviet regime. For a few centuries it had been one of the most important priories of the Polish and of the Russian provinces, for some time also the house of studies. In the communist era the Museum of Religion and Atheism was located in these buildings.

In 2010 Archbishop of Lviv, Mieczysław Mokrzycki (formerly, secretary of John Paul II), invited the Order of Preachers to take pastoral care for the numerous students in Lviv. One Ukrainian and one Polish brothers started their service in September 2010 living in the Diocesan Seminary. From the very beginning the priority of their work was the pastoral Care of the students - now about 50 in number. But they have also been engaged in evangelization in the diocese through retreats, conferences, formation programmes for priests and consecrated persons, serving as confessors and spiritual directors, promoting the Rosary etc.

With the help of the Archbishop Mokrzycki and the Polish Province, the brothers, Jakub and Mykola, bought and completed a new two-storey apartment in the city centre, very close to the Church of the Presentation of the Lord which they rent from the Greek Catholic community for daily Masses. On the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, this apartment on Kryvonosa Street, the Dominican house was re-established and dedicated by the Vicar General, Maciej Rusiecki. Fr Jakub was appointed the first superior of the house.

Afterwards the Solemn Mass was celebrated in the Church of the Presentation with the participation of some religious communities from the city and lay people connected with the Dominicans. The chief celebrant was the auxiliary bishop of Lviv, Leon Maly and the preacher was the Polish Provincial, Fr Krzysztof Popławski. The feast continued with a party at the Rosen Hall, in the former Carmelite priory, which is normally the place of meetings for the students group

In the afternoon, the brothers visited the famous Lychakiv Cemetery to pray at the tomb where many of our brothers had been buried. Afterwards they visited our former priory and the Church of the Most Blessed Body of Christ which is at present the Museum of Religion. The whole feast was concluded with solemn Gregorian vespers in the church, which is now known as the Greek Catholic Church of the Most Blessed Eucharist

Fr Krzysztof Bujak OP

- **Lay Dominicans' Final Promise in Belfast**

Two Irish lay Dominicans made their 'final promise' in Belfast on 8th December.

Mr Francis McCaughan and Ms Lisa Hanna (pictured) made their lifelong commitment to life as lay Dominicans ('tertiaries') during the celebration of Mass at the Queen's University Belfast (QUB) Catholic Chaplaincy.

Francis and Lisa are the founding members of the new Lay Dominican Chapter based at QUB Catholic Chaplaincy which is under the patronage of Blessed Giorgio Frassati.

The Chapter has a particular emphasis on the intellectual tradition of Catholicism and during this Year of Faith has embarked upon a series of ambitious projects.

There are at present three other people in the initial stages of joining the Chapter which was founded earlier in 2012.

Belfast, in Northern Ireland, also enjoys the presence of Dominican sisters who have been involved in education in the city since the nineteenth century as well as some other lay Dominican Chapters.

The new Chapter of lay Dominicans, with Francis and Lisa as founding members, is enhancing the Dominican contribution to Church and society in Belfast, the second largest city on the island of Ireland.

In recent months, three additional Irish lay Dominicans made their final promise: Mr Michael Joyce and Mr Damian McDonnell in Kilkenny made their final promise on 3rd November last, while Mr Paul McLoughlin made his final promise in Cork on 3rd October.

For further details of these events, please see the friars' vocations blog: <http://irishdominicanvocations.blogspot.ie/2012/12/great-news-for-irish-lay-dominicans.html>

Facebook page of the QUB Chapter: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/159192120815095/>

Lay Dominicans in Ireland: <http://www.laydominicans.ie/>

- **Launch of the new Dominican Portal app**

On the feast of Our Lady's Immaculate Conception, we are pleased to announce the official launch of a new media initiative: an official app for iPhones and iPads called 'The Dominican Portal'. The app is available [here](#) from the iTunes Store for free. The app gives news updates, access to documents, audio recordings and videos of the Order, so now you can have the content of <op.org> with you, on the go! The app was developed by Br Luuk Jansen of the Irish Province who has developed other apps for last summer's Eucharistic Congress in Dublin, and also the iDoms Portal app. The app is currently only available in English, but French and Spanish versions are being developed and we hope to launch these soon.

We encourage you to download this new app, and to spread the word among your friends and family. With this mobile access to the content of <op.org>, let us praise, bless and preach God's Word wherever we go!

Official news

- **Fr Bruno Cadoré, OP - Merry Christmas!**

May the birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ bring you abundant joy, peace and blessings. Merry Christmas!

- **Fr Bruno Cadoré Has Convoked the Next General Chapter**

The Master of the Order, Fr Bruno Cadoré has convoked the next General Chapter which will take place in the city of Trogir, Croatia from the 22nd of July, 2013. In accordance with LCO 413, 11, he has written the letter of convocation. In the letter, he indicated that the choice of date and venue is in accordance with the mandate of the last General Chapter of Roma 2010. This Chapter will be a Chapter of Diffinitors.

The Chapter is expected to start with the celebration of the Mass of the Holy Spirit after which the capitular friars will proceed to set the programme and procedure for the Chapter. Fr Mihael Tolj of the Province of Croatia will be the Secretary General of the Chapter. It is the wish of the Master that

the Chapter ends on the 8th of August, which is the Solemnity of St Dominic but this will be determined by the programme of the Chapter.

As preparations are now in top gear for the Chapter, the Master is calling on all members of the Dominican family to pray for the success of the Chapter. All are expected to offer Masses and intercessory prayers during the Divine Office for the Chapter.

- **Fr. David G. Caron, O.P., Chosen as President of Aquinas Institute of Theology**

Aquinas Institute of Theology announced today the appointment of Fr. David G. Caron, O.P., as President. The appointment was made by the Provincial Council of the Province of St. Albert the Great (the Central Province). In making the appointment, the Council accepted the recommendation of the Aquinas Institute Board of Trustees. Fr. Caron has been serving Aquinas Institute as Acting President since August of this year.

Prior Provincial Fr. Charles Bouchard, O.P., said, in making the appointment, that Fr. Caron is "the right man to bring the Dominican tradition of preaching and scholarship into dialogue with the contemporary needs of the Church. We are especially proud of the important contributions Aquinas is making to Catholic preaching and to the preparation of leaders for Catholic health care."

The Presidential Search Committee, chaired by Aquinas Board member Sandra Johnson, JD, said "I am delighted that Fr. Caron will be the President of Aquinas Institute and I look forward to his leadership."

Fr. Caron is a Dominican of the Province of St. Martin de Porres (the Southern Province), where he most recently served as Socius, or Assistant to the Provincial. Prior to that, he taught at Aquinas Institute of Theology, St. Louis University and Barry University in Miami, Florida, where he also directed the Center for Dominican Studies. His Doctorate of Ministry was earned at Catholic Theological Union in 1998. Both Fr. Charles Bouchard, O.P., Prior Provincial of the Province of St. Albert the Great, and Fr. Chris Eggleton, O.P., Prior Provincial of the Province of St. Martin de Porres, said that Fr. Caron's appointment is an excellent example of collaboration between the two provinces. "Working together will strengthen us and will enable us to serve the church better," they said.

The Provincial Council and the Board of Trustees expressed their gratitude to the members of the Search Committee for their excellent work. Members of the Search Committee are Sandra Johnson, JD, chair and trustee; Javier Orozco, O.F.S., Ph.D., trustee; and Dee A. Joyner, Aquinas M.A. '11, trustee; Fr. Louis Morrone, O.P., Vicar Provincial of the Province of St. Albert the Great; and Catherine Vincie, R.S.H.M., Ph.D., professor of Liturgical and Sacramental Theology.

When notified of the impending announcement, Saint Louis Archbishop Robert J. Carlson said, "In the fine tradition of the Dominican Apostolate, Aquinas Institute of Theology has become a catechetical powerhouse both locally and beyond when it comes to training and equipping future preachers and evangelists in the Catholic faith. Aquinas Institute's philosophy of preparing future priests and church leaders to share the fruits of contemplation in a way that reflects the intersection of the Church's theology and everyday life is one with great potential to influence our local Church, our world and eternity. The mission of Aquinas Institute is to educate men and women to preach, to teach, to minister, and to lead."

Aquinas Institute of Theology is a graduate school of theology and ministry. It has about 300 students, including Dominican and Resurrectionist priesthood candidates. The school serves a joint

formation community of two Dominican provinces which is located at St. Dominic Priory, 3407 Lafayette Avenue.

- **Fr Louis-Marie is Reappointed as the Promoter of the Rosary**

Fr Louis-Marie ARIÑO-DURAND has been reappointed as the General Promoter of the Rosary by the Master of the Order, Fr Bruno Cadoré. He is from the Province of Toulouse.

He was born in Cholet (France), made profession in the Order in 1999 and was ordained to the priesthood in 2005. He was the Assistant Director General of the Rosary Pilgrimage for Youths for 3 years. He was the Regional Chaplain of the Rosary Groups of Midi-Pyrénées and Aude regions (2009-2012) and also the President of the Association of Marian Works (AOM). In October 2012, he was the preacher at the Rosary Pilgrimage to Lourdes. He is the author of the book titled, Marie m'a bien aimé and also the general editor of the official rosary website of the Order – www.rosarium.op.org

He was first appointed the General Promoter of the Rosary in 2007 and his current appointment will be still December 2017. Through the intercession of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary, we wish him the best during his new term in office.

Calendar of the Master – January 2013

Dec 29-Jan 3: Christmas Break

3-9: Visitation to the Province of Portugal

12-24: Visitation to the Provinces of Holland and the Flanders

25-31: Visitation to Mexico for CIDALC