



- **Dominican Family Day - 7 November 2012**

Why have a Dominican Family Day? Clearly, we need more than just a day dedicated to a particular theme (and there are many!) to ensure the promotion and success of our projects. But we hold these days because we often need reminding of the importance of those things about which we care.

And we care about the Dominican Family; this is evident from the many common projects we have around the world, with sisters, friars and laity of the Order, recalling the great diversity of the branches of our vast family (friars, nuns, apostolic sisters and their numerous associates, lay fraternities, priestly fraternities, secular institutes, youth movements, various movements and associations). This communion is also especially seen in the bonds of friendship and collaboration that connect the members of St Dominic's family and support the life, joy and creativity of everyone in their very different fields (apostolic, intellectual, artistic projects...). And it is no less seen in the magnificent signs of solidarity found between friars, sisters and laity when we are experiencing moments of difficulty.

We celebrate a Dominican Family Day to give us the opportunity to give thanks, and to cultivate the friendship in which the Family of St Dominic lives and through which it announces ever more fervently, more beautifully, with even more strength, that friendship that Jesus's coming sealed between God and humanity.

A few years ago the date we chose for this Day was the 7th November, the Feast of All the Saints of the Order of Preachers. All those unnamed brothers and sisters that nevertheless make up the immense crowd Dominic had the joy to discover under the protection of the Virgin Mary. All those who walked along the way of sanctity by means of a life of preaching.

The Synod on the New Evangelisation for the Transmission of the Faith has just come to an end and the Year of Faith has begun. What a perfect time to remind all of us that our common mission in the Dominican Family, in all its diversity, is preaching. It is to proclaim the Gospel as joy for the world! It is also an opportunity to remind us that the choice to consecrate ourselves for preaching is our particular road to sanctification.

So many of our priories have a picture or image depicting the brothers and sisters of the Order under the protection of the Virgin. What a magnificent image of our family, so diverse yet seeking unanimity, gathered one day at Prouille in a holy preaching and being invited to draw on the force of its fraternal communion in the contemplation of the mystery of the Incarnation.

May God grant that, in this Year of Faith, we may know how, with renewed determination, in the witness of this communion, to walk on the path of Evangelisation to which the Church is called!

Brother Bruno Cadoré,
Master of the Order

- **First Meeting of European Regents**

The first meeting of the European Regents of Studies took place at the Convent of Saint Thomas in Ávila, Spain. The meeting was presided over by the Socius of the Master of the Order for Intellectual Life, fr. Michael Mascari. There were 22 regents from the different provinces and vicariates of the Order in Europe. The meeting and its organization was motivated by the Acts of the General Chapter of Rome in 2010 which recommended, “to all Regents of studies of each region of the Order to have a meeting at least once every three years preceding a General Chapter”.

The meeting began with a welcome address by fr. Juan Alonso Pedro Merino, the current chairman of the provincials of the Iberian provinces and Vicar of the Vicariate of Our Lady of the Rosary. After some highlights of the history of the hosting convent, fr. Juan Alonso encourage the participants to exercise the mission of study “with mercy and compassion”. “Ours - he added- is the right time to present a great service to the Church with our theological reflections which are, at the same time, faithful to tradition but not remaining as a mere repetition and preservation of answers of the past. Our reflection should have the creativity and boldness necessary to shed new light on the current situations of our faith in dialogue and openness to anyone who demands for our proposal, as it was taught by Jesus Christ in his Gospel”.

The objectives of the meeting focused on four important aspects of the intellectual mission of the Order in Europe and in the task of the Regents in their respective provinces and vicariates. Each one of these four aspects articulated the agenda for each day of the meeting.

To reflect on the intimate relationship that should exist between an academic commitment to theology, the other human sciences and the life experiences of men and women of today. Fr. Carlos Rodriguez Linera, General Promoter for Justice and Peace assisted the Regents in this reflection with his dissertation on the intimate connection between pastoral experience and theological reflection. In this regard, he stressed the urgency to recover the incarnated mission of the Son of God incarnated. How is Dominican study rooted in contemporary reality? There is a historical legacy in the Order that would be of great help in establishing the aforementioned rooting. In the sixteenth century, for instance, some of the best Dominican theologians of Spain were able to enter into an intense dialogue on the specific issues and difficulties found by their missionary brothers when they went about preaching the Gospel in the Americas. This interaction and collaboration between the Dominican Theologians in Salamanca and the Dominican Preachers in the New World is, in the words of the Master of the Order, the “Salamanca Process”.

To receive information about:

The Centers of Studies under the immediate jurisdiction of the Master of the Order such as Saint Thomas Aquinas University (Angelicum), Rome; The Biblical and Archeological School of Jerusalem (École Biblique); The Leonine Commission and The Historical Institute. Fr. Michael Mascari provided a wonderful reflection on the relevance of these institutions and their necessary renewal in the coming years. The criteria for a renewal of those institutes must be those that reflect a Dominican community of study and prayer.

The “New Projects” of the intellectual mission of the Order in Europe such as the Dominican University on line -DOMUNI-; the program of studies at the Dominican network in Paris (le reseau dominicaine à Paris); the Espace (Berlin-Pistoia); Project of the Chenu Institute (in collaboration with the Capuchins in Münster on the process of ‘secularization’ in the European societies); the weekly formation program in Dubrovnik; the Inter-religious dialogue with Islam in Turkey; the Aquinas Institute in Oxford and all other projects that promote a better knowledge of the thought of Saint Thomas Aquinas.

The challenges and difficulties of the intellectual mission of the provinces and vicariates in their respective centers of study.

To dialogue and research new strategies of collaboration in Europe. A great challenge for the Dominicans in order to offer to the world, the Church and the Order in general a more and better coordination of their intellectual mission in Europe. The provinces in Europe are bearers of a living tradition. Their contribution to the intellectual mission has been highly appreciated and valued. Sadly there has been a perception that their intellectual institutions are lacking strength when they face the new challenges of contemporary culture.

To review the Ratio Studiorum Generalis (RSG). The Permanent Commission for the Promotion of Study in the Order has begun a review process of the RSG, as instructed the Acts of the General Chapter of Rome in 2010. The strengths and weaknesses of the current ratio and its structure were analyzed during the meeting. Also there was an extensive discussion on possible new elements to considered in its revision.

The detailed preparation of the liturgy and taking into consideration not only the three official languages of the Order but also the historical, cultural and religious environment of the city of Avila enriched, without question, the gathering. All this has opened other dimensions equally necessary in the intellectual mission of the Order.

- **Cardinal Schönborn, OP on The New Evangelization**

Cardinal Christoph Schönborn, OP, the Archbishop of Vienna, Austria was a Synod Father at the Synod of Bishop on New Evangelization. He is among the most interesting figures in the global church -- an intellectual and theological protégé of Pope Benedict XVI and also known for his willingness to make surprising pastoral judgments. In this interview, he speaks on the New Evangelization.

I've spoken to several people in the synod who were impressed with what you said about these gatherings being a chance for bishops to talk to each other about their pastoral challenges.

At the very beginning of the synod, I suggested that we share, not so much challenges, but our experiences. As successors of the apostles, we are called to be the first evangelizers. We all have experiences of all kinds of joys, fears, successes, failures, and so on, in evangelizing. We all asked ourselves, 'Do I really evangelize?' I preach a lot, I'm in the parishes, I write pastoral letters, and so on, but what's meant by the 'New Evangelization' is not only the daily pastoral work, which obviously we have to do and we do it with joy, but what Pope Benedict repeatedly says to us, encourages us to do, is to reach out to those who no longer have, or never have had, any direct contact with the gospel. This is the real challenge of the New Evangelization. I was very moved by some examples in the synod of real shared experiences of our work of evangelization. Of course, we also have to talk about all the questions of secular society, of globalization, of the social dimension, and all these subjects, and I think we've had a very rich menu about what's going on throughout the world. The situations are all different, but nonetheless also more and more similar. Some of us, however, also gave really personal testimonies, and that was very moving.

In that spirit, let me ask about a couple of your recent pastoral experiences in Austria. One is the priests' movement, what some call the 'priests' rebellion.' Where do things stand now in terms of your relationship with that group?

I think all the Austrian bishops have normal and regular contact with the priests who are in that movement. In my diocese, some of the leading priests of that movement are in the diocesan priests' council. Just at the beginning of this month, we talked very intensely about the questions and the challenges of this group. We all share many of these. The problems and questions they raise are real questions from the field. The issue is how to respond, how to take up these challenges, and I dare to say that the majority of the priests, as well as we bishops, as we have shown in our recent pastoral letter, think that some of the proposed solutions [from this movement] fall short. We have to dig deeper, to see these questions in a vaster context. We have to see it as a common challenge for all the faithful, priests, bishops, and laity, to deal with a situation in which in many respects we have become a minority, even if by numbers we may still be the majority. We have to learn to deal with this situation in a creative way.

Your view is that tinkering with church structures won't cut it?

Exactly. We need to take up this challenge [of church structures], because it's one part of the reality. Like many other European dioceses have done in the last two decades, for example, we're on our way to restructure our pastoral work.

We'll come to that in a moment, but first let me ask: However challenging it may be, has this priests' movement also done some good for the church in Austria?

I have trust in them, because they're priests close to the people who share their worries. Sometimes, perhaps, I would say their perspective needs to be enlarged. The challenge is to introduce their grassroots perspective to other aspects which are simply not present in their reflections and proposals. For example, the whole question of secularization doesn't appear in their proposals, and that's astonishing to me. We are living in the midst of a radical secularization, and our parishes are now minorities even in the villages.

You're committed to continuing the conversation?

Absolutely. In our dialogue with the Roman Curia, which is going very well and is very cordial, that's been upheld, especially in light of what the Holy Father said in his Holy Thursday homily. He said there is only one possibility, which is to go forward together. Of course, there have to be limits. All the bishops in Austria have said very clearly, for instance, that you can't call for disobedience and also hold a major diocesan job. Every business person understands that these two things are incompatible. I've acted in certain circumstances to say, well, here's the limit, and you have to make your choice.

Let's move to the restructuring of the archdiocese, which includes closing or clustering two-thirds of your parishes. How has that been received?

It's in the beginning, and the reception has been mixed. On the one hand, I feel that many priests and lay people are glad that something is moving, because they know stagnation would not be a solution. It would only increase depression and discouragement. We all know that changes have to be made. Let me give you an example: the city of Vienna has 172 parishes, which is notably more than we had in 1945. The number of Catholics, however, has shrunk to less than half of what we had then. We have more parishes, churches, and buildings, but significantly fewer Catholics. We have to do something, and we're trying to do it the right way. For instance, we've proposed to give churches to other Christian churches which are growing, such as the Copts, the Serbian Orthodox, and the Romanian Orthodox, who are all getting bigger. Instead of selling churches or simply closing them, we want them to stay open. I also don't rule out that what I've seen happen in Berlin

could happen in Vienna, which is that some churches the diocese had to close for financial reasons are taken over by the laity and become vibrant centers of spiritual life on another level.

That's another point about your restructuring plan. It's not just closing parishes, but you've also called for greater lay involvement.

The key idea, which has been extremely present in this synod, is the small Christian community. Many, many bishops from around the world have spoken about the small Christian communities. We see the need, and we have the desire, not to lose communities but to increase their number. We're forced to reduce the number of parish structures, with all their administration and expenses, but we want to favor a growing number of small Christian communities led by laity – laity who aren't full-time, who aren't bureaucrats, but volunteers. These are people living in the field, who do what laity in many parishes and other communities already do, which is to take responsibility for a large part of the life of the church, the vibrant aspects of community life. We want to implement more explicitly the great theme of Vatican II: the common priesthood of all the baptized, with the ministerial priesthood at its service, promoting the holiness of the people of God. Laity today – or, I would rather say, the baptized today – are fully capable of being true witnesses to faith in Christ in their daily lives, and therefore in the lives of small Christian communities.

The role of the laity is something the priests' movement also has promoted. Is this possible common ground between you and them?

Yes and no, because I think the accents are different. The emphasis shouldn't be primarily on laity assuming offices in the church, but assuming responsibility for evangelization, for mission. Our headline for the Archdiocese of Vienna is, "mission first." We even said it in English! The question is, do we really believe that we can attract people to Christ today? It's as simple as that.

Some of the parishes you're closing could become centers for laity to lead that mission?

First of all, we're not so much closing parishes as clustering them. For example, five small parishes in the countryside will form one greater parish. Their facilities, however, could be used to animate some of these small Christian communities. Of course, there are also the ecclesial movements, the religious orders, all kinds of prayer groups, and so on. Already, they're what forms the day-to-day life of the church.

Do you see other signs of hope for the New Evangelization?

I would add one more point. What strikes me is the growing number of youth prayer groups throughout the country. It's like a fire spreading throughout the country. Everywhere, these youth groups are springing up, sometimes related to a parish or a monastery, but very often they're spontaneous. They just meet among themselves. You can see something new is bubbling there ... there's life!

By John L. Allen Jr.

- **DOMINICAN YOUNG HEARTS MOVEMENT, NIGERIA**

From the 9th through 12th of August, 2012 we held our 5th National Congress. It took place at the Sisters of Hospitality Convent, Obehie, Nigeria with the theme "The Potter and the Clay; Moulding Dominican Youths after the Heart of Christ".

It was hosted by the DYHM unit group in Oyigbo, Nigeria. The congress was successful, as it was a challenge for all who attended, reawakening our call as Dominicans and charging us once again with the charisma of the Order, which is preaching.

The congress was well attended and achieved the purpose for which it was convened. We had participants from all units of DYHM in Nigeria; Ibadan, Yaba, Mafuluku, Gusau and the host unit, Oyigbo. We had a number of observers and special guests also.

This would not have been totally possible without the notable presence of the Socius to the Master of the Order in Africa, Fr. Gabriel Samba, OP; the Prior Provincial of the Province of St. Joseph the Worker, Nigeria and Ghana, Fr. Charles Ukwe, OP; the founding fathers of DYHM in Nigeria, Fr. Oluyemi Taiwo, OP, Mr. George Adesanya and Fr. Alex Okondugba, OP; and indeed the valuable inputs of many other very important personalities who were there. Rev John-Mark Igboalisi, OP and Sr Patricia Elebeke, OP were also in attendance. Rev Gabriel Odin, OP was the moderator.

The congress was addressed by Frs Gabriel Samba, Charles Ukwe and Alex Okondugba. The participants were also privileged to have a very enlightening interactive section with both the socius and the provincial. Issues bothering on the functionality of the national council, the initial and ongoing formation of members, statutes of the body and its relationship with the other members of the Order were discussed. Among the numerous achievements of the NaCon is the election and inauguration of a new National Council.

Words alone cannot express how grateful we are to the Almighty for all His graces and favors upon us

Isioma Diji, (National Coordinator)

- **The International Meeting of Dominican Cooperator Brothers**

October 31 to November 4 in Lima, Peru

The Province of St John the Baptist, Peru is hosting the International Meeting of Dominican Cooperator Brothers. The province is set to welcome more than 70 friars from different provinces, vicariates and other entities of the Order.

The event will take place within the framework of the 50th Anniversary of the Canonization of St. Martin de Porres, in order to address and reflect on issues specific to the mission, charisma, ministry and challenges of cooperator brothers in the Order today, as proposed by the General Chapter of Rome 2010.

Among the participants are representatives from Spain, Toulouse, Italy, Poland, France, Holland, Mexico, Colombia, Ecuador, Argentina, Canada, USA, Malta, Australia, New Zealand, Brazil, Vietnam, Pakistan, Congo, Africa and Peru.

The representatives from the General Curia will be led by the Master of the Order, Fr Bruno Cadoré, OP. Fr Javier Pose, OP (Socius of the Master of the Order for Latin America and the Caribbean) and Fr Gabriel Samba, OP (Socius of the Master of the Order for Africa) will also be there. There will also be a number of brothers who have asked to attend the event and some others from Colombia, Peru and Mexico to support the organizing committee.

The meeting will be held at the premises of the House of Spirituality of St Rose of Lima, run by the Dominican friars from the Regional Vicariate of Puerto Maldonado of the Province of Spain. There the participants, guests and hosts will participate in each of the activities scheduled from 31 October to 4 November this year.

Now, the organizing team and supporters are ready to welcome visitors and in turn, they are promising an interesting and memorable experience.

Fr. Aníbal Javier MORENO MOJICA, OP.

- **The Rosary as a Meditation on Life**

If Dominicans were known for anything it would have to be that they are celebrated down through the ages as good preachers with a solid devotion to the Rosary. Today, the celebration of the regular Sunday Liturgy takes precedence over the feast. However, I'm taking some liberty to speak on my own take on the Rosary as a meditation on life.

Hindu mystics would divide life into four twenty year segments: 20 years as a youth; 20 years as a warrior; 20 years as head of a household; and twenty years in search of the spirit.

I've taken this concept and revised it to parallel the mysteries of the Rosary.

The Joyful Mysteries are the beginning of our lives as youths. We become aware of life: "The Annunciation." After that we begin to grow and take our first steps out into the world: "The Visitation." Then we come to the realization of what life is to be: "The Nativity."

After that we have to come back to our roots and see the value of things, especially the Church: "The Presentation." And, lastly, before we step out to become a warrior, we need to see the wisdom of the elders: "Jesus, found with the teachers and doctors of the Law in the Temple."

The second phase: 20 years as a warrior are our "Sorrowful Mysteries."

Our eyes, like the eyes of Adam and Eve, are opened and we see the result of our seeking independence: "The Agony in the Garden."

Still we keep at it and find that we are caught coming up against the powers of this world. It is a painful experience: "The Scourging at the pillar."

Then there is a slight respite: we find a way to have both worlds. We can follow the Spirit and, at the same time follow our own pursuits. We see ourselves as demi-Gods: "The Crowning with thorns."

Then comes the realization that all of this has been a false pursuit and must come to an end: "The Crucifixion."

The third phase of life: Head of a Household brings us back to our roots. There is a "Resurrection from the Dead" and all is not lost. We are given a second chance. Then we are taken up the mountain – "The Ascension" and given a new vision of what are lives could be. But we are told, "Don't stand here looking up to the sky..." and so, we come back to our roots that are most perfectly held in the life of the Blessed Virgin Mary. She, the most perfect of our race, is taken up into

Heaven and we two come to understand that God promises never to leave us and that we will never die and this gives us hope that "life is changed, not ended ... and we begin to see God as He is."

The Fifth Glorious Mystery reminds us that the crown – or honor – that we seek mustn't come from ourselves (like the Crown of Thorns) but must be an honor that God gives us: The Crowning of the BVM as Queen of Heaven and Earth.

The Fourth Phase: "In pursuit of the Spirit" gives us reflection on the Luminous Mysteries and is a kind of reflection of our entire lives. We have to be aware of where we began and we have to see the hand of God present to us even when we didn't know it. "The Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River." The most important part of this "mystery" is to be able to grasp that God really does love us. The Voice of God booms out of the clouds, "You are my beloved... [and worth being listened to]"

From there we go out into the world. But this time we are not going on our own steam. We have been renewed and the result is that we see miracles happening. "The Wedding Feast at Cana" where the ordinary water turns into great wine! From there we become aware of the real source of our greatness and we go out proclaiming the Good News: "The Proclamation of the Gospel."

But our quest for the "Spirit" is not yet completed. We still need to be reminded that the good that we do does not come from just inside ourselves but from God: "The Transfiguration" shows us that we must be rooted in that connection with the divine or we will sink back into "doing our own thing."

Then we come to the essence of this entire reflection: "The Eucharist." If we are not rooted in the Eucharist we will just be a noisy gong a shadow reflection of what we should be. The Eucharist is what sustains us forever and ever and if we are not connected to the real presence of Jesus all of the above will just fall apart.

There you have it! I hope that you can gain some deeper insight into our lives as Christians who strive to follow Jesus by way of the Rosary. Amen!

Br. Daniel Thomas, OP

- **Councils of Faith: An Introduction**

What is an ecumenical Council? Why are there 21 Ecumenical or General Councils?

Ecumenical Councils are meetings of bishops from across the Church, in union with the Pope, to exercise, by discussion, vote, and the passing of written texts or (legal) resolutions, their teaching and juridical ministry on behalf of the whole Church. More local (geographically or juridically restricted) councils have also occurred and still occur: they require less participation by the Pope, and have competence over that part of the Church of which the validly assembled bishops, or indeed patriarchs, are ordinaries. (Other religious leaders and experts may also be invited to participate in various ways.) For those who are interested, authoritative Church teaching, in its current formulation, on the nature of ecumenical councils is contained in Vatican II's Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium* (LG) n. 22 and wider but relevant teaching in nn. 23-25.

The practice of having councils, ecumenical or smaller in scale, is rooted in the ministry of the apostles and the special task of Peter, as given by Jesus, and the way they exercised these ministries as testified to in the New Testament including the letters. The Twelve, under the leadership of Peter,

are a crucial group in the founding and early leadership of the Church. They are often referred to as a collective entity, what we know call a college. Paul, also named an apostle, is keen to stress his solidarity and union in teaching and discipline with the other apostles. Particular authority lies in their collective decisions, seen most dramatically in the Council of Jerusalem in Acts 15. This sets a precedent for later synods or councils of bishops, the successors of the apostles who receive their teaching and juridical (disciplinary) function in the Church, and also their role at the service of the unity of local Churches and the Universal Church.

We know of local and regional councils in the second century and they became a common, established widespread practice of the Church in the third century. In a similar, but not identical, way to the apostles, the bishops have serious and weighty authority on their own, and also when they act in agreement, whether dispersed or gathered together at the time. At the same time appeals were made to the eldest churches, those of known apostolic origin, and especially to Rome, linked in a unique way with the ministry and martyrdom of St Peter. After Christianity was officially tolerated by Constantine in 313, it became possible to call a council of the bishops across the whole Roman Empire. This happened for the first time at Nicea (modern Turkey) in 325. It was called an ecumenical council, after the Greek word for household, a term that became an administrative and descriptive term in the Roman Empire, used to refer to the entire household or economy of the empire. (Such was the size of the empire that it acquired the sense of 'universal'. However, it seems that Churches outside the Empire were not invited.) Though very few western or Latin bishops attended, the decisions, expressed in legal canons, were approved by the Pope and such a collective and united gathering and set of decisions by the bishops were seen as powerfully authoritative and binding for all the Church.

The practice of holding such ecumenical councils grew, alongside more local or regional ones. In due course, by the ninth century, 7 councils (the last one being Nicea III in 787) were recognised by Rome and the main eastern sees (ie the Patriarchies) as 'ecumenical' in stature and authority. All these 7 councils were held in the eastern empire, in modern Turkey, but were held to be ecumenical since the Pope consented to them happening, and then accepted and approved their canons. The extent of his active participation, typically via representatives, varied. The papal approval of their documents and canons was not always immediate or comprehensive. Constantinople I (381) was intended as an eastern council only but later the Pope approved nearly all of its canons, in effect raising it to ecumenical status.

After the 'final' split of the Latin (West) and Greek (East) speaking Churches in 1054, both continued to have local synods of bishops. In the West these happened at various levels for various territories, including provincial and sometimes national ones. In due course, the Pope started calling general (i.e. non-territorially particular) ones, starting with Lateran I in 1123. These grew in importance and complexity and in what they addressed. They were intended for the Western Church in the first place, and held in West Europe, but the Pope did have a universal ministry and jurisdiction. Two of them, Lyons II (1274) and the Council meeting at Florence in 1439, were attended by Eastern officials to try and restore Christian unity between West and East. Although agreements were reached no lasting unity was achieved.

The Pope called another western general council at Trent (1545-63) to address the problems of Protestantism. The Protestants, some of whom had wanted a general council called to address their complaints about the Church, rejected its findings. Some of them rejected its authority on the grounds that it was not an 'ecumenical council', i.e. one like those of the first millennium that commanded adherence in East as well as West. By this time lists (with some variations) were emerging in the West of the general councils from the period of the Middle Ages. St Robert Bellarmine, in the 1580s, was the first to draw up such a list in which, to respond to the Protestant

objection, he called all the councils of the first millennium lists and those of the second up to and including Trent 'ecumenical'. This list soon found its way into official Vatican documents and Papal discourse. (Constantinople IV (869-70) was first given 'ecumenical status' by Papal officials late in the 11th century principally because one of its canons argued strongly against state interference in Episcopal appointments. Popes endorsed this status.) It is the list we now have, to which, of course, have been added Vatican I and II. Though there are other important, if officially less universal, church councils we shall in the first place examine those now listed as the 21 Ecumenical Councils of the Church.

Some prefer to name them the 21 General Councils, out of respect for the sensibilities of Eastern Christians who generally restrict the term 'ecumenical council' for the first 7 on the Papal list. The Popes use both terms, sometimes choosing 'general' to show respect to the Eastern Churches. Though these councils sometimes treated the reconciliation of Christians, the word 'ecumenical' is not being used in this modern sense of ecumenism in the term 'ecumenical council'.

The Church's theological understanding of councils, and the expression of this in canonical and procedural terms have developed over history. The Church has come to recognise that although an ecumenical council requires the presence of many Bishops, it is the role of the Pope that is crucial in determining what is and is not an ecumenical or general council. As *Lumen Gentium* (LG) puts it 'there never is an ecumenical council which is not confirmed or at least recognised as such by Peter's successor. (LG 22)' It is his universal jurisdiction, unique to him as an individual among the other bishops, that makes this possible. In actual fact the extent of active participation of the pope has varied a lot historically in different ecumenical councils. However, the Church in her wisdom now also states "And it is the prerogative of the Roman Pontiff to convoke such councils, to preside over them and to confirm them. (LG 23)" However, the bishops do not serve as mere adjuncts of Papal ministry. They have their own dignity and office, directly conferred by God and given in Episcopal ordination. Thus ecumenical / general councils, in which they come together, in communion with the Pope, express the highest authority of the Church, applicable in teaching on faith and morals and in regulating the liturgy and in other disciplinary measures.

- **Yves Congar: My Journal of the Council**

A book review

Yves Congar

Over the past month or so, it wasn't unusual to see Sr. Judith Miryam lugging around an enormous book. Why? It was her "assignment" from Elizabeth Scalia of *The Anchoress* to do a book review of Yves Congar's *My Journal of the Council*. (A whopping total of 979 pages!)

Sr. Judith Miryam says her many long vigils with Sr. Maria provided large chunks of time to read this amazing book. It wasn't unusual for her to say in just about any conversation, "You know what I just found out?" and tell us some anecdote of the life of our Dominican brother.

Sr. Judith Miryam's review is now online at the *Patheos Book Club* site but we are posting here for you as well.

Now the task is to figure out how to manage to sign the book out of our library before anyone else does!

My Journal of the Council by Yves Congar, OP. Translated from the French by Mary John Ronayne, OP, and Mary Cecily Boulding, OP. Edited by Denis Minns, OP. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2012. 979 pp.

Sr. Judith Miryam Boneski, O.P.
Dominican Nuns, Summit, NJ

“I am keeping this little journal as a witness (455),” notes Yves Congar, halfway through writing his account of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965). In the recent publication of the English translation of his journal we have a remarkable inside history of this seismic council.

Pope John XXIII personally chose French Dominican priest and theologian, Yves Congar (1904-1995), as a theological consultant for the preparatory work for the Council. Fr. Congar’s contributions were not limited to his subsequent role as peritus (theological expert) to the French bishops. He gave lectures, was consulted widely, authored books and articles, and managed a daunting correspondence. His journal entries show the staggering workload. That all these labors were accomplished under great suffering, both psychic (being under a constant cloud of suspicion since being silenced by the Holy Office in 1954) and physical (recurring neurological illnesses), is incredible. Congar acknowledges the cause of his strength in the face of so much weakness. “To live SOLELY BY GRACE, without any reassuring human support, that is the rule that I rely on. God does not deceive us, although his grace is often puzzling” (308).

Through the eyes of Père Congar, the reader experiences the inner workings of the Council: the constant meetings, the painstaking drafting of the documents, the power struggles and politics, and his own moments of frustration and fatigue. “I feel fed up and even crushed by everything” (410). However, Congar’s exasperation does not extinguish his wit. Recalling dinner at an outdoor café, he writes, “We saw normal people again, to whom our byzantine intrigues would have absolutely NOTHING to say” (558)!

Yet, even at his most negative and cynical, Congar never loses sight of the vital mission of the Council: “The entire work of the Council...is on the brink of a powerful revitalization of the Catholic Church and its dynamism (736),” or of his own mission within it. “I want to offer myself faithfully to serve, to the best of my ability..I wish to cooperate loyally and humbly with this great enterprise. I pray every day that I may offer myself in this way... (17).”

Described by Yves Congar as “this little journal,” this volume is anything but in both size and content! Yet, this weightiness does impede the book’s accessibility, with its substantial introductory material and indices, which assist in navigating through its density of references. The translators do not muffle the unique (and sharp) voice of Congar.

No one after encountering this journal can read the documents of the Second Vatican Council, and not perceive the hand of Père Congar. More importantly, no one can read this journal and not behold the Holy Spirit at work fifty years ago and now in the ongoing renewal of the Church.

- **The First Convocation of The Dominican Sisters Conference**

Claim the Center, Walk the Edge (By Sister Ceil Murray, OP)

We descended, 645 Dominican sisters and associates, on the Chicago Westin North Hotel Columbus Day weekend to begin a new entity. Born from the former Dominican Leadership Conference and the Dominican Sisters Federation, this gathering was the first convocation of the

fledgling Dominican Sisters Conference. According to the Mission Statement we discussed Friday afternoon, the purpose of this expanded grouping was to unite "the sisters and associates of U.S. Dominican Congregations in their mission to preach the gospel of Jesus, standing as a clear voice for truth, justice, and peace."

Contemporary conferences have themes. Ours was "Edgewalkers: Unfolding the Fertile Unknown." The first unknown was "Just what is an edgewalker?" That answer came with keynote speaker Judi Neal (teacher, consultant, author of "Edgewalkers: People and Organizations that Take Risks, Build Bridges, and Break New Ground"). Judi's career focus has been on helping groups large and small attend to the issue of faith and spirituality in the workplace. Applying the concept of edgewalkers to religious—they are the ones in the congregation who see the possibilities of the future, walk between the worlds of what is now and what could be, build bridges between the edge and the more cautious center, and live with passion and focus.

The average organization appears as a bell curve with a large center of "hearth tenders" (those who keep the status quo going) and a very small percentage of forward-looking edgewalkers. The DSC on the other hand, according to an online survey of participants, has a quarter of the membership as edgewalkers and a second quarter flame keepers who honor traditions, but are open to change. These numbers are unusually high, showing that Dominican Sisters Conference is on the forefront of what organizations need to be like in this world. Congregations should honor their edgewalkers, continually asking them "What do you see that we don't?"

Saturday morning brought a paper by our brother and former Master of the Order Timothy Radcliffe. Since health concerns kept Timothy from joining us in person, his paper, "Women Religious as Edgewalkers," was presented by Sister Anne Willits. Our brother gave us a quote from Thomas Merton, urging us to be "like God whose presence is at the center and whose circumference is nowhere. Dominicans thrive best on the edge, but must claim their place in the center, which is the Church." This balancing act can put us between a rock and a hard place, but that is the space Jesus occupied "and what made him such a disconcerting chap."

The Dominican concept of obedience—listening to God and God's Word—involves us with the teaching authority of the Church. This means the hierarchy, but also theologians and indeed, all Catholic teachers. Timothy urges us not to engage in expressing contempt for the Pope and Vatican Officials, saying we "cannot build a Trinitarian Church by rubbishing other people." In the end, obedience to the hierarchy draws us into the Center, while obedience to the voices of the poor and disenfranchised catapults us back out to the edges. In all of this, let us be "people of calm and quiet."

Afternoon was occupied with a presentation by three of our Dominican Justice Promoters: Sisters Margaret Mayce, Lucianne Siers and Pat Daly. Their formal title was "Not Too Hot to Handle: New Energies for Preaching Truth to Power." They focused on the issue of climate change which "affects everything else" in the justice spectrum. After their informative input, we wound up discussing practical steps we might take to lessen the amount of greenhouse gas emissions which are destroying the atmosphere in which we live and breathe.

Like the other presenters, the justice team was escorted to the stage by a pair of Dominican dancers in bright colored capes. The dance troupe's graceful movements enhanced prayer services and Sunday Eucharist. What the dancers did for the eye, convocation choir and instrumentalists did for the soul through their music, under the direction of Sisters Jo Ann Timmerman and Margaret Palliser.

On a material level, consumer instincts surfaced at every break as we negotiated The Market Place set up in the halls surrounding the meeting room. Every imaginable Dominican product or craft was offered for sale. Dance, music, art, books; we reveled in all of them.

In the end, our spirits were most lifted by the close contact with so many other Dominicans—each of us in her own way. For this author, it was two memorable dinners. Thursday night, a group from the Roman Congregation told me my meal “was taken care of by a friend.” Friday evening I sat “on the edge” of a round table at The Ram with three fellow Dominican Sisters of Hope, contemplating the house specialty dessert in the center: a platter of three ice cream cupcakes, each a different flavor. Somehow we managed to cut those delectable morsels so that each one got a taste of every flavor—rather like the whole convocation experience. It was four days of new flavors, ideas, friends, sisters, ways of looking at the Dominican mission. Let the preaching continue!

I joined the Planning Committee for the first Dominican Sisters Conference Convocation as a Dominican Associate of Peace with enthusiasm for the opportunity to contribute to the celebration of 20 Dominican congregations forming a new entity. After attending the event, I am overwhelmed by the depth of the courageous thinking and joyful engagement that I experienced each day. I share this brief reflection of the sung and spoken words which lead me to personally affirm the proposed DSC Mission Statement: “The Dominican Sisters Conference unites sisters and associates of U.S. Dominican Congregations to preach the gospel of Jesus, standing as a clear voice for truth, justice, and peace.”

“God is still speaking: blessed invitation. God is still speaking: listen and draw near.”

The “planners and organizers, the thinkers and dreamers, the artists and visionaries, the youthful and the wise” responded to the invitation to meet as edgewalkers, flamekeepers, hearthtenders, and sometime placeholders and guardians at the first Dominican Sisters Conference Convocation. Their challenge was to use their giftedness to listen, reflect, and process insights as “Edgewalkers: Unfolding The Fertile Unknown.”

The meeting space for sisters and associates was filled with profound prayer, reflections on the Word of God, preaching in words with nuanced meaning as well as the direct questions that need to be asked and sharing stories from the heart. “O Word of God, come into this space. O Word of God, come send us your grace. Open our minds; show us your truth. Transform our lives anew.”

Simultaneously artists added music, dance and visual arts to coax the “edge” to emerge allowing participants to be both at that edge and at the center.

Dr. Judi Neal pronounced in word and song that edgewalkers are “people who have learned to walk between the visible and invisible worlds and who are bridge builders who link different paradigms, cultures and realities. Edgewalkers believe that the greatest creativity comes from walking in different worlds and blending different paradigms, which is what creates your leading edge.” In other words, Judi declared that humanity is evolving, universal humans are growing and that Dominicans are called to the edge. But, she quoted Rumi: “The breeze at dawn has secrets to tell. Don’t go back to sleep. You must ask for what you really want. Don’t go back to sleep.”

Timothy Radcliffe, OP through the voice and heart of Ann Willits, summoned to mind the recognition that “being on the edge is where Dominicans thrive best because we know the center is everywhere and the circumference is nowhere. Jesus walked on the edge as a difficult, disconcerting chap. He claimed the center while living on the edge. Dominicans perched on the edge need to be people of calm and quiet, waiting for God to speak.” “There’s a still small voice that I hear when

I'm silent and it speaks to the depths of my soul—and I know that if I take time to listen, then I won't be the same anymore.”

Margaret Mayce, OP, Lucianne Siers, OP and Pat Daly, OP summarized the call for justice by asking “What is the earth asking of our Order? We stand at a critical moment in earth's history. Is it too hot to handle or can we speak truth to power?” They reiterated the 2006 Genesis Farm statement that: “We stand in awe before the Mystery and beauty of existence. We believe this is a graced moment, and that we have the capacity to transform ourselves and our cultures.” The conclusion of the discussion was that the Dominican charism must be the leading edge at this time of “great peril and promise for one human family, one community, and one destiny.” But the challenge remains for Dominicans to answer: What is it that we have not done yet?

Mary Hughes, OP proclaimed “that Jesus turned the cultural edge upside down by recognizing that at the edges you don't see the edge but only wholeness and interconnectedness. Dominic was preoccupied with preaching with God or about God, and Catherine entered unexpected places like hospitals, jails and papal corridors. Dominican women everywhere find our center through the people on the margins in our ministries of health, the arts, elderly, rainforest, sexual identity, wherever there is need.” She challenged all to be edgewalkers who play with gravity and turn everything upside down.

Immediately following the DSC convocation, the Annual Meeting of Elected Leaders took place. Building on the energy that had been generated from the convocation, the follow-up meeting moved forward to planning for the future. As the elected leaders tended to their agenda, they seemed to transition from the role of Edgewalker to that of Hearttender. While they were inspired to think globally, they were challenged to act locally.

The Planning Committee presented three possible scenarios for regional meetings of the Dominican Sisters Conference projected for 2013. They provided a springboard for additional considerations such as holding meetings in a variety of sites rather than defined regions in addition to the role that technology might play in facilitating maximum participation. While there is a goal of building relationships across congregations, there is a strong desire to take collective action that flows from the mission of the Dominican Sisters Conference.

Then, discussion on local gatherings of the Dominican Sisters Conference shifted to the global perspectives of Dominican Sisters International. Sister Fabiola thanked the elected leaders for more than \$1 million dollars that they have contributed to the Solidarity Fund since 2001, while Sister Toni Harris outlined how a percentage of the fund has been disbursed to support Dominican life and mission throughout the world.

The demands of pressing business refocused the agenda to more practical matters such as consensus that elected leaders need to meet annually, the tedious work of examining the proposed by-laws for the Dominican Sisters Conference, and also a review of the annual budget.

While the elected leaders were stretched to think broadly, they were challenged to delve into the details of implementation. When the meeting was over, the work was certainly not finished. In truth, we've only just begun!

- **Fr Bruno Cadoré on The Challenges for Evangelization Today**

The three challenges facing evangelization today were raised by the Master of the Order, Fr Bruno Cadoré OP, in his speech, delivered on Monday, the 15th of October, at the XIII Ordinary General

Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, on the theme, "The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian faith,"

According to him,

The challenge of evangelization finds its joy and strength in contemplation. This insight made by mendicant Orders brings to light three of the challenges that evangelization faces.

The challenge of knowledge; faced in dialogue with all seekers of truth, philosophers, scientists, researchers. Deploying the sciences and knowledge provides the opportunity to realize this "beautiful friendship between faith and the sciences" proclaimed by the Council. In faith one contemplates the mystery of the ongoing creation of God and his faithful call to the freedom and reason of man. In friendship we can, with men of science, discern the challenges in order to build together a world for man.

The challenge of freedom. In meeting with our contemporaries, believers and non-believers, it is necessary first of all to present the friendship of God with man, rather than formulating questions and answers that at times are not asked in the proper terms. Being led by God's patience rather than relying on man, so that he learns to place his freedom at the height of his dignity and to contemplate the mercy of Christ, who precedes him, He who teaches his friends what he received from the Father.

The challenge of brotherhood. Religious communities desire to be places in which brotherhood constructed in diversity aspires to be transformed by the spirit of communion in "sacrament" of friendship of God with the world. And, because of this hope, they are challenged to broaden this hope of communion, tying their destination to the forgotten of the world, making of them the conviction of the Synod of 1971: "Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel".

- **Conciliar Debates and the Desire for Unity**

In a 2005 address to the Roman Curia, Pope Benedict said of Vatican II, "If we interpret and implement it guided by a right hermeneutic, it can be and can become increasingly powerful for the ever necessary renewal of the Church." Quoting this passage in his letter announcing the Year of Faith, Benedict invites the faithful to a deeper participation in the graces flowing from the Council, especially this year.

But, we might ask, why does Vatican II need to be interpreted? Fifty years later, doesn't saying that the Council still needs to be implemented "guided by a right hermeneutic" betray a lack of confidence in the Council itself? If the Council's dogmatic teachings are really inspired by the Holy Spirit, wouldn't God, who "is not a God of confusion but of peace" (1 Cor 14:33), guide the reception of the Council as well as its deliberations?

To begin an answer to these questions, we can look a little closer at what a council, or any act of the magisterium, really is.

The history of the Church and its magisterial pronouncements can be read as a two-thousand-year process of answering two questions: "Who is God?" and "How do we see his face?" The Church, established by Christ as the calling-together of God's people to form the Mystical Body of Christ (CCC 751–752), is the ordinary means whereby man lives in the light of Christ and his grace. The

Church lives as a sustained participation in and reflection on the mystery of Christ, and the Holy Spirit guides her in coming to a deeper understanding of the deposit of faith given completely by Christ (Jn 16:12–13). The magisterium exists to preserve the deposit of faith, witnessed in the Scriptures and the living Tradition of the Church (Donum Veritatis 6). Acts of the magisterium, then, both in its ordinary functioning through the teaching office of the pope, cardinals, and bishops, and in its extraordinary acts like papal proclamations, dogmatic definitions, and ecumenical councils, help direct men to God by sifting the wheat from the chaff in theological teaching and religious practice.

But magisterial statements are not magical spells that instantly fill the hearts and minds of all who hear them with perfect clarity and understanding. What exactly a conciliar decree means and how it accords with Scripture and Tradition will inevitably cause debate. Consider the explosive aftermath of the Council of Nicaea in 325, where four major rival schools competed to interpret or reject the council, with saints defending two of the four schools and everyone concerned to prove his argument by appealing to Scripture and Tradition.

So we should not be surprised or dismayed to find Pope Benedict, or Bl. John Paul II before him, urging the faithful to “interpret and implement” Vatican II, even decades after the close of the council; post-Nicene conflict caused persecutions and political upheaval until the Council of Constantinople in 381. The sixteen profound documents of the Council state many fascinating and vital positions on key theological teachings, including religious freedom, church–state relations, the role of the laity, ecumenism, the nature of the liturgy, etc., and the present task at hand is to elucidate the real but not always obvious ways those teachings stand as developments in continuity with Scripture and Tradition.

There are two major lessons that we can learn from the theological—and even social and political—storms that have roiled in the aftermath of previous ecumenical councils: first, that the life of the Church will be greatly enriched once these theological connections have been made and the teachings of the Council are more fully realized in the practice of the faithful; and second, that this process of faithful interpretation and implementation will not happen without charity.

"Charity" here is emphatically not just an emotional response or a half-hearted sentiment; it is the grace of God that infuses the soul and provides a structure of desire for the operations of the intellect and will, directing our actions toward concord with each other through unity with Christ the Truth. Without this charity, any theological reflection on the Council is doomed to discord and ideological fracture.

Bl. John XXIII knew that charity would determine the place of Vatican II in the life of the Church. In his exhortation *Sacrae laudis*, promulgated on January 6, 1962, he asked the Church to work for the success of the Council through prayer as a union in charity. He particularly asked those who pray the Divine Office to offer a prayer he composed for the work of the Council, that the unity of the Council might be symbolized and strengthened by the unity of those who prayed for it. As we pray and work for the continued interpretation and implementation of Vatican II, his call to prayer remains as important now as it was then.

The following, then, is the text of that prayer, adapted only to reflect the name of the current pope. The translation below is based on that given in *The Pope Speaks*, as no English translation is given on the Vatican website. Those who desire may offer it, as suggested by Bl. John XXIII, before each Office of the day, for the *felix exitus* ("fruitful result") of the Council:

Acceptum tibi sit, Domine Deus, sacrificium laudis, quod divinae maiestati tuae offero pro felici exitu Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani secundi, et praesta, ut quod simul cum Pontifice nostro Benedicto suppliciter a te petimus, per misericordiam tuam efficaciter consequamur. Amen.

Accept, Lord God, the sacrifice of praise I offer to your divine majesty for the fruitful result of the Second General Council of the Vatican. United in intention with Benedict our Pope I offer it. Mercifully grant that we may indeed gain what we beg for so humbly. Amen.

—Br. Gabriel Torretta, O.P., Dominicana

- **Eckhart and Aquinas**

Eckhart Society 25th Annual Conference

The Eckhart Society recently held its 25th Annual Conference. It was held at High Leigh Conference Centre, just north of London, England. The Society was founded in 1987 to promote understanding and appreciation of the work of Meister Eckhart, to facilitate scholarly research into his life and work, and to promote the study of Eckhart's teaching as a contribution to inter-religious dialogue.

This year's conference focused on Eckhart and St Thomas, the only two friars to be re-called to the Dominican chair at the University of Paris. Two papers showed how on certain points the thought of these two great Dominicans is very close and the other two papers showed that on certain other points their thought is not at all close and is even contrasting.

Fr Michael Demkovich OP of the Chicago province argued that in presenting his understanding of 'deiformitas', or the transformation of human beings in Christ, Eckhart uses Aquinas's theology of the Eucharistic change. fr Rupert Mayer of the province of South Germany and Austria considered the themes of 'ground of the soul' and 'sparkle of reason' to show how Aquinas and Eckhart share compatible views about the sources and possibilities of human knowing.

Dr Andreas Speer of the Thomas Institut in Cologne argued that they have contrary views about theology. Aquinas presents a case for two theologies, one that pertains to philosophy and the other to revealed religion. Eckhart speaks in terms of one theology, returning (so Dr Speer argued) to a view proposed by Boethius, rejected by St Thomas, but accepted also by St Albert the Great.

Dr Eleonore Stump OPL, professor of philosophy at the University of St Louis, showed how the two Masters differ subtly but significantly in explaining how the human being unites his will with the will of God. Eckhart takes a stern view of this, asking his readers to eliminate their own wants in order to want only what God wants (and perhaps to give up wanting altogether). Aquinas takes a less stern view, that also seems closer to ordinary experience: the human being has desires which are not extinguished even when he wants also what God wants for him. The prayer of Jesus in Gethsemane is the supreme teaching about this.

About fifty people attended the conference which included times of prayer, meditation and fraternity, as well as an evening concert of chamber music. The Master of the Order wrote a letter to the conference sending his best wishes and expressing his thanks for the ways in which the Society has promoted the teaching of Eckhart.

- **Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting of the Regents of Studies**

Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting of the Regents of Studies was held at Rosary Hill, Hongkong from 28 – 30 September 2012. Prior Provincial Br. Javier Gonzalez OP offered to host the meeting along with Prior Vicente Sanchez OP. Br. Paulson Kannampuzha, the Co-ordinator of the Regents along with Br. Fausto Gomez organized the meeting. Br. Michael Mascari the Socius for Intellectual Life presided over the meeting. Those present were Bros. Mark O'Brien (Australia), Fausto Gomez (Holy Rosary, Hongkong), Romulus Rodriguez (Philippines), Nghi Dinh and Thomas (Vietnam), Philip Pan (Taiwan), James Channan (Pakistan), Paulson Kannampuzha (India) and Michael Mascari (Rome).

Br. Mark O'Brien was chosen to act as the secretary. Br Michael Mascari in his opening talk mentioned about the challenges and difficulties on the one hand and the possibilities which attend the work of the Regents in this Region. Minority status of Christianity, the lack of vocations in some entities, growing religious intolerance, secularism and consumerism are some of the main difficulties whereas there are also the possibilities of growing numbers of religious vocations in some provinces, opportunity of imparting Christian teaching and of proposing an alternative way of life according to the Gospel. In the years to come Asia-Pacific could offer significant contribution to the life of Order. Dominican study needs to be undertaken in clear relationship with its mission. Our preaching and pastoral questions should provide the immediate context of our study and reflection.

After the keynote address of Br Michael Mascari, the Regents of different countries presented an evaluation of the study Centres of their provinces which gave a true picture of their strengths and weaknesses. Australia, Pakistan and Taiwan were among those who had smaller number of vocations. In Vietnam, though the number of students was high, proportionate facilities are lacking. Holy Rosary Province has the joy of receiving greater number of students in these years and the Province is trying to provide a homogeneous intellectual formation to all the students. Taiwan and Pakistan do not have a studium for themselves but send the students to other Centres. During the sharing the issues like lack of proficiency in English language, political and cultural challenges, issues of inculturation, lack of Dominican curriculum in some places and fragile academic centres came up for discussion which elicited collaboration among the entities. A fear was raised whether the move to send the student-brothers outside one's entity would compromise on the aspect of inculturation. Too small provinces feel the pressure of dedicating more friars as professors and administrators while the existing ministries are still to be continued. Those who send the students to other non-Dominican centres had no control over the academic programme. At the same time if we try to operate small centres then the financial burden tends to be a greater challenge.

It was felt that the collaboration at the level of post-Institutional studies could be a better option in the light of the much needed inculturation at the level of Studentate. It was agreed to put out a list of available professors (a data bank of the region) for the task of teaching. An exchange of students for a short time could also be an enriching possibility. Offer of free scholarship could also be a possibility of helping the other entities. The need for an Inter-Provincial Centre for study could be kept in mind in the future as a way of collaboration. Providing access to libraries of the Order would also be of great assistance to the friars in their research.

The second part of the deliberation was on the revision of Ratio Studiorum Generalis. It was generally felt that the present RSG is essentially a good document but it could be made up-to-date in line with the Acts of the General Chapters. The text contains the importance of the locus of library, the emphasis on the research method, introduction of issues of Justice and Peace from the initial formation and adaptability to modern technological tools that are some of the commendable features of the existing RSG. Different regents in their turn expressed their suggestions for the

improvement of RSG which was noted by Br Michael Mascari for points to be taken into the Permanent Commission for Promotion of Studies in the work of revision of the RSG.

Towards the end of the meeting, Br Mark O'Brien was elected as the Co-ordinator of the Regents of the Asia-Pacific Region. Br Carlos Linera In-charge of the Commission for Justice and Peace addressed the regents regarding the work that is going on in the Order in the field of justice and peace. He emphasized the need of constant reflection on the reality where we as a community are doing the ministry of preaching. He also pointed out that unless we speak the language of the world, we won't be able to influence the people with our Christian vision. Thus he exhorted the members in doing theology from reality.

The meeting was concluded on 30th September 2012 with a Eucharistic celebration with the lively community of students of Holy Rosary Province at Macau.

Resolutions, Election, and Proposals
from the Meeting of Regents of Studies of the Asia-Pacific Region
Hong Kong, on 28-30.09.2012

After receiving reports from the various CIS of the region and after discussion of the RSG and proposed revisions, the meeting made the following resolutions:

1)–The meeting resolved that a 'data base' of Dominican Professors in the region be drawn up, providing:

–their names

–qualifications; where and when these were obtained

–area(s) of specialization

–experience in teaching

–availability for working in one or more of the CIS of the region, either in a full-time or part-time capacity, and for how long.

The various CIS of the region will access this 'data base' and can make requests through the normal province channels for the services of one or more of these professors.

The financial arrangement for any such collaboration would best be worked out between the particular CIS and professor.

2)– The meeting resolved that the next meeting will take place in Vietnam in two years' time.

3)– The meeting elected Fr. Mark O'Brien as the coordinator of the region for the next three years.

4)– The meeting agreed that the Provinces of the region should commit themselves to exploring further areas of collaboration, for example, in an inter-province CIS or a Centre of Specialised Studies (e.g., Interfaith dialogue). The next meeting will report on progress in this area.

5)–The meeting agreed that Provinces with the necessary financial resources should consider establishing one or more scholarships to help finance the study of English or other disciplines by Friars in the region.

6)–The meeting designated Fr. Mark O’Brien to draw up a proposal about ways of enhancing access to the library resources of the Order, and to present this to the Regents of the region. The Regents will then present the proposal to their respective Provincials and Councils for consideration.

- **The Rosary: Fairest Flower of the Order**

“When a Dominican is clothed with the habit, he is invested with large rosary beads to hang from his belt. He is like an army officer commissioned with a sword of office, as was David when given the very sword with which he had slain Goliath: ‘There is no other sword like that; give it to me.’ Any good preacher of the rosary is meant to use it not only for his own private prayer, but to use it as an instrument of his missionary work and as a weapon for salvation. There is none like it.”

Fr. Gabriel Harty, O.P.

At 91 years old and in the “late evening of life” as he describes it, this “Rosary Priest of Ireland” wishes to share his wisdom about the Rosary. Fr. Harty “crossed over” from the diocesan priesthood to the Dominicans in 1949. His mission from that year until now continues to be preaching of the immeasurable treasure contained in the Holy Rosary.

The Order of Preachers has a special attachment to the Rosary since it was a gift to St. Dominic by Mary in 1206. St. Dominic was lamenting the fact that he seemed to be making little progress in winning over the Albigensians, heretics who denied the sacraments and the reality of Jesus’ Incarnation. Mary’s response was the Rosary, urging him to use it as a spiritual weapon in defense of the Church, and to preach it to others.

In describing this uniquely Dominican charism, Fr. Gabriel quotes Antonio de Monroy, a previous Master of the Order:

“The Holy Rosary is the fairest flower of our Order. Should it come to pass that this flower withers, simultaneously the beauty and lustre of our Institute is seen to fade and disappear. And on the other hand, when that flower revives, forthwith it draws down on us the heavenly dew, imparts to our stem an aroma of grace and causes it to bring forth, as from a root of piety, fruits of virtue and of honour.”

October 7th is the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary, and the Church encourages her members to pray the Rosary more fervently during this month. If you are interested in learning more about the Rosary, and its spiritual benefits please visit: <http://rosaryconfraternity.org/the-rosary/>

Fr Kevin Gabriel Gillen, OP

- **Thérèse in the Vineyard**

Today, on the memorial of St. Thérèse of Lisieux, the Dominican blog offers a reflection on holiness and temporality, inspired by the witness of the Doctor of the Little Way:

In the Parable of the Vineyard (Mt 20:1-16), there are some who join the harvest at the eleventh hour and others work from dawn to dusk. At the end of the day, both receive the same wage. Likewise, in the ministerial life of priests and religious, there are those who find their vocation as mature adults, and there are others who offer their first fruits to the Lord as young men and women. Through the mystery of providence, people of vastly differing age, experience, and culture are often called to be contemporaries in formation. They have answered the Lord's call at different moments in the stories of their lives, some as innocent youths and others as aged penitents. In this context, the parable helps to remind us that the young man should not glory in his innocence, nor the old man in his experience. At the end of the day, both will receive the same reward.

Taking a broader view of the parable, we can also consider the time of one's entry into the vineyard not within the context of an individual's life, but in the context of the whole history of the Church. Thus, just as in the parable we hear of different hours of the day—the third hour, the sixth hour, and so forth—so, when we consider the history of the Church, we often divide it into different eras. Karl Rahner, for instance, posits three periods: Jewish Christianity, the time between the Council of Jerusalem (A.D. 48) and the Second Vatican Council, and the time after the Second Vatican Council. Other historians and theologians have proposed alternative schema, emphasizing the divisions marked by the Council of Nicea, the excommunications of 1054, and the Council of Trent—to give just one example.

However the ages of the Church are divided, one sentiment that links Christians throughout history is a nostalgic longing for some past era. If only I lived in the age of Faith—or in the flourishing of religious life in the High Middle Ages, or in the Ancien Régime in all its decadence—and so on, depending on my proclivities. At times, these wistful longings can actually be helpful in inspiring men and women of a particular era to imitate the great deeds of past ages. Pope Honorius III, for instance, accounted for the charism entrusted to St. Dominic by writing, “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.” And Saint Ignatius, in his turn, reading Bl. Jacob of Voragine's Golden Legend, was inspired to exclaim, “What if I should do what Saint Francis or Saint Dominic did?”

One perennial source of inspiration has been the scriptural account of the community of the Apostles in Jerusalem (Acts 2:42-47). As M.H. Vicaire shows in *The Apostolic Life*, many founders of religious orders and movements within the Church seem to have been mistaken in their understanding of the precise historical details of the life of the Apostles, and yet their imaginative reconstructions have borne great fruit in the life of the Church.

In each era of the Church, when the example of the past has transcended mere nostalgia it has also expanded the horizons of the present. Understanding the nuances of Church history frees us from the burdens imposed by the sometimes limited and myopic vision of the present moment. Diligent study of the history of the Church can free us from a naïve idealization of past ages and help us avoid the arrogant assumption that, given our individual sensibilities and preferences, we would have been better off living in a different era. As a matter of fact, the Lord has called us to his service now, at this moment of history, with all of its warts and wisdom. To long to live in a time other than the one the Lord has ordained for us would be to reject God's providential plan for our lives and for the life of the Church.

In the project of living out our vocations in the circumstances we happen to find ourselves placed in, we can have few better role models than St. Thérèse of Lisieux. St. Thérèse entered the Lord's vineyard not at the eleventh hour, but at the nineteenth, and yet she has received the same reward as the virgins of the early Church, the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance. Today, in the heavenly faculty lounge of the Church's doctors, she engages in erudite discussions with her colleagues, St. Catherine of Siena and St. Teresa of Avila. (At present they only allow St. Hildegard of Bingen to listen in on their colloquies, but she will soon have her turn to chime in.)

And yet, as Thomas Merton once observed, St. Thérèse became a saint without rejecting the bourgeois environment and era that marked her character. However objectionable that culture may have been to Merton himself, he had to admit that one its members, St. Therese, "not only became a saint, but the greatest saint there has been in the Church for three hundred years—even greater, in some respects, than the two tremendous reformers of her Order, St. John of the Cross and St. Teresa of Avila."

Pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest (Mt 9:38)—and if today you hear his voice, harden not your heart.

Bro Innocent Smith, OP

- **The Presence of God**

How can I come to know and live in the presence of God? The Irish Dominican Father Anselm Moynihan once authored a short but compelling book to answer this question. In his spiritual classic, *The Presence of God*, Fr. Moynihan presents the profound teaching of St. Thomas Aquinas on the various ways in which God is present and active in our world and in our lives. God is present to the whole world as the loving Creator of all. God sees all, God rules all, God holds all creatures in being at all times. Love is in control of the universe.

But in the souls of those who live in God's grace, God is present in a special and still more profound way. In the inner depths of the faithful soul, God is present as Someone, an indwelling Guest, a loving Friend. God is within, and he is available for knowing and loving. To have the Holy Trinity dwelling within one's very soul is at the heart of what it means to live in God's sanctifying grace. A baptized faithful person is, in a way, like a tabernacle.

After the Second World War, Fr. Moynihan wrote this book because he had become convinced that, more and more, people were losing awareness of how present and active God is. The short book quickly became popular because the author both explains deep theological mysteries in simple terms and offers practical steps on how to live and grow in a daily awareness of the Holy Trinity dwelling within one's soul. The book teaches how turning toward God within our hearts, making acts of faith in the Indwelling One, and welcoming his inward action allow one to be present to the Trinity.

When one learns to abide in the presence of God continually, he begins to experience spiritual joys and delights that far surpass anything he has known before. Only the holy are happy.

The Dominican Lay Fraternity at New Hope Publications in New Hope, Kentucky have now reprinted this classic book for distribution throughout North America. For those in the U.K. and Europe, the same book is available through St. Martin's Apostolate.

You can order the book by clicking on any of the links above. —Dominicana

Official news

- **The New Vice Province of Bolivia**

The Master has convoked the first Chapter and appointed the first Prior Vice Provincial.

The approval has been given for the erection of the Vice Province of Bolivia which will integrate brothers from the provincial vicariates of the provinces of St Albert, Teutonia (Germany) and St Albert the Great (USA).

In the same decree of canonical erection which will take effect on January 14, 2013, the Master of the Order, Bro. Bruno Cadoré OP, convoked the first chapter of the Vice Province which will take place in January 2013 and appointed Bro. Fernando Delgado Flórez as the first Prior Vice Provincial.

According to the Decree signed by the Master;

"The erection of the new Vice-Province of Bolivia is a joy not only for Bolivia but for the entire Order. It extends, with gratitude, the legacy of the brothers who for five centuries have preached on this continent and particularly so manifest fertility of the work in recent decades by the Friars of the provinces of St. Albert Teutonia and the U.S. A. "

He asserted further that;

"the union of the two in a Vice Province will give new impetus to the mission of the Order in Bolivia and strengthen their specific contribution to the local Church. This union is made to start the Year of Faith, in a time when the whole Church feels called to a renewal of its mission of evangelization, which is her deepest identity. In this dynamics, the new Vice Province is called to be the 'holy preaching' in Bolivia: unanimous in fraternal life in common, consecrated to the Word of God at work in the world, faithful to the evangelical counsels, fervent in celebrating liturgy and prayer, assiduous in study, "

The Vice Province will be called "Vice Province of Bolivia" and its territory will be the entire country of Bolivia. The first chapter will be held in the Convent of San Judas Tadeo of Cochabamba from 14 January 2013. This was the date indicated in the canonical decree and approved by the General Council of the Order, in Santa Sabina.

After consultation with the brothers, the Master appointed the first Prior Provincial, while the other officers are appointed by the Chapter of the Vice Province, as determined by the Constitutions of the Order.

Bro. Javier Pose, Socius for Latin America and the Caribbean, will chair the inaugural Mass and the first session of the Chapter. When the new Prior Provincial makes the profession of faith, he will take possession of his office and chair the remaining parts of the Chapter.

- **Synod Fathers visit Santa Sabina**

As the Synod of Bishops on the new evangelization is ongoing, the Master of the Order, fr Bruno Cadoré, OP has played host to a number of participants at the synod.

Fr Bruno hosted three Nigerian Bishops who are currently participating in the synod. They are; Bishops John Ebebe Ayah (Ogoja Diocese), Emmanuel Adetoyese Badejo (Oyo Diocese) and Matthew Hassan Kukah (Sokoto Diocese). Bishop Matthew Hassan Kukah is the fourth bishop of Sokoto Diocese which is in the North-Western part of Nigeria. Dominican brothers from St Albert the Great Province (USA) started the missionary work in that part of Nigeria over 60years ago. The first two Bishops of Sokoto were Dominicans; Bishops Edward Lawton, OP and Michael Dempsey, OP. Fr Anthony Akinwale, OP (an expert at the synod) and indeed the entire community were at hand to welcome the bishops.

The next day, the Synod Father, Cardinal Christoph Schönborn, OP, (Archbishop of Vienna, Austria) and Bishop Sebastian Shah, OFM (Apostolic Administrator of the Archdiocese of Lahore, Pakistan) also visited the community. They both had lunch with the community and shared with the brothers afterwards.

The synod of bishop will come to a close with a Holy Mass to be celebrated by the Holy Father on Sunday, the 28th of October, 2012 at St Peter's Basilica.

- **Fr. Quirico Pedregosa, Jr., OP is the New Rector of the UST Central Seminary (Manila)**

The Congregation for Catholic Education (for Seminaries and Educational Institutions) designated Rev. Fr. Quirico T. Pedregosa, Jr., O.P., as Rector of the UST Central Seminary through a decree dated September 7, 2012.

Fr. Pedregosa was born in Barotac Viejo, Iloilo on October 18, 1953.

He joined the Order of Preachers in 1971, the year when the Dominican Province of the Philippines was established. He made his first religious profession on May 19, 1973 and was ordained to the priesthood on March 25, 1981.

After working for two years at the Parish of Santo Domingo, Quezon City, he was assigned to formation ministry as Master of the Students (of professed student-brothers) for nine years (1983-1992). He was elected Prior Provincial of the Dominican Province of the Philippines for three terms (1992-1996; 1996-2000; 2008-2012) and he was stationed in Rome as General Councilor and Socius (Assistant) for Asia Pacific Region of the Master of the Order of Preachers from 2001 to 2008. He was Co-Chairperson of the Association of the Major Religious Superiors in the Philippines (AMRSP) and member of the Episcopal Commission on Mutual Relations from 2010 until the end of his term as Provincial in April 2012.

Fr. Pedregosa served for twelve years as Vice Chancellor of the University of Santo Tomas, Manila, and as Chair of the Board of Trustees of the universities, colleges and schools in the country, owned or supervised by the Dominican Province of the Philippines. He has lectured at the Faculty of Theology of UST on Spiritual Theology and Religious Life. He has written articles on Spirituality, Religious Life and Mission. He has authored recently two books, both published by the Dominican Institute of Preaching, Quezon City: *The Love that is Mission* (2011) and *Leadership for Mission* (2012). He holds the following degrees: AB Philosophy, Bachelor in Sacred Theology, MA Theology, and Ph.D in Humanities (Honoris Causa).

- **Fr Amir Jaje, OP is Appointed a Consultor**

The Holy Father has appointed Fr Amir Jaje, OP as a consultor for the Commission for Religious Relations with Muslims within the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue.

Fr Amir Jaje is the Provincial Vicar of the Vicariate of the Arab World. He was born in Karakosh in Iraq. He has a doctorate in History of Religions and he teaches at the Theological Faculty of Babel College. He is also the secretary of the Episcopal Commission for Inter-religious Dialogue of the Assembly of Catholic Bishops of Iraq. The Dominican Vicariate of the Arab World comprises Iraq, Egypt and Algeria.

Calendar of the Master – November 2012

Oct 31-Nov 3:	Cooperator Brothers Meeting at Lima
4-16:	Canonical Visitation to the Province of Central America
17:	DSI Meeting at Santa Sabina
19-30:	Plenary Meetings