Dominican Month for Peace: Dominican Prayers for Peace – Advent 2017

Proposed by the Liturgical Commission of the Order

A. Peace Prayer

Lover of humankind and Designer of Peace, we praise you for your presence in our lives and in our broken world.

Outraged by the inhumanity of people to one another, and by our lack of stewardship for our Earth and Earth’s resources, we call upon you to move us from the narrowness of our traditions to renewed ways of being your church; from being captives of our throw-away culture of death to being creative witnesses for justice, from the smallness of our horizons to the breadth of your vision.

With Dominic, Catherine, Antonio de Montesinos and Bartolomeo de las Casas as guides, make ready the way in us that we might call others to freedom and to renewed faith.

In Advent, as we prepare for the Incarnation of your Son, the wounded healer, call us from the preoccupations with our own histories and hurts to the daily tasks of peacemaking, from privilege and protocol to partnership and pilgrimage, from isolation and insularity to inclusive community where the refugee and the immigrant find a welcome and a home.

Transforming Holy Spirit, you call us from fear to faithfulness, from clutter to clarity, from a desire to control to a deeper trust, from the refusal to love to a readiness to risk.

In a special way, as you hear our prayer for Colombia, make ready in us the way that we might know the beauty and power of your gospel of joy.

Come and be born in us a-new!
**Alternative:**

**B. Peace Litany**

We, the Dominican Family, realize that people the world over do not live together in peace and so we pray:

1.- O Lord Jesus, benefactor of the true peace, the prophet Isaiah called people to return to you and proclaimed the justice and salvation of Your Father,
   
   **All:** Come, O Jesus, and bring us peace.
   Or : Rorate caeli desuper et nubes pluant iustum.

2.- O Lord Jesus, benefactor of the true peace, your cousin, John the Baptist proclaimed a need to return to God and therefore prepared the way for you,
   
   **All:** Come, O Jesus, and bring us peace.
   Or : Rorate caeli desuper et nubes pluant iustum.

3.- O Lord Jesus, benefactor of the true peace, a lowly peasant girl was chosen to be your mother showing that God does great things with all people,
   
   **All:** Come, O Jesus, and bring us peace.
   Or : Rorate caeli desuper et nubes pluant iustum.

4.- O Lord Jesus, benefactor of the true peace, as you were born angels reminded us of your glory and of the peace that you bring to the world,
   
   **All:** Come, O Jesus, and bring us peace.
   Or : Rorate caeli desuper et nubes pluant iustum.

5.- O Lord Jesus, Prince and Benefactor of the true peace, our world longs for your coming. Come and bring that same peace to Colombia, Venezuela, Iraq and the Middle East, to any place that is experiencing violence and conflict,
   
   **All:** Come, O Jesus, and bring us peace.
   Or : Rorate caeli desuper et nubes pluant iustum.

**Dominican Month for Peace: Letter of the Master of the Order to all the members of the Dominican Family**

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Warm greetings from Rome!

After the hectic activity of our Jubilee Year, we are now trying to follow up on the many new commitments we have made!

One of the recurrent themes from our Jubilee was the importance of us renewing our preaching to be advocates of peace (like Dominic) in a world torn apart by many forms of violence and war. There is hardly a country anywhere that is spared from this harsh reality that breeds fear, insecurity, and the assertion of narrow ethnic and religious identities, that result in enormous suffering, death and displacement of entire communities.

While many Dominicans are already involved in forms of preaching that are bringing hope to such situations, we would now like to promote a global Dominican solidarity for all such efforts. We therefore propose to identify a period each year when Dominicans everywhere will pray for peace, and will offer solidarity for a particular project for peace.

The period we propose is Advent, when we are all waiting for the incarnation of the Prince of Peace. Our focus on Peace will then start on the First Sunday of Advent and culminate on the Church’s World Day of Peace on 1 January. Each December will therefore be our Month for Peace.
Our focus of solidarity this year (2017) will be on Colombia. There are several Dominican brothers and sisters who have been very engaged during the most difficult periods of the war there. Now, with all the more reason, they are supporting the implementation of the Peace Accord that was signed in 2016. It is their appeal for solidarity that has inspired us to institute this Dominican Month for Peace. We therefore invite all members of the Dominican Family to join this solidarity effort.

In order to identify our focuses in future years, we have invited our sisters of DSI to join us to elaborate its direction. We call on our Dominican entities everywhere to reflect on their own efforts for peace that would benefit from a global Dominican solidarity. We then invite any entity which has developed a concrete project to make a request to be the focus of our Dominican Month for Peace in the years to come. This request can be made through the Order’s General Promoter for Justice and Peace or the DSI International Promoter for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation.

**2017 Focus on Colombia**

You may have heard about the historic Peace Accord that was signed in Colombia in November 2016 between the government and the oldest and largest guerrilla group in the region, the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia). After more than 50 years of confrontation, the parties to the armed conflict have decided to end one of the most tragic and devastating cycles of violence in this country and in Latin America. In a world where the threat of war is the growing tendency, this effort to build peace needs to be strongly encouraged.

For several decades, Dominican brothers and sisters have been involved in the accompaniment of communities affected by the conflict in various parts of the country, one of the areas most affected being Catatumbo. This year’s campaign will encourage the whole Order during the Month of Peace (December) to support them in their efforts to forge peace and reconciliation in Colombia through:

1. **Prayer:**
   - Each entity is asked to organise at least one Prayer Vigil and Solemn Eucharist for Peace and Reconciliation in Colombia.
   - This can be done creatively to raise awareness about the peace process in Colombia and how it relates to the local reality.
   - Our monasteries of nuns are especially requested to strengthen the project through their prayers throughout the month.

2. **Preaching:**
   - We are all asked to incorporate this focus on peace in Colombia into our ordinary Advent preaching.

3. **Collection of Works of Art:**
   - All artists within the Order are invited to contribute towards the process of peace and reconciliation in three possible ways:
     - Produce a work of art to be sent to Colombia to be placed in a space of solidarity;
     - Produce a work of art to be placed in local symbolic spaces in the home country to raise local and global awareness of the need for peace and reconciliation; or
     - Offer a training course in Colombia to stimulate and train local Dominicans and other local people to develop their artistic skills that can contribute towards peace and reconciliation.

4. **A Collection or Financial Contribution:**
   - In order to support the establishment of a network of peacemakers, “Pacificultores”, made up of people who promote a culture of peace in Catatumbo, we are asked for a contribution that will be used to:
     - develop an Institute of Research and Formation in the Diocese of Tibú to train local church and community members in skills to become peacemakers in the region;
     - produce educational resources and other materials that can assist the development of a culture of peace.
     - Inspire effective peace-building actions.

5. **Contact with the local Colombian Embassy:**
   - Ensure that the local embassy of Colombia is informed about the Order’s focus on solidarity with Colombia’s Peace Process.
   - Invite the ambassador and other embassy officials to participate in any activities organised.
   - The embassy is encouraged to address the concerns raised by Dominicans in Colombia.
How to send contributions?

Financial Donations: via the Provincial Curia
   Banco de Bogotá, checking account 052034055, SWIFT BBOGCOBB.
   Through the Intermediary Bank Citibank, New York Swift CITIUS33.
   BB account 10922754 ABA 02100089

Work of Art: Write to the General Curia: Promoter for Justice and Peace un@curia.op.org
General Information: Fray Jorge Ferdinando Rodriguez Ruiz - frayjorgeferdinando@usantotomas.edu.co -
   Phone: 057 320 820 1769
Diocese of Tibú: diocesisdetibu@gmail.com; www.diocesisdetibu.com.co
Attached please find a pamphlet with information about Colombia and about the Month of Peace this year. We
also attach some testimonies of local people that can be useful in the organisation of the month.

Our Request
1. We request each entity to identify a coordinator and a team of people to promote and coordinate this
   project.
2. Please inform our promoters of Justice and Peace, fr Mike Deeb - un@curia.op.org and Sr Cecilia
   Espenilla - jp.dsi@curia.op.org of the name of the coordinator appointed for your entity.
Thank you very much for your cooperation! We pray that, through this small action, solidarity amongst us all
can grow and, in turn, enable our preaching mission to have a greater impact in bringing Good News to our
world.
In St Dominic,

Fr Bruno Cadóre
   Master of the Order
Fr Mike Deeb
   General Promoter for Justice and Peace
Sr Cecilia Espenilla
   DSI International Promoter for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation

Rome, the 1th October 2017

No sister act: Dominican Sisters’ album tops charts in time for Christmas

The members of Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist, silently filed into the chapel. Within minutes, they
were singing — first in unison, then in a transfixing, layered harmony that reverberated off the marble floors, wood-
paneled walls and cathedral ceiling.

The evening prayer service was intended for no audience but the Lord they have taken vows to serve. Still, The Chapel at
the Motherhouse on the rolling grounds of the Catholic order’s campus outside Ann Arbor, Michigan, is also the
place where the members record music that has been heard by millions. Their third and latest album, “Jesu, Joy of Man’s
Desiring: Christmas with the Dominican Sisters of Mary,” has gracefully muscled its way to the top of Billboard’s classical chart and climbed nearly as high on the holiday chart.

They may be sisters, but this is no act.
“It’s such a part of our prayer life that when we make a CD, we’re just praying,” said Sister Joseph Andrew Bogdanowicz, a founder of the community who has overseen the production of three CDs. “It’s what we do, it’s who we are.”
The album’s 16 songs span from the 5th century to present day and represent the music of 10 countries. The collection includes the well-known (“We Wish You a Merry Christmas,”) obscure (“Sleep, Little Jesus,” based on a Polish carol) and original (“Snowflakes,” composed by Bogdanowicz). Some songs are a cappella, others contain light instrumentation — all supplied by the sisters.

For them, the music is a gift to God, but also to people who can’t see the sisters perform live. They don’t tour, and only on rare occasions do they sing in public or on national broadcasts. Their evening services at the Motherhouse are open to visitors on Sundays, but space is limited and those are structured prayers, not performances.

“We want them to have this beauty, and that’s the only way we can do it,” Bogdanowicz said. “It can even be in another country or part of the world or somebody who doesn’t even have a clue who we are but if they’re quietly listening to this and it’s elevating them towards God, then God’s done everything we wanted him to do.”

The unconventional recording artists got their start in the music business a few years ago, when the sisters were approached by Monica and Kevin Fitzgibbons, music industry veterans who founded DeMontfort Music and attended the sisters’ service known as “Vespers.” The label specializes in sacred music produced by “hidden communities,” and the Dominican Sisters of Mary’s latest album is distributed by Sony Music Entertainment.

Some time and prayer, not surprisingly, was necessary, but a spiritual match was lit.

“My thought was, if we’re going to do it, we need to do it well,” Sister John Dominic Rasmussen, also a founder of the 20-year-old order that started with four sisters and now has roughly 130. “The team that came here and approached us — just from my conversations I knew they would be able to do it well.”

Rasmussen oversees the business side of the sisters’ musical projects, and she comes by it honestly: Her mother was a country music publicist in Nashville, Tennessee, working for major record labels and then independently. Growing up around the industry has helped her understand some of its language and logistics.

Her mother attends a weekly breakfast meeting of music industry people, and Rasmussen recently tagged along. She wanted to share a video of her sisters performing, so she turned to a longtime TV show host.

“I said, ‘Let me see your iPhone,’ and I called it up and showed it to him,” she said, and soon, others grew intrigued. “They’re like, ‘This is beautiful, let me see that. ... We got to promote this.’ My mom’s like, ‘We’ll get ‘em for everybody.’”

“When you love what you’re doing ... you want to find every moment to bring people you know to that experience,” she added.

While the sisters live a structured, contemplative life, they recognize the importance of engaging with culture. Their primary mission is that of education — they teach preschool through college at private schools across the United States — and making and sharing their music is a natural extension of that.

“If (people) only hear bad music or see ugly art, how are they ever going to know the beauty of music or the beauty of art or the beauty of the universe?” asked Mother Mary Assumpta Long, mother superior of the Dominican Sisters of Mary. “It’s all in education — you have to expose them to beauty and goodness.”

By JEFF KAROUB
Bro. Gregorio Lima Hontomin, OP: A Wonderful Dominican Cooperator Brother

I never met Bro. Gregorio in person but putting together the bits and pieces of the stories about him, one can easily discover that there is something special about him. From the point of view of our faith, Bro. Gregorio was someone who lived his Christian life, as a Dominican cooperator brother beyond the ordinary. It is no wonder why after his death, many were already thinking of the possibility of him being recognized someday by the Church, as a person of heroic virtue. It was also for this same reason that the brethren of the Dominican Province of the Philippines have not failed to mention the possibility of his cause in every Provincial Chapter since after his death.

Bro. Gregorio did not write any spiritual treatise, as he was not trained or prepared for such an undertaking. However, from the interviews and oral testimonies that I have gathered over the past ten years, one could say that Bro. Gregorio may have been a person of few words, but he spoke eloquently through his life and works. He was a native of the Batanes Islands on November 21, 1909. Situated in the northern part of the Philippines, it is a group of small islands that was evangelized by the Dominicans. The island where he came from is called Sabtang. Its people are known for basketmaking and building boats. Most likely, his talent, for which he would later be well-known (a handyman) may have had its incipience in his island and his culture as Ivatan, as the natives of the Batanes are called. Around 1930, he came to Manila and was employed at the San Juan de Dios hospital in Intramuros. It was there, as some would say, that he was recruited by a Dominican father to become a cooperator brother. In so far as documents would show, he is said to be the first native Filipino to enter the Dominican formation.

We may say, that the first half of his Dominican life was spent in the Convent of St. Albert the Great in Rosaryhill, Hongkong (1936-1959) and the second-half at the University of Santo Tomas in Manila (1959-1982). In the convent of St. Albert the Great, Bro. Gregorio became an icon, so much so, that his life has been embedded in its history. He was there, just right after it was newly established as a convent and a formation house, and he was practically the last friar to leave, when the house of formation was closed. Bro. Gregorio served as an all around and always on-call handyman of the Dominican brethren in the said Convent and House of Formation. He displayed remarkable talents on almost everything, if not all, which required technical and manual skills. He was the friar who was mainly responsible for keeping the convent in tip-top shape. His ingenuity in fixing things was so impressive to the amazement of his Dominican brothers in St. Albert the Great. Another remarkable characteristic of Bro. Gregorio was in terms of taking care of his sick brothers as the community infirmarian who was never tired of nursing anyone who got sick. He had touched, to a great extent the life of the friars in Rosaryhill so much so that any friar who would recollect memories of St. Albert the Great in Hong Kong would remember the genial Bro. Gregorio and instrumental he was to the survival of the friars during the Second World War.

It was said that the room of Bro. Gregorio was like a prayer room and a workshop together. In the midst of all kinds of gadgets; numerous nuts and bolts, screws, wirings, etc., a crucifix was prominently placed. It is said that the way his room was arranged reflected his character as he is said to have found contemplation in his work. The humble generosity and graceful presence of Bro. Gregorio in so many ways touched the lives of the brethren who passed through the alleys of St. Albert the Great Convent in Hong Kong. When the Dominican House of Studies in Rosaryhill was closed on June 7, 1959, Bro. Gregorio was tasked to remove all the temporary and permanent fixtures from the entire convent.

In the Philippines, he was assigned to the University of Santo Tomas where he worked as the head of the General Services of the University Hospital. A few years after assuming his new assignment, he was chosen as one of the delegates from the Philippines to the canonization of St. Martin de Porres by Pope John XXIII on May 6, 1962. It became an opportunity for him to visit other places in Europe, such as Spain and Portugal where he met many Spanish friars he had known before. He is said to have been able to visit the Holy Land as well. His spiritual experience in this journey made an indelible impression on him.
As head of the General Services Department of hospital of the University of Santo Tomas, Bro. Gregorio spent practically the entire second-half of his Dominican life at the hospital. Once again, the ingenuity of Bro. Gregorio blended with a deep spirit of service was clearly seen in his work there. He was not only good in repairing broken hospital apparatuses but also in inventing various kinds of equipment for the benefit of the patients and the rest of the health care workers. Despite the respect and admiration he was enjoying, Bro Gregorio still remained humble and charitable. He extended whatever help he could give to the needy patients. Sometimes in the afternoon, he visited the slums around the University and distributed bread especially to street children. His extraordinary life and service did not go unrecognized. On May 9, 1977 he was conferred with a pontifical award for outstanding service to the Church - Croce pro Ecclesia et Pontifice.

During those times, the Dominicans in the Philippines were facing a great difficulty, not from outside but from within. The wounds resulting from the birth of the Dominican Philippine Province from the Holy Rosary or Spanish Province were still fresh and the pain was very much felt among the brethren. Bro Gregorio saw and felt the tension between the Spanish and Filipino Dominicans and shared in the crisis and suffering. However, he urged and prayed for peace among the brothers. In a symbolic way, he would make rosaries with olive seeds and telephone wires and would give them out to the brothers on his birthday and a symbol of peace and unity. On July 6, 1982, Gregorio was found leaning on his table. He has collapsed while fixing things. He was rushed to the hospital but before six in the evening, he had returned to his Creator.

At his burial, his nephew was given a moment to say a few words. He said that if there was anything that Bro. Gregorio left for his brethren, it was his memory as a man of peace. With that, he hopes that like, Bro. Gregorio, the Dominicans in the Philippines would always live together in same spirit of peace, understanding, and love.

Brother Brice BINI, OP is the new Coordinator of the Regents of Studies of Africa

Brother Brice Kézié Bini, OP, Regent of studies of Saint Augustine Province in West Africa was elected on 24th November 2017 by the Regents of Studies of Africa as Coordinator of the Regents for the region of Africa (the Inter-Africa, IAOP). As such, he was appointed on 27th November 2017 by the Master of the Order, Brother Bruno Cadoré, as a member of the Permanent Commission for the Promotion of Studies in the Order of Preachers (Dominicans), for a period of six years. He replaces Brother Paul Akin-Otiko, OP, former Regent of Studies of the Province of St. Joseph the Worker, Nigeria and Ghana. Brother Brice not being the IAOP Councillor for Intellectual Life, according to the Statutes of the Inter-Africa, he is a member of the Commission of the Intellectual Life of the IAOP (art.10).

The office of regional coordinator of the regents of studies was created by the General Chapter of Rome 2010, to “assist and support the Master of the Order in the intellectual mission of the Order, and stimulate the intellectual collaboration of the Provinces with each other and with the institutions under the immediate jurisdiction of the Master of the Order "(ACG Rome 2010, 96). In addition, the Regional Coordinator of Regents of Studies is called to serve as a member of the Permanent Commission for Promotion of Studies (ACG Rome 2010, 98). The General Chapter of Bologna 2016 specified that the mandate of the regional coordinators of regents of studies as members of this commission is six years (ACG Bologna 2016, 347.2).

The General Chapter of Bologna (ACG Bologna 2016, 347) entrusted seven main tasks to the Permanent Commission for the Promotion of Studies in the Order, which consist of “assisting the Master of the Order and the Socius for the intellectual life in the following areas:
1- planning and allocation of human and financial resources of the Order in the field of study;
2- promoting the training of future teachers;
3- the implementation of the new Ratio Studiorum Generalis;
4- preparation of a report on the viability of the study centers of the Order prior to each General Chapter;
5- supporting the development of the report the Socius for the Intellectual Life must present to the General Chapter, and the development of proposals to be presented to the Chapter;
6- checking the status of the publications that depend on the Master of the Order and the establishment of a policy for publication and dissemination;
7- other tasks that are required by the Ratio Studiorum Generalis.”

The next meeting of the Permanent Commission for the Promotion of Studies, which will be attended by Brother Brice for the first time, will take place from 18 to 20 April 2018 in Rome, at the Santa Sabina Convent. We say a big thank you to Brother Brice Bini, Doctor in Moral Theology who, despite busy academic schedule at the Catholic University of West Africa (UCAO) in Abidjan, Ivory Coast and elsewhere, generously agreed to serve the Order in this new responsibility. We wish him a successful mission.

fr. Gabriel Samba, op

Frassati Fellowships: Young Adults Building a Catholic Culture

“You need a Catholic culture that is more powerful for you than the worldly culture that surrounds you.”

Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, 1901-1925, was a Third Order Dominican known for his love of the poor, his rich spiritual life, and his joyful personality, by which he drew many of his peers to Christ. He was a tireless organizer of his fellow students for Catholic causes in an era marked by the empty ideologies of Fascism and Communism in his native Italy. In 1990, Frassati was beatified by Pope Saint John Paul II. Today, young adult fellowships that bear his name are building a thriving Catholic culture in a skeptical age.

Father Jerome Zeiler, O.P., parochial vicar of Saint Patrick’s Church in Columbus, Ohio, is the chaplain of the Columbus Frassati Society, which offers a packed roster of spiritual, social, and service events that regularly gather from 20 to 50 young adults.

“How do you confront the Culture of Death—a materialistic, secular, godless culture—when you’re immersed in it? You have to do more than go to Mass on Sunday. You need a Catholic culture that is more powerful for you than the worldly culture that surrounds you,” says Father Zeiler.

According to Father Zeiler, the group has grown organically by word of mouth and through Facebook. Young adults tend to move on as they get married—often to fellow Frassati members.

The Frassati Fellowship of NYC is one of the largest and most active of the Frassati groups (which are independent from one another) and is supported by the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal and the Sisters of Life as well as the Dominican Friars. Father Dominic Bump, O.P., offers spiritual direction to the young adults of Frassati NYC.

“Frassati helps them build virtuous friendships that are ordered to the highest good, which is ultimately Sainthood. Relationships formed in Frassati are deeper, more real, and without cliques,” says Father Bump, who accompanied Frassati Fellowship of NYC at a 40 Days for Life vigil outside a Manhattan Planned Parenthood in October.

Ingrid Abeleda, Frassati NYC’s pro-life ministry leader and the organizer of the vigil, discovered the Fellowship through a service project at a parish damaged by Hurricane Sandy in Brooklyn. “I’ve really found a family here, a place in the Church, a way to grow, and a sense of accountability,” Ingrid says. “We’re not perfect, but we encourage one another to grow in sanctity.”

The DC Frassati Fellowship is perhaps the most connected to Blessed Pier Giorgio’s Dominican roots. Participants meet at the Dominican House of Studies and take part in the priory’s Masses, Holy Hours, and Liturgy of the Hours.
“The life of the Priory overflows into the Frassati Fellowship,” says Brother Ignatius Weiss, who is coordinator, together with Brother Frassati Davis, of the fellowship’s core team. “Parishes provide a spiritual home for our members, but the Dominicans offer them a special grace to inform their way of living as Catholic young adults in Washington, DC.”

"In This Sign": A Fantasy Novel by Sr Mary Martin, OP

On Tuesday November 14th, we published a long awaited book...In This Sign!
Our own Sr. Mary Martin, prioress, wrote this fantasy novel almost 40 years ago and it has finally seen its day in print. In This Sign follows the story of 11 year-old Patsy, an ordinary girl from small town Ohio who is unexpectedly thrust into the adventure of her life.

All 11 year-old Patsy wants is to go home, but having been mysteriously transported to another world she discovers that she holds the key to their fight against the Dark Ones. To refuse her mission would be to send the Kingdom of Arendolin to its demise, but to accept it will require a bravery and trust beyond Patsy’s imagination. In an adventure of a lifetime, this little girl from Ohio learns that to combat the Dark Ones without she must conquer the darkness within.

An Interview with the Author:

When did you write this book?
I wrote the book between 1979 and 1981. It amounted to about 20 minutes of actual writing time per night. Sr. Mary Elizabeth read each chapter as I finished it. I kept her cliff-hanging for months! Sr. Maria [of the Cross] also read it at some point. Then I put it aside. When we got computers and I was bursar, I typed it into Word, then put it aside again. I did make one half-hearted attempt to have it published but that came to nothing because it was an evangelical outfit and the book is too Catholic.

What inspired you to write it? Why did you choose to write fantasy?
I wrote it because I had read the Ring Trilogy and it became stuck in my head. I set myself with one over-riding task: to make Patsy's adventures truly life-changing, such that she would be a changed individual when she returned home. The other fantasy novels I had read, including the Narnia Chronicles, seemed to leave everything back in the fantasy world, so that they simply returned home to same ol' same ol'. That was actually one of the hardest parts, getting her to bring the changes back with her. It took a couple of attempts and some outside criticism to get it, but I think I did.

Where did the ideas for your characters come from?
All the characters, like the ones in Sr. Mary Catharine's novel [Amata Means Beloved], are loosely based on sisters in the community. I can't remember who I based Rendil on, however. What place do you think fantasy, should or could have in a person’s life?
Fantasy in general can be a good way of focusing on the important things in a context where the unimportant everyday things fade away to make room for them.

Which is your favorite character in your book and why?
My favorite character is of course Patsy, who is based loosely on me, except that she has more of a temper, and my hair was darker red. I also enjoy Landon, who is based on Sr. Maria [of the Cross], although she had a much more complex character.

So much time has passed since you wrote In This Sign, is there anything you wanted to change?
From the vantage point of nearly 40 years, I wouldn't change anything I wrote; I really think I got it right. [We think so, too!]

Are you considering writing another novel?
I am not considering writing another novel. Without comparing myself to the great Harper Lee, I can learn from her: Quit while you're ahead and don't let them talk you into it!
You can purchase your own paperback copy of In This Sign in our gift shop HERE.  
A Kindle version will be coming soon!  
By Dominican Nuns of Summit  

General Assembly of Lay Dominicans Fraternities in Africa  

From Thursday 16th to Sunday 19th November 2017, the first General Assembly of Lay Dominican Fraternities in Africa was held at the Convent of the Dominican Sisters at Rebero, Kigali – Rwanda. This is a short summary of the meeting.

INTRODUCTION: The African Council of Lay Dominican Fraternities (ACLDF) has amongst its responsibilities the mandate to ensure that Lay Dominicans in African fit within the proper structures in the Dominican Order and Family. It is for this reason that this meeting was organized by the present members of the Council.

INPUTS: The Promoter General, Fr. Rui Carlos Lopes op, Joyful Felix Foko, the regional president of the ACLDF and his councillors present took turns to facilitate the conferences during the four-day meeting. The Religious Promoters and other participants contributed positively in the discussions and at the end arrived at the following resolutions:-

That all Lay Dominicans should refresh themselves on the Rule, the Acts of Argentina, the Declaration of the Master of the Order and other relevant Church documents in order to situate themselves firmly within the Dominican spirituality.

That the leaders present at this meeting should facilitate the understanding of the proposed draft Directory for Africa amongst their members and make suggestions where necessary to the ACLDF for any amendments.

That all the Provincials/Provincial Vicars should be officially informed of this decision immediately. Each entity should make sure that this is done as soon as possible through their Religious Assistants and/or Promoters.

That we should be reminded of the forthcoming 3rd International Congress of Lay Dominicans Fraternities in Fatima Portugal from 4 to 10 October 2018.

In this respect:
- All professed Lay Dominicans shall be welcomed.
- All Religious Assistants and promoters shall be welcomed.
- Only two Lay Dominicans from each country shall have an active voice. The choice of these two shall be given to the leaders.
- All Lay Dominicans should pray and organize community prayer sessions for the success of the Congress.
- When questionnaires towards the preparations of the Congress are made available, we should contribute promptly to help the commission leaders in their preparations.
- Those who would wish to participate are encouraged to indicate to the Regional President through their chapter leaders before March 2018. This will help to request invitation letters early enough and to acquire low cost air tickets and to avoid inconveniences such as those that happened towards the 800-year Jubilee celebrations when many Lay Dominicans from Africa were denied visas to Rome, Italy.

All should be involved to participate in the activities of the Dominican Month for peace as per the letter of the Master of the Order of 11/11/17 (attached). This will begin on the first Sunday of Advent 2017 and runs throughout the month of December.

We should pray, reflect and make suggestions towards the organization of a Congress of Lay Dominicans in Africa, preferably to be hosted by any country within the Western zone-Benin or Côte d’Ivoire.
In the course of the activities, the Council had a closed-door session with the Promoter, Fr. Rui and discussed other sensitive issues especially related to discipline and administration, the process of admitting members to profession and the statues of members who are no longer in communion with the Church. In the next review of the directory, these issues will be further discussed and clarified.

ORGANIZATION AND GRATITUDE: Rough statistics indicate that about 700 Lay Dominicans are present in 27 countries in Africa today. Since the foundation of the African Council of Lay Dominican Fraternities (ACLDF) in Bamenda, Cameroon 2004, the Rwanda meeting of leaders is the first ever assembly/gathering of Lay Dominican Leaders from more than three countries at a time.

Seven countries were present, three sent reports and three whom the council had been working with (Nigeria, Côte D’Ivoire and Burkina Faso) were absent. In all, at least the Council had so far been able to interact with 13 countries.

Much gratitude was given to Rwanda for the organization and warm reception of the delegates, despite the short notice. Equally, the Provincial Vicar for Rwanda and Burundi with the Dominican Friars in Kigali and Nyagatare were very much appreciated for their co-operation and support. The Dominican Sisters of Africa in whose convent the assembly was held were also very much appreciated for their hospitality.

The participants noted with gratitude the presence and inputs of the Promoter General Fr. Rui Carlos Lopes OP, and the promoters from the Southern Africa and Equatorial Africa Frs. Raphael and Aristide; and the dynamism of the Regional President Joyful Felix Foko and his team for their instrumentality and sacrifices.

Participants while evaluating their interaction on the last day noted with satisfaction that this was a unique moment to renew their preaching mission. The social evening, the tour of Kigali city and exchange of experiences together with the rich inputs exposed the beauty of the Dominican vocation.

In his last statements Fr. Rui thanked all the Fraternities in Africa for what they are doing for the Church and the Dominican Order. He urged all to deepen their spirits within the Dominican spirituality. He further reiterated that when we live in communion we overcome all obstacles to our lives, “Be faithful to your Profession and remain faithful to St. Dominic’s vision and Christ’s Mission”, he concluded.

Joyful Felix rounded up by thanking all for their sacrifices and hoped he meets all again in the forthcoming events. All delegates departed happy, determined and hopeful.

A Digital Forum to prepare for the International Laity Congress – Fatima 2018

The General Promoter of the Laity, Fr Rui Carlos Lopes has inaugurated a Forum to help prepare for the International Laity Congress in Fatima in October 2018.

This is his video message:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OqU3P8nxTSE

Dear brothers and sisters,
these early days of November are very important to strengthen our fraternity as brothers and sisters.

Not only in this world but also in the dimension of the communion of saints. This is the sense of the feast of the Dominican saints and deceased. You and all of your dearly deceased have been present in my prayer.

Today I want to open a forum to share our thoughts to prepare as best we can, and with a profound reflection, for the next International Assembly convened for October 2018 in Fatima, Portugal.

I propose two questions and I would like you all to participate in the forum:
1) What is lay preaching?
2) What is the meaning of commitment and profession in the Order?

It is important that the next International Assembly offers us clearer ideas on such important topics. Many times preaching is understood in a too clerical way, sometimes “preaching” means “homily” and the homily is reserved to the ordained minister. But so many brothers and sisters preach in other ways.

Second, you have all made your profession to the Master of the Order, the successor of Saint Dominic. For the Dominican brothers, the profession has a specific sense of obedience to the Master. For Dominican laity, it is totally different. But we have in common the dedication of our lives to preaching. What is the sense of profession in the Order? How does this profession help us to preach?

I ask you to reflect and share your reflections. It would be interesting for all of us.

Thank you so much.

Click here to access the Forum - http://www.fraternitiesop.com/forum-en/

Sister Donna Markham, OP, Receives Great Preacher Award from Friars

Sister Donna Markham, OP, President and CEO of Catholic Charities USA (CCUSA), was one of two recipients of the Great Preacher Award from the St. Albert the Great (Central) Province of the U.S. Dominican Friars. She and Monsignor Kenneth Velo, Senior Executive of Catholic Collaboration at De Paul University in Chicago, received the award at the Provincial’s Dinner November 4 at Misericordia Heart of Mercy in Chicago.

“This year, the Provincial’s Dinner honors two preachers whose extraordinary ministries and words totally reflect the Gospel of Jesus Christ,” said Father James V. Marchionda, OP, Prior Provincial of St. Albert the Great. “Great Preacher most fittingly describes this year’s gifted and faith-filled recipients.”

A native of Chicago, Sister Donna graduated from Regina Dominican High School, an all-girls school located in Wilmette, Illinois, and founded and sponsored by the Adrian Dominican Sisters. A clinical psychologist, she holds a bachelor’s degree in fine art, philosophy, and English from Siena Heights College (now University) in Adrian, as well as a master’s degree in psychology and a PhD in clinical psychology, both from the University of Detroit.

Sister Donna served as President of Southdown Institute in Toronto, a residential program that offers healing and wholeness to priests and religious facing addictions and other mental health issues. She also offered leadership to the Adrian Dominican Congregation, first on the General Council under Prioress Sister Nadine Foley, OP, from 1986 to 1992 and then as Prioress from 2004 to 2010. She went on to serve as President of the Catholic Health Partners Behavioral Health Institute in Cincinnati, Ohio, and to chair the Catholic Charities USA Board of Trustees.

In 2015, Sister Donna became the first woman to head CCUSA. Through 177 member agencies in 2,600 locations in the U.S. and its territories, CCUSA reaches out to people in need through services in housing; healthcare; employment and job training; immigrant and refugee support; advocacy; and family, children, and senior services; and leadership formation in Catholic identity for all involved in the agency’s work. In addition, CCUSA is the official domestic disaster relief agency of the U.S. Catholic Church, leading to the agency’s involvement in disaster relief for communities affected by recent hurricanes, floods, and fires.

The Provincial’s Dinner supports the formation ministry of the men entering the Dominicans through the Province, including the novitiate in Denver.
The Dominican Family in the Philippines to fast against drug war killings

The Dominican family will stage a day of fasting and prayer for peace in the country amid the growing number of deaths linked to government’s war on drugs.

The fast is scheduled on December 3, the first Sunday of Advent, as a response to “the challenges against the value and dignity of human life”.

Fr. Napoleon Sipalay, Jr., president of the Dominican Family in the Philippines Foundation, said the day is also an opportunity to intensify the act of charity for families of victims of extrajudicial killings.

“The intention is to save the amount we could gather out on that day of fasting from different communities of the Dominican family… for the families of EJK victims,” Sipalay said.

The Dominicans earlier expressed concern on the human rights situation in the country as the government refused to hit the brakes on its relentless crackdown on the illegal drug trade.

Even Fr. Mike Deeb, the Dominican Order’s permanent delegate to the United Nations and its General Promoter of Justice and Peace, sounded alarm on the rising drug-related killings.

He said that drug abuse is “very worrying” and a “big issue of concern” in the UN, but stressed that killings will not address the problem.

Sipalay added that while their action is only “a drop in the big ocean” on the problem of drug killings, he is hoping that such activity touch the lives of other people.

“What we are doing is to start the ripple of touching the many members of the Dominican family to do something concrete,” he said.

Acts of Love and Words of Life Growing the Circle of Friends of Elisabeth Leseur in Paris

“...we must give ourselves; that is, we must bring forth from this interior sanctuary where we keep the best of ourselves, some thoughts, chosen from among the best and most noble, that, once we have shared them, will become acts of love and words of life. We must firmly desire to try to give our best, to do all the good we can. The unknown reservoir of strength, energy, and nobility lying within our depths must become the property of our brothers and sisters through courageous effort and a surrender of our inmost selves.”

Elisabeth Leseur

Her story and writings have made Servant of God Elisabeth Leseur a person of interest for people around the world, and support for her cause has been equally diverse. Our small part in this work began eighteen months ago as we exchanged our first correspondence with Brother Llewellyn Muscat, Secretary to the Dominican Postualor in Rome. After expressing our initial interest in the cause, we sought tangible ways to support and perhaps unite the Elisabeth’s many friends from around the world. With help from a small but dedicated team, we were able to create ELCause.org, a website dedicated to the promoting the cause. From the beginning, it has been made it available in five languages (English, French, Spanish, Portuguese and Italian) to better connect with devotees. In the four months since we launched ELCause.org, we have been overwhelmed by the positive response. We have had visitors from over 66 countries!

As part of our work we sought a more personal experience of Elisabeth and decided on a visit to Paris. We asked Brother Llewellyn if he might accompany us, so that together we might meet with devotees and work to
move the cause forward. During this journey together, and as has been our experience in general working on the cause, we were blessed to be witness to many acts of love and words of life.

**Churches along Elisabeth’s Faith Journey**

We began our journey by visiting the churches of great significance in Elisabeth’s faith life. Father Thierry Laurent, Abbey of St. Roch, provided both a tour of the magnificent church, and assistance in locating Elisabeth’s original baptismal certificate. Our visit of the baptismal font at St. Roch was particularly moving considering this was the place where Elisabeth’s faith journey began. Later that day, we visited St. Germain, where Elisabeth and Felix Leseur were married. Given all the saints and clergy honored in these great historical churches of Paris, we wondered how much Elisabeth might be known or remembered. To our surprise and delight we learned that Elisabeth was highlighted in a display at the Church of St. Augustin. This church was near the Leseur’s home, and Elisabeth had visited frequently to meet with her spiritual director and to receive the sacraments. Knowing that Elisabeth must have spent prayerful hours at this site brought us great joy. Pictures of these churches and the display that included Elisabeth have been posted on ELcause.org.

Through ELcause.org, we have been blessed to receive many notes from devotees of Elisabeth around the world. Several weeks before our trip, we received a message from a woman in Paris, who lives very near Elisabeth’s final resting place, and who offered to take prayer requests to the grave site. With the help of our French translator, we exchanged a few more letters and agreed to to meet at Elisabeth’s grave site. While we were initially challenged by language, we were overwhelmed by the kindness of France Roseau and her family, as her adult children would eventually join us to assist in translating our conversation over lunch. With language no longer a barrier, we were able to speak of Elisabeth and discuss the ways we may increase the circle of friends and support in Paris.

**Generous Spirits in Fruitful Meetings**

In addition to the sites of significance in Elisabeth’s life, we were fortunate to arrange a meeting at the Dominican Archives (Bibliotheque du Saulchoir Peres Dominicains) in Paris to view the items that have been preserved for both Elisabeth and Felix. The goal of our visit was to understand what materials were available for future historical inquiry. Elisabeth’s archives included everything one would expect, a rosary, a few photos, books and many of her handwritten letters. What was missing was her original spiritual journal. It would only be a few days later that we would learn that this journal was most likely destroyed when publishing house at which it was stored was bombed during World War II. Felix’s archive was noticeably larger, particularly since it contained many of his published works. We concluded that there is much work still to be done by historians to exhaustively review, catalogue and study all of the materials.

The Dominican Convent (Couvent De L’Annonciation) in Paris, where Felix Leseur resided during his priesthood, provided the backdrop for a meeting of a group of long-time supports of Elisabeth. The meeting room, with a gentle sunshine coming through the windows, provided a great setting to review the important work done to date for the cause. Listening to these devotees discuss the articles, books and presentations given over many years revealed another facet of the depth and breadth of support for Elisabeth’s cause.

Once the past efforts were shared, the group turned its attention to moving the cause forward. In order to align and join efforts around the world, the group agreed that an international organization would be needed. In addition to promoting the fame of sanctity of Elisabeth, one of the first tasks of this new organization would be to provide support for a definitive historical inquiry into the life of Elisabeth. This inquiry, anchored by at least three historians, must complete a review of the archives, seek out and capture all vital records (e.g. baptismal and marriage certificates, school records, etc.), and document a complete history of Elisabeth’s life. As part of this journey, we were privileged to have the opportunity to accompany Brother Llewellyn to meet Monsignor Dubois, Promoter of the Causes of Saints for France, and his assistant, Iona Tonon. Brother Llewellyn and Monsignor Dubois worked collaboratively to review the work done on the Cause since it was formally opened by the Diocese of Paris, examined the last formal documents generated on the cause, and discussed what was now required to advance the investigation into the compelling story of this most remarkable daughter of Paris.
Gratitude to Elisabeth’s Growing Circle of Friends

We extend our gratitude to the many people who assisted us in making this trip so fruitful. These individuals demonstrated many acts of love and we shared many words of life during our time together. The Diocese of Paris, especially Monsignor Dubois, for supporting a meeting to discuss the future direction of the cause. The Dominican Couvent De L’Annonciation in Paris and Brother Eric de Clermont-Tonnerre for not only hosting Brother Llewellyn, but for also arranging and hosting many devotees in a meeting to unite efforts moving the cause forward. Father Thierry Laurent for finding the time to spend with us on a busy weekday morning at St. Roch. The archivist at the Bibliotheque du Saulchoir Peres Dominicans could not have been more gracious to us in reviewing the materials in both Elisabeth’s and Felix’s archives over several hours. We are especially grateful to France Roseau and her family for accompanying us to Elisabeth’s grave site and their hospitality that afternoon. And for all the kind people who directed us in the various churches we visited in Paris.

For more information and to stay up to date on the progress of the cause of Elisabeth Leseur, please visit ELcause.org. We would like to encourage all those who have been touched by the life of Elisabeth or have experienced physical or spiritual healing through her intercession to contact Brother Llewellyn Muscat at postulatio@curia.op.org.

Jennifer and Joseph MacNeil - United States

Elisabeth Leseur’s quote is from Janet Ruffing’s 2005 book “Elisabeth Leseur Selected Writings”.

The Cause of Frank Duff, Founder of the Legion of Mary

The International Headquarters of the Legion of Mary in Dublin was very pleased to receive a visit from the Secretary of the General Postulation of the Order of the Preachers, Fr. Llewellyn Muscat OP. In the days he spent in Dublin (3-7 November 2017) excellent direction was given to those working on the Cause of Frank Duff (1889-1980), founder of the Legion of Mary. Particular attention was given to the work of the Historical Commission in order to bring its work to a conclusion.

During his stay in Dublin Fr. Muscat met various people involved with different aspects of the Cause and was received by His Grace, Diarmuid Martin, Archbishop of Dublin. He visited the house in which Frank Duff lived for a considerable portion of his life and where he died. He visited the grave of Frank Duff in Glasnevin Cemetery, Dublin where he is buried. He also visited the annual Legion Evangelisation Conference (Peregrinatio Pro Christo), where he encouraged the 200 attending to promote and pray for the Cause.

The Legion of Mary

The Legion of Mary was established in 1921 by Frank Duff. He was a member of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and was at that time confined to a membership of men only. Some apostolic minded women asked what they might do, having attended a talk given by Frank Duff on St. Louis Marie de Montfort’s True Devotion to Mary. From this the Legion of Mary was born on 7 September that year. Where the Vincent de Paul dealt with the great physical needs of the day the Legion complements its work by concentrating on the spiritual needs of which there were many.

The Doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ became part of the Legion’s action and Frank Duff saw that all the parts made up the whole by seeing and service Christ in everyone met. The organisation also enabled the ordinary Catholic to fulfil the obligations of Baptism. After the Eucharistic Congress of 1932 the Legion rapidly grew throughout the world. It exists in over 170 countries and in the vast majority of dioceses thanks to the support of the Bishops and clergy who provide the much needed encouragement and spiritual formation they provide.

The active member attends a weekly meeting lasting no longer than 1 hour and 30 minutes and is assigned from the meeting to carry out (always in pairs) an apostolic duty for a minimum of 2 hours per week. The auxiliary member complements the active member by saying the prayers of the Tessera (prayer card) – The
Rosary, Catena (Magnificat) and final prayer for Faith. These prayers are offered to Our Blessed Lady for her to use in whatever way she wishes.

The Legion of Mary is at the disposal of the Parish Priest to undertake whatever tasks he assigns to the Legion. The Legion of Mary only enters into a Diocese with the permission of the Bishop and only into the Parish with the permission of the Parish Priest.

Prayers for the Beatification of Servant of God Frank Duff

God our Father, You inspired your servant Frank Duff with a profound insight into the mystery of Your Church, the Body of Christ, and of the place of Mary the Mother of Jesus in this mystery. In his immense desire to share this insight with others and in filial dependence on Mary he formed her Legion to be a sign of her maternal love for the world and a means of enlisting all her children in the Church's evangelising work.

We thank you Father for the graces conferred on him and for the benefits accruing to the Church from his courageous and shining faith. With confidence we beg You that through his intercession you grant the petition we lay before You. .............. We ask too that if it be in accordance with Your will, the holiness of his life may be acknowledged by the Church for the glory of your Name, through Christ Our Lord, Amen.

All those who receive graces with the intercession of the Servant of God are invited to contact the office of the General Postulation of the Order (postulatio@curia.op.org) or the office of the Legion of Mary in Dublin (International Centre: Concilium Legionis Mariae, De Montfort House, Morning Star Avenue, Brunswick Street, Dublin 7, Ireland).

Sile NiChochlain

1000 Cranes for Iraq

The Project

This is a project of a group of Adrian Dominican artists creating work to support the ministerial efforts of the Adrian Dominican Sisters on behalf of the exiled Iraqi people driven from their homes by ISIS.

On August 6th, 2014, the fighters of the Islamic State expelled hundreds of thousands of Christians, Yazidis, Kurds and even Muslims from Mosul and the north of Iraq. The refugees were forced to flee with nothing, with no means of livelihood and even their human dignity.

They now live in exile in the Kurdish territory, without safe shelter, adequate nutrition, potable water or basic health care. Our Iraqi Dominican Sisters, themselves displaced and without home or possessions, are trying to support and care for their fellow exiles.

The Story of 1,000 Cranes

The ancient Japanese tradition of senbazuru promises that a person who folds 1000 cranes will be granted a wish, such as long life or recovery from illness.

In our time, the tradition of the thousand cranes was rekindled through the story of Sadako Sasaki, a Japanese girl from Hiroshima. Sadako was two when she was exposed to radiation from the atomic bomb, and only twelve when she developed leukemia. She learned about the ancient story of the cranes, and began folding them, praying for health and world peace. Sadako died before she could finish 1,000 cranes, but her classmates, in honor of her life and efforts, finished the project. Sadako was buried with 1,000 cranes.

A statue of Sadako in the Peace Park in Hiroshima bears the inscription: “This is our cry, this is our prayer, peace in the world.”

1,000 Cranes in an Iraq Bomb Shelter

Before the US invasion of Iraq in 2003, when the Iraqi people were suffering the effects of years of severe economic sanctions, US Dominicans organized Voices for Veritas as a response. Three delegations of
Dominicans visited Iraq in successive summers from 1999 to 2001, as a witness of our solidarity with our Iraqi Dominican family and the people of Iraq. Visiting a bomb shelter in Baghdad, the Sisters and Friars were deeply touched to see a festoon of 1,000 multicolored origami cranes — a powerful and poignant symbol of the Iraqi peoples’ prayer for peace.

Now, you can go to the website "1000 Cranes for Iraq" and donate by buying one of the Cranes. The net proceeds of their work will be used by the Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine of Siena for their relief efforts in Iraq.

Please note that contributions for charitable purposes abroad are not tax deductible under the U.S. tax code.

**Dominican Sisters Europe Coordinating Council in Rome**

The Dominican Sisters Europe Coordinating Council gathered from the 23rd to the 26th of October 2017 for their yearly meeting. The coordinating council consists of the continental coordinator, Sr. Else-Britt Nilsen OP and her councils from the different language zones: Sr. Franziska Madl OP (AGOP), Sr. Lúcia Petres OP (DSE-CE), Sr. Marie-Laure Larcher OP (Groupement Fraternelle), Sr. Barbara Bonfante OP (USMID). It was the first time that SEDEP was represented through the presence of Sr. Maria Ferrández OP. Sr. Edel Murphy OP from the English-speaking zone was unable to attend.

The national coordinator and her council updated one another on the status of DSI and the regions/language zones respectively.

They discussed and organized various activities and plans of action centered on collaboration and geared towards establishing deeper bond and unity among apostolic Dominican sisters in Europe. Previous events/activities were also evaluated.

It has been an on-going practice of the Coordinating Council to take turns in hosting their meetings. This year was Sr. Barbara’s turn to offer hospitality. She belongs to the congregation of the Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine of Siena. Her community at Via Degli Artisti 17, Rome graciously opened their home as venue for the meeting. Sisters in the coordinating council participated in the community’s Eucharistic celebrations, prayers and meals.

Aside from hard work, the council spent time walking and visiting some historical edifices and beautiful churches in Rome!

**Preaching Through the Arts**

The words “Joyful Friar, Itinerant Preacher” used to describe our holy founder St. Dominic, rang true to me as I once again had the joy and privilege of sharing with our Dominican Youth ways to preach the Gospel through the Arts. The students that attended my contemplative practice of “Origami” workshop were filled with joy and enthusiasm to preach the Gospel in today’s world as Dominic did over 800 years ago. Like the itinerant preacher Dominic, many are able and willing to go where the Spirit leads them and preach in whatever way they can. Whether through the spoken word, or through art, music or dance, the word is JOY and their creativity opens a whole new world as to how to communicate it.

During our session together, the students learned to fold colorful origami cranes and were delighted to know that they would be sent to persons and places around the world in need of peace and healing. Such a simple
action, yet, through this contemplative practice, these young Dominican men and women would continue to preach love and peace through the “Art of Origami”. As Dostoevsky once said: “Beauty will save the world,” and this art form has the capacity to spread both joy and peace as well.

As we reflected on “Preaching through the Arts”, all agreed that whatever we do, whether playing sports, cooking, writing, sewing, speaking, etc., when it is done with love and intention, it is ART! St. Pope John Paul II reminded us: “Although not all are called to be artists in the specific sense of the term, everyone is still to live an ‘artful’ life which reflects that beauty which they perceive”. Our time together passed quickly, but I was encouraged that its impact would continue as we enjoyed a lively discussion on the insight: “Creativity is God’s gift to us…using our creativity is our gift back to God”. I was deeply moved as I experienced their prayerful reflections on the question: What is your gift from the Divine Artist, and, as a committed Dominican preacher, how are you sharing it with our world today?

As an Amityville Dominican Sister for 60 years, it gives me great hope to know that our charism of joy and preaching the truth will continue through these committed, talented and community-minded young men and women. I am confident that they will continue to share in the “holy preaching” since, during our short time together, their enthusiasm was contagious and I felt refreshed and renewed through their extraordinary spirit of joy and hope!

As an Amityville Dominican Sister for 60 years, it gives me great hope to know that our charism of joy and preaching the truth will continue through these committed, talented and community-minded young men and women. I am confident that they will continue to share in the “holy preaching” since, during our short time together, their enthusiasm was contagious and I felt refreshed and renewed through their extraordinary spirit of joy and hope!

Sister Mary Anna Euring, OP, Amityville Dominican, former educator, administrator, hospital chaplain and now happily “re-engaged” as an artist & musician.

---

**Official News**

**Brother Charles Emeka Ukwe is the new Socius for Africa**

The Master of the Order, Brother Bruno Cadoré, appointed Brother Charles Emeka Ukwe, OP, on Thursday 30th November 2017, as his Socius for Africa and Coordinator of the Inter-Africa (IAOP), for a six-years term. The appointment was publicly read at the Convent of Santa Sabina, Rome and took effect the same day. Brother Charles becomes the sixth Socius for Africa.

A native of Nigeria, 58 years old and a trained canonist, Brother Charles succeeds Brother Gabriel Samba (Congo-Brazzaville, Vicariate of Equatorial Africa), whose six-year term has come to an end. The transition between the outgoing Socius and the incoming Socius took place during the plenary session of the General Curia at Santa Sabina, Rome, at the beginning of November. Brother Charles was assigned to the convent of Santa Sabina by the Master of the Order, on 17th November. He left the same day for Nigeria to prepare and to deepen his learning of French in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, before the arrival of the Master of the Order for the canonical visitation of the new province of St. Augustine in West Africa (January 29 - February 7, 2019). The new Socius will definitively return to Rome in February 2018.

As former Prior Provincial of the Province of St. Joseph the Worker of Nigeria and Ghana (2009- 2017), Brother Charles is familiar with the Dominican Region of Africa, the challenges of Inter-Africa as well as the orientations and decisions of the last IAOP General Assemblies held in May 2017 in Ibadan, Nigeria. It was
during this 13th Assembly that, in accordance with the Statutes of IAOP, the members of the assembly proposed three candidates by secret consultative vote to the Master of the Order for the nomination of the Socius for Africa and Coordinator of the Inter-Africa. The brothers and the Master of the Order placed their trust in Brother Charles Emeka Ukwe.

Brother Charles Emeka Ukwe was born on February 4, 1959 at Orlu, in the Eastern part of Nigeria. He joined the Order of Preachers (Dominicans) in 1981. He made his first profession on September 27, 1982 and solemn profession on September 27, 1985. He was ordained a priest on October 2, 1989. After his ordination, he was assigned to St. Patrick Catholic Church, Agbor-Obi, Delta State, as Assistant Parish Priest, and Parish Priest of All Saints Catholic Church, Oyigbo, Rivers State, in 1994. He went on mission to the Diocese of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, USA, from 1998 to 2001. He studied Canon Law at the Catholic University of America where he obtained a Licentiate in Canon Law in 2003, and Doctorate in Canon Law from the Angelicum, Rome, in 2006. While he was writing his doctoral dissertation in the US, he served the Diocese of Arlington, VA, as a Judge in the diocesan tribunal from 2005 to 2007. He returned to Nigeria in 2007 and taught Canon Law at the Dominican Institute, Ibadan. In 2008, he was appointed the Judicial Vicar of Ibadan Archdiocese by Archbishop Felix Alaba Job. In that capacity, he ran the Tribunals of First and Second Instances. In 2009, he was elected the Provincial of the Dominican Province of St. Joseph the Worker, Nigeria and Ghana, and in September 2013 for a second term which ended in July 2017.

We express our congratulations and our thanks to Brother Charles for humbly accepting this responsibility to serve his Dominican brothers and sisters in Africa and the Order. We assure him of all our fraternal support and our prayers. God bless his ministry.

fr. Gabriel Samba, op

**Meeting of the International Liturgical Commission of the Order (CLIOP)**

Members of the International Commission of the Liturgy (CLIOP) gathered for their bi-annual meeting at Santa Sabina from Tuesday, November 28 to Friday, November 31, 2017. Some topics for the meeting included: translations of the Dominican Proprium for several language groups, reorganization of the Liturgical archives in preparation for digitization, the creation of liturgical formation resources for members of the Dominican family, projects with Dominican Sister's International (DSI), planning for Info/CLIOP, and meetings with new and present members of the Dominican Curia.

This photos shows the members of CLIOP during one of their plenary sessions.

fr. José Filipe Da Costa (Province of Portugal) - President
fr. David Caron (Province of St Martin the Porres, USA)
fr. Thomas Moller (Province of Teutonia, Germany)
fr. Dominik Jureczak (Province of Poland)
sr. Ragnhild Bjelland. (The Dominican Sisters of Notre Dame de Grâce (Chatillon) Oslo)
fr. Joseph Nguyễn Van Hiền (Province of Vietnam)
fr. Manuel Eduardo Solórzano Zerpa (Vicariate of Venezuela, Province of the Holy Rosary)
Calendar of the Master of the Order for December 2017

1–16: Canonical Visitation to the Province of St Joseph, USA
19–21: Canonical Visitation to the Province of Switzerland
25: Christmas Celebration at Santa Sabina
Dec 26–Jan 7: Christmas Break

All articles are available on www.op.org