



ORDER OF PREACHERS



The Canonization of Blessed Maria Alfonsina Danil Ghattas



At the Ordinary Public Consistory of February 14, 2015, the Holy Father Pope Francis announced the Canonization of Blessed Maria Alfonsina Danil Ghattas, a Dominican tertiary, which will take place on May 17, 2015 at St Peters Basilica, Rome.

Blessed Maria Alfonsina Danil Ghattas was born at Jerusalem on October 4, 1843 to a devout family which assured her sound Christian upbringing. She was baptized on November 19 of the same year. From September 1848, she started attending the school of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Apparition which has just arrived in Jerusalem few months earlier. On July 18, 1852, she received the sacrament of confirmation.

At the maturity of her aspiration, she entered the religious life in 1858 as a postulant of the Institute of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of the Apparition. On June 20, 1860, she received the religious habit and with the name, Maria Alfonsina, she made her religious profession in 1863. She was subsequently assigned to teach catechism at a public school in Jerusalem. She distinguished herself by the zeal and dedication with which she did her work. In 1865, she was transferred to Bethlehem to continue her teaching ministry. She promoted the Confraternity of the Immaculate Conception (which will later be known as, “Daughters of Mary”) and also the Confraternity of the Christian Mothers.

On January 6, 1874, the Virgin Mary appeared to her for the first time. Exactly a year later, the Virgin Mary appeared to her again and asked her to start a religious family that will be known as the Congregation of the Holy Rosary. She related her mystical experiences to the Patriarch of Jerusalem, Bishop Vincenzo Bracco, who encouraged her and gave her a spiritual director in the person of Fr Antonio Belloni.

In May 1876, when Fr Belloni has to go away, she sought spiritual direction from Fr Joseph Tannous. After some difficulties, he finally learnt to understand and appreciate her. He asked her to start writing down her mystical experiences including everything related to the new congregation the Virgin Mary wants her to start.



Over the time, the Daughters of Mary have continued to grow in their aspiration for religious life. In July 1880, they formerly started to live in common under the direction of Fr Tannous and on December 15, 1881, the first group of sisters received their habits at the hands of the Patriarch of Jerusalem. In accordance with the wish of the Virgin Mary, the new community of sisters was called the Institute of the Sisters of the Holy Rosary.

On September 12, 1880, Sr Maria Alfonsina obtained from the Holy Father the dispensation from the obligations of her vows in the Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Joseph. On October 7, 1883 she entered the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Rosary and on December 8 of the same year, she received her religious habit (with the name Alfonsina Maria) and began her novitiate. On March 7, 1885, she made her profession of religious vows and on July 25 she was sent to Jaffa again, to teach.

On November 1, 1886, together with Sr Hanneh, she opened a new mission at Beit-Sahour and the following year, she travelled with another sister to Salt, Jordan to open another house. In 1889, the Rules of the Sisters of the Holy Rosary received the diocesan approval. That same year, she travelled to Naplus but could not say due to yellow fever. She had to return to the Mother House in Jerusalem for treatment.

On October 4, 1890, on the eve of the feast of the Holy Rosary, she was admitted into the Third Order of the Dominicans at the Dominican Convent in Jerusalem. At the beginning of 1892, she was transferred to the mission at Zababdeh and from 1893 to 1908, she was the superior of their house in Bethlehem. From 1909 to 1917, while still at their Mother House in Jerusalem, she was asked to establish an orphanage in Ain Karem.

From March 1927, her health condition worsened which will subsequently lead to her death. Indeed, she died on March 25, 1927 and was buried the next day.

Despite the obvious signs of her holiness, some internal difficulties in the Institute of the Sisters of the Holy Rosary and the difficult political situation in the Middle East prevent the immediate commencement of the cause of her beatification and canonization. After overcoming these difficulties, the cause started in Jerusalem in 1986. Having concluded the prescribed procedure, the Diocesan Inquiry closed in May 1987.

On December 15, 1994, the Decree on her Heroic Virtue was proclaimed. After a diocesan inquiry into an alleged miracle which ended in 2005, the Decree on the Miracle was proclaimed on July 3, 2009. November 22, 2009, the Rite of her Beatification was proclaimed at the Basilica of the Annunciation in Nazareth. On May 17, 2015 she will be canonized at St Peters Basilica, Rome.

The Sisters of the Congregation of the Holy Rosary are currently working in Palestine (Gaza strip), Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, Syria, Kuwait and in some Persian Gulf emirates (Abu Dhabi, Shariqah) and Rome Fra Francesco Ricci, O.P.

• [The human rights situation in Iraq in the light of abuses committed by the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and associated groups](#)

Here is a statement on the human rights situation in Iraq which was prepared by Dominicans for Justice and Peace in conjunction with our Caritas partners for the 28th session of the Human Right Council (Wednesday, 28th March, 2015). Fr Mike Deeb, OP (Permanent Delegate to the United Nations and Promoter for Justice and Peace for the Order).

HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL - 28th session
Geneva, 25 March 2015

Item 2 – Interactive dialogue

The human rights situation in Iraq in the light of abuses committed by the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and associated groups

Joint Oral Statement submitted by Caritas Internationalis (International Confederation of Catholic Charities) and by Dominicans for Justice and Peace (Order of Preachers)



Mr. President,

Caritas Internationalis and the Dominicans for Justice and Peace (Order of Preachers) welcome the report of the OHCHR on the human rights situation in Iraq as well as its recommendations.

Ours are among the few humanitarian organisations maintaining a permanent presence in Iraq and we witness daily the relentless suffering inflicted on the entire Iraqi population. As we speak, hundreds of thousands of men, women, children and elderly are being subjected to horrendous atrocities. They are forced to flee their homes, deprived of their basic needs and, even worse, of their human dignity.

Mr. President, the international community has failed to ensure protection and security, as well as respect for the lives and dignity of the Iraqi population, especially women and children. Muslim groups that dissociate themselves from Da'esh as well as minority groups, including Christians, Yazidis, Kurds, Shabaks, Madaeans, Turkmens, among others, bear the heaviest brunt of violence and systematically are targeted and subjected to inhuman crimes.

As Pope Francis said: "I join the country's bishops in asking the government to preserve national unity through dialogue, and avoid war. (...) Violence generates more violence; dialogue is the only path to peace." [1]

We therefore urge the international community:

- *To create conditions for a sustainable peace by immediately addressing the root causes of this crisis. Concrete actions urgently must be taken to stop fuelling the cycle of violence. This can only be achieved if all, including governments, engaged in directly or indirectly arming, training, financing and doing business with the perpetrators of these crimes, immediately suspend such support;*

- *To ensure effective protection of civilians, especially vulnerable groups, through the creation of a safe environment for them;*

- *To respect and uphold the right of internally displaced Iraqi children to access education by provision of adequate funding and resources to implement such initiatives;*

- *To provide additional funding for addressing immediate and basic humanitarian needs, including safe shelter, adequate nutrition, potable water, and health care;*

- *To take all necessary measures that facilitate safe and unimpeded access, by humanitarian actors to civilians in need ;*

- *To urge all engaged stakeholders to visit Internally Displaced Persons in Iraq in order to bring witness of international solidarity from the international community and to attain firsthand knowledge of the suffering of the affected populations.*

Finally, we call on the Human Rights Council and the OHCHR:

- *To closely monitor the implementation of the recommendations formulated in the Report*

And we reiterate our call :

- *To urgently re-establish the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Iraq that was terminated in 2004 with the aims of regularly monitoring the human rights situation in Iraq and instituting an early warning mechanism for the international community engaged in response to this humanitarian crisis*

[1] Pope calls for dialogue to avoid war in Iraq, 30 June 2014. <http://www.romereports.com/pg157483-pope-calls-for-dialogue-to-avoid-war...>



• Dominican Sisters gather in New York to attend UN event

Dominican Sisters at the 59th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, March 9–20 at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

“It is no secret that we live in dark times and that we often feel perplexed and discouraged. When we reflect on the story of the women who went to the tomb on Easter morning, carrying their perfumes, perhaps we can learn something from their ability to deal with events with both wisdom and boldness. We see these women, carriers of perfumes, rising early on the ‘first day of the week,’ ‘when the sun had risen,’ to anoint the body of Jesus. The reference to the ‘first day’ and ‘sunrise,’ accompany their vision of a scene submerged in a universe of new meaning. We are at the beginning of the new creation and the light of the Risen One enfolds them in its splendor. They are aware of the size of the stone and of their inability to move it; but this is not an obstacle to them in their determination to go and anoint the body of Jesus (...).” (Cf. Dolores Aleixandre RSCJ).

In preparation for their experience during the Commission on the Status of Women, our Dominican Sisters from DSI reflected on this meditation on the women at the tomb. It was provided by Dominican Sister Maria Alejandra Leguizamon (Peru), who attended last year’s session. Each evening, as we gathered to review the days’ events, we used this meditation as our starting point.

The past two weeks have been an experience of great paradox. On the one hand, we have listened to the sobering lived reality of women and girls worldwide, who contend with crushing poverty; lack of access to appropriate health care, education, land, credit, employment and remuneration for employment equivalent to that of men; rape; early/forced marriage; trafficking and sexual exploitation; discrimination of all kinds; lack of opportunities to participate in making the decisions that impact their lives and the lives of their children.

Yet, and incredibly so, there have been glimmers of hope. In panel after panel, we witnessed women who would not cave-in in the face of darkness. Their resiliency, their commitment to life, and their belief in their capacity to shape a future of hope for their children was palpable. Like the women who went to the tomb, they have experienced life – even in the midst of death.

What follows are some brief reflections from our Dominican Sisters and Dominican Volunteer who have been part of this experience.

Like the women going to the tomb, we, as “workers in the field” often find ourselves standing before a stone which is much too heavy to move: so much sorrow, so much evil (I am working against human trafficking), no real future for either victim or perpetrator. But sometimes the stone moves, and a perspective opens. This was one of my hopeful impressions during the CSW events. So many women, first of all young women, enthusiastic, full of power and willing to change things! There I found something about the work of the Spirit. Distances diminish, and that gives people of good will the chance to approach each other and to remain in touch. Together—and only together—we are strong! The globalized world is moving forward, and despite of all bad things ,the stone will be moved... —Marjolein Bruinen, OP (Netherlands)

It’s easy to feel discouraged and helpless in a world seemingly spinning out of control with violence, corruption, inequality, and poverty. I often feel overwhelmed and powerless as I work on NGO committees at the UN that deal with human trafficking, migration, peace and security, and women’s and girls’ issues. I hear over and over how, as the most vulnerable, women and children are disproportionately impacted by these global issues. Just as the women from the tomb, women (and men) have gathered at the UN for CSW with wisdom and boldness to tackle these issues and ensure equality for all of humanity. Having the opportunity to meet and listen to so many passionate activists and leaders has given me renewed hope that a future where humanity comes together and takes care of its most vulnerable is possible, and we are working to make it possible. —Kelly Litt, Dominican Volunteer

At dawn, the women rushed to the tomb, to the place of pain and grief, to anoint the body of their loved one. This is my body—the women killed by violence, war, abuse and trafficking;
This is my body—the raped, tortured, abused, abducted, broken bodies and spirits in need of healing and wholeness.



This is my body--those who perpetuate the power paradigm over women in a spirit of entitlement and impunity.

This is my body—in need of open eyes, open ears, and an open heart to see and know that we are one.

How can we fear ourselves? We are one body.

—Bernadine Karge, OP (Sinsinawa)

Women hurrying to anoint the body of Jesus, knowing the tomb stone was impossible to move, were not intimidated! They were eager, hopeful and focused. For me, as a Dominican woman, this image is powerful. Every situation demanding justice is a potential opportunity to be present as “the body of Christ.” There will always be “tomb stones” to move; but like the women carrying perfumes, my presence—my support—our support is what matters. “Miracles” happen when we step out in hope to face the challenges that our professional and personal commitments encounter on a daily basis. And, in spite of “tomb stones,” we “perfume” the body of Christ—mine, and yours, every day. Here is some of what I will carry with me after this experience, along with the imperative to continue striving for: gender equality; ending the violence against women and girls; sustainability of Planet Earth; women need to be at the table, with the United Nations, in partnership, if peace is to be realized. —Maureen O’Connell, OP (Australia)

Each one of us who participated in the CSW59 made some kind of journey; namely, physical, emotional, intellectual, ideological, spiritual—just like the women who went to anoint the body of Jesus. In different capacities we bear our jars of perfume and soothing balms in terms of our lived and shared experiences, our struggles, our cares and interventions in a bid to heal a world torn and broken by injustice and wars. At the center of this phenomenon are women and girls, the marginalized, and surmounting the crises in our world today remains a daunting task. However we are not deterred by perceived or real obstacles. Instead, our shared hope is ever renewed, especially as we gathered for this experience. —Emmanuela Okafor, OP (Nigeria)

The women who went to the tomb were a determined lot, and filled with hope, for what, they did not yet know. During these weeks that we’ve gathered here at the UN, we have listened to women who bear witness to gender inequality, poverty, violence and abuse in the many countries they represent. The words that come to mind are determination and hope. One can’t but notice their determination and hope. It is a wonder that gives us hope! Just how did the women face the tomb in the morning to anoint their friend? And how is it possible to experience the desolation, violation, and violence that our speakers have with such determination and hope? Their gift to us is the passing on of that hope. My prayer is that we become one with them in their hope and determination, for we know that this “hope does not disappoint.” (Romans 5:5) —Pat Farrell, OP (San Rafael), Dominican Sisters Conference Executive Director

The “mirróforas,” the women bearing perfumes, go to the grave to embalm the dead body of their friend. But to these ordinary women, something new is given; to know the secret of the Resurrection; the victory of life over death. Indeed, they are given a new mission: to be proclaimers of the good news to all people. From women on their way to anoint the dead, they become bearers of the message of new life in the midst of death.

We, too, are a group of women in charge; every day anointing and embalming the bodies of suffering people in our realities, in our countries: victims of trafficking; migrants; girls threatened by the forces of death. During our time here we have had the opportunity to meet women from around the world; women who, with their struggles and experiences, gave testimony to the truth that life is stronger than death; women who came to announce to us the pleasing fragrance of life. By our sharing of these experiences, we go back to our realities bringing new perfumes; the fragrant scent of resurrection. And we return to our homes with the certainty that our mission is not to embalm dead bodies; it is, as St. Paul (2 Corinthians 2:15) says, to be the pleasing fragrance of Christ. It means that we carry with us the perfume of life, so that we might be better able to rescue the dignity of life wherever it is threatened. —Sandra Ede, OP (Brazil)

It was a great opportunity to participate in the Commission on the Status of Women, especially at the time of evaluation of the 20 years of the Beijing Platform for Action. I have lived through many experiences throughout these days; a lot of listening, learning, questioning, enchantment and admiration. Beauty and challenges were blended together through the witness of women and girls from five continents, who



enthusiastically shared their struggles and achievements in defense of life and the rights of women and girls. They manifested concretely their sense of empowerment and hope.

Just as the women in the Old Testament—Miriam, Esther, Ruth, Naomi, Judith, Hagar, Deborah and many others who walked with the people of God—just as the women who accompanied Jesus in his Passion and at the dawn of Resurrection, women continue to keep alive the flame of hope; of a utopia opening paths and offering new opportunities; rescuing and empowering other women who are still being violated and discriminated against because they are victims of an exclusionary and oppressive system which does not recognize gender equality and our rights as women.

Addressing these challenges, we will continue to struggle to build a world based on the values of the Reign of God. We are the protagonists of our history. We are powerful and will continue to work with our many networks engaged in defending the life and dignity of all persons, especially women and girls. —Celestina Veloso Freitas, OP (Brazil), DSI Justice Promoter
By Margaret Mayce, OP (Amityville)

• **Provincials' Workshop 2015: Imbibing the Spirituality of Leadership**

Provincials' Workshop 2015 at Santa Sabina, Rome from March 9 to 20, 2015

Once again, the recently elected and re-elected provincials gathered for their annual workshop. For the provincials, it was two weeks of interactions among themselves and with the functionaries and functionalities of the general curia. At different sessions, the provincials met with various members of the general curia who introduced their functions and highlighted the various areas they require the cooperation of the provincials.

Topics bordering on the Spirituality of Leadership and the duties of provincials and how best they can be carried out were discussed. Other issues concerning the Order at large, its mission and plans for the future also featured prominently. Worthy of mention is the preparations for the Jubilee of the Order. The coordinator, fr Franklin Buitrago Rojas gave a rundown of the preparations so far and how each province can participate.

The Master of the Order, fr Bruno Cadore had his time with the provincials as a group and individually. During his sessions with them, among other things, he shared with them pertinent issues from the last General Chapter of Trogir and the Synod of Bishops. He also exhorted them on their duties as provincials especially as regards the formation of their brothers.

There were ten participants at this year's workshop. From South America, we had frs Juan José Salaverry (Peru), Said León Amaya (Colombia) and Miguel Angel Rios (Chile). From North America, we had frs Kenneth Letoile (St Joseph, USA), Thomas Condon (St Martin de Porres, USA), Mark Padrez (Most Holy Name, USA) and André Descôteaux (Canada). From Europe, we had frs Michel Lachenaud (France) and Philippe Cochinaux (South Belgium). From Asia-Pacific, we had fr Vincent Li (Taiwan).

The schedule was beautifully planned to allow the provincials the necessary space for relaxation and other activities. Activities like the participation at the general audience of the pope and a visitation to Fossanova and Monte Cassino. The entire programme was put together by a team of friars led by fr Dominic Izzo. Gratitude goes to him and the other friars for a job well done.

For more pictures of the Provincials' Workshop 2015, click here.
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/orderofpreachers/sets/72157651038820699/>

• **The Province of Australia Receives First Diocesan Priest into the Fraternity**

On the feast of St. Patrick, 17 March 2015, the Dominican Province of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Australia received into the Priestly Fraternities of St. Dominic Fr. Ron Peters, dean and administrator of the Cathedral of the Diocese of Wollongong, Australia. He was likewise presented with the Dominican cross by the Prior Provincial, Fr. Kevin Saunders, who presided over the rite during Morning Prayer, in the presence of members of the local Dominican Priory of St. James in Glebe, Sydney, NSW. Friars from this community also serve St. Bede's Church at Pymont, the chaplaincy at the University of Sydney, and the chaplaincy at Notre Dame University, Broadway campus.



Fr. Ron was born on 27 August 1958, and was ordained as a priest of the Diocese of Wollongong on 4 June 2005. Below is a brief testimony from Fr. Ron:

My parents migrated to Australia from the Netherlands in 1954 and they landed at the Dominican Sisters' Convent, Prouille, Wahroonga, where they were caretakers for a few years. There they started their new family. Three boys were born to them at Wahroonga: Ronald, the youngest, was baptised "Dominic" in the Holy Name Church in 1958.

My family returned to the Netherlands where I began my schooling. However, the cold climate of Holland brought us back to Australia a few years later.

I was educated by the Mercy Sisters and Patrician Brothers in Blacktown, western Sydney. In February 1979 I was professed into the Patrician Brothers. I served in a number of schools run by the Order and also served some time as Director of Formation as well as working in the Catholic Education Office of Sydney as an adviser in Religious Education for secondary schools. In these apostolates I met a number of Dominican women who kept me yearning for a deeper relationship with the Dominican Family.

During my mother's protracted terminal illness, my mother and I sought the intercession of her patron, Saint Catherine of Siena. Nursing her in the family home, we received many graces and blessings: strength for the journey.

After considerable discernment, I decided to apply to the Bishop of Wollongong for admission into the formation program for ordination. I spent some time at the Beda College in Rome, as well as the Good Shepherd Seminary in Sydney. I was ordained by Bishop Peter Ingham on 4th June 2005 in the Cathedral of Saint Francis Xavier.

In August 2006 I was appointed Dean of the Cathedral and Administrator of the Wollongong and Gwynneville Parishes. In 2010 I was made the Administrator of the Lumen Christi Parishes, Wollongong, incorporating the parishes of the Cathedral in Wollongong, Saint John Vianney in Fairy Meadow, Mater Dolorosa in Balgownie, and Saint Brigid in Gwynneville.

I serve on the Diocesan Council of Priests. I am the Chair of the Diocesan Catholic Schools Council. I am chaplain to the Dutch community living in the Wollongong Diocese. I have a particular interest in Prison Ministry, having served at the Berrima Women's Correctional Facility for four years. I continue to visit prisoners in a more limited capacity.

I believe that I have had a call to the Dominican way of life for many years. As a priest I have come to appreciate the charism of preaching, and seek nurturance for this ministry by membership in the Dominican Priestly Fraternity. I continue to seek the presence of Jesus in the various responsibilities of my priesthood and desire to proclaim the Good News in the spirit of Dominic. I seek the life of prayer, study and contemplation in my journey of loving, serving and giving.

It was ironic that the Rite of Reception should occur on the Feast of Saint Patrick. I had spent twenty-five years in the teaching Order of the Brothers of Saint Patrick (Patrician Brothers). Now, my spiritual and apostolic journey reached another milestone as I deepen my commitment to continue to teach the Good News in the spirit of another great pastor and our Patriarch, Saint Dominic.

I pray that more priests in Australia will discover the rich spiritual heritage of the Dominican Family and seek membership of the Dominican Priestly Fraternity.

• [Dominicans look forward to celebrating double Jubilee](#)

Fr Vivian Boland's interview with the Vatican Radio.

The Extraordinary Jubilee Year of Mercy announced by Pope Francis gives Dominicans across the globe a double occasion to make 2016 a really special year.



Yes, because as Fr Vivian Boland OP, Vicar of the Master of the Dominican Order told Vatican Radio, members of the Order were preparing to mark 800 years since its foundation when Francis' announcement took them by surprise...

Fr Boland says that "what struck us here is that this Extraordinary Holy Year will coincide almost exactly with the Jubilee year of the Order".

"We have been preparing to celebrate the 800 years since the confirmation of the Order in 1216 by Pope Honorius III, so this will add a wonderful extra dimension to our celebration next year of our own Jubilee".

He says the announcement reminds him of the beginning of Saint John Paul II's ministry as Pope and his first Encyclical, "Dives in Misericordia" which, he says, was a kind of flagship encyclical announcing his arrival, the beginning of his ministry in the Church, and Boland points out that Pope Francis is taking up that theme again.

Boland explains that the Preaching of the Order was always concerned with mercy which has always been part of the spirituality and theology of the Dominicans.

St Dominic and his first companions – he says – dedicated themselves to preaching and hearing confessions: these were the two ministries they undertook at the beginning, ultimately aiming to bear in people's lives the mercy of God.

He recalls St Thomas Aquinas' words on mercy and justice when he said that "a world that would be purely just would be a cruel world, that the world cannot continue, that human relationships cannot survive, that communities cannot endure if there is not also mercy: there has to be room for mercy, for compassion. An absolutely strictly just world would be a cruel world so there has to be mercy, compassion and forgiveness" he says.

So, Boland continues, in celebrating mercy we are not just celebrating a moral characteristic or a way of behaving, we are celebrating something that is fundamental to our very existence because the creation of the world itself originates in the mercy of God.

And continuing to refer to St Thomas, Boland says every divine action has its root in mercy.

Boland also brings the concept of mercy to the fore in the world today and says that looking around at the current situation you could say that "in this moment the world needs more than anything else an experience of the mercy of God, an experience of compassion, of mutual understanding, of a recognition of the simple humanity that we all share. And that whatever the differences there are between people, and the struggles for power and so on that go on, that in the end every human being needs an experience of mercy".

"If we are to enter the experience of what it means to be a human being, it can only be in terms of compassion, of mercy, of forgiveness" he says.

● [Saving lives, putting solutions together for Boat People](#)

The attached statement on Boat People, which we Dominicans co-signed (together with 124 other civil society organisations from all over the world), was read at the UN Human Rights Council recently by the International Catholic Migration Commission. We are all encouraged to share it broadly, especially with any people who are in a position to do something about this tragic situation. Mike Deeb, OP (General Promoter of Justice and Peace & Permanent Delegate to the United Nations)

Mr. President,

In the past twenty years, at least 15,000 people have died trying to reach Europe's shores from Africa and the Middle East. Many of those who died were refugees and asylum seekers, women and children, human beings fleeing wars, abject chaos and despair.



The Mediterranean Sea crossing is the world's most deadly, with 3,500 deaths recorded just last year. In one recent incident, more than 300 people drowned with another 29 dying of hypothermia as their rescuers took them to Lampedusa.

Such tragedy was widely predicted a few months ago when Europe failed to pick up its share of the budget and mission of Italy's important Mare Nostrum search and rescue operation. Though Mare Nostrum by itself was not a comprehensive response to the increasing crisis in the Mediterranean, Operation Triton, its replacement, was actually launched with a much smaller mandate and resources.

The International Catholic Migration Commission and Associazione Comunità Papa Giovanni XXIII, within the group of 125 civil society organizations listed on both sides of this statement, ask the European Union and others to urgently effect a real change in migration policies.

The Mediterranean is not only "Mare Nostrum" (our sea); these are "Fratres Nostris": our brothers and sisters in these boats and dying. So many deaths can be prevented if Europe would continue Italy's priority to save lives first—i.e., with real search and rescue. Border enforcement approaches that lack this priority neither protect the fundamental human right to life nor respect international and regional treaties that require protection: for those fleeing persecution, serious human rights violations and torture; for those abused by human traffickers or smugglers; and for children.

Alongside efforts at political solutions and development that address root causes of this migration, wider resettlement, labour migration and humanitarian channels are needed so that people fleeing for survival do not have to seek help from human traffickers and smugglers, suffer so much, and die.

States, international agencies and civil society have collaborated on this before: it is time to re-animate cooperation that offered so much relief a generation ago to boat people in Southeast Asia, including robust resettlement and visas for safe, orderly migration within a Comprehensive Plan of Action. It is also time to fix the Dublin Regulation for greater solidarity, humanity and consistency in providing asylum across Europe. Among other things, asylum seekers should no longer be forced back to the country of first access to ask for asylum.

Thank you.

● [Archive of Dominican Journals](#)

A Project of the Dominican Library in Caleruega

On the occasion of the Jubilee of the Order in 2016, the Dominican Library at Caleruega is hoping to complete its project of the archive of Dominican Journals. This project aims at creating a complete archive of all Dominican journals of all languages published in every part of the world by all entities of the Dominican family.

Over the years, the library has been able to gather many Dominican journals. However, some of them are not complete, there are missing editions and some Dominican journals are totally absent from the catalogue. As part of the celebration of the 8th Centenary of the Order, the library wishes to give further impetus to this project.

The Caleruega Dominican Library is hereby calling on all those who are responsible for the management of libraries and/or publications of all kinds of journals of any group of the Dominican family who wishes to be part of this project to contact the Library - (bibliotecadominicana@dominicos.org). Interested persons are to indicate the manner in which they wish to send the journals. The Caleruega Library can take responsibility for the cost.

For more information about the Dominican Library in Caleruega - <http://caleruega.dominicos.es/biblioteca>
The current catalogue of Dominican Journals can be downloaded here - bibliotecas.dominicos.org/HemerotecaDominicana.pdf



• **The building of the new Dominican Monastery of Kabwe-Zambia has started**

Many have been wondering; What has become of our Dominican contemplative nuns who left Senekal in South Africa to relocate in the Diocese of Kabwe, Zambia since August 19, 2013? Sr. Joyce Gabriel, Vicareess of this monastery in the course of its new foundation is pleased to update us on the life of the community and the building the new monastery that has already started.

Dearest sisters, brothers and friends,

Much greetings from all of us in Kabwe. It is my hope and prayer that the Good Lord is keeping you all in good shape. If not, then know that you are not alone as we remember you all in our prayers.

Back in Kabwe we are all well. I apologize for my delay in updating you of our progress as a new community but I believe you understand that being new means also being confused. Much has happened since our last letter and I thought of briefing you as your prayers are always of great support.

Since August last year there has been movement in and out, one of great benefit to our sisters and the community at large. Early August 2014, Sr. Maria Dolorosa had the opportunity of attending a course on Administration at Kalundu Study Center and in December, Sr. Joyce Rita attended a course on Finance Management. We are grateful to God for the opportunity offered for the African sisters by ASEC (African Sisters Education Collaborative).

Early December 2014, we received the approval from the Kabwe Municipal Council to begin the construction of our monastery, unfortunately we could not begin immediately because the rains expected in October were also approved by God at the same time. This was also joyfully received because famine was predicted in the country. New Year renewed our hope every day for a better future.

As you all know from our previous news, our temporary habitation though expensive is not conducive for a contemplative way of life. It is with great joy that our contractor announced that he would begin clearing the bush despite the rains. Again man proposes but God disposes. Zambia was due for presidential elections on 20th January 2015. Fearing insecurity, no company was willing to part with their machines. With this, our worries and prayers were at war with each other and finally early February prayer won the battle and in six days all the trees in our land were on the ground. Since then, work of clearing and levelling the site has been going on.

The contract is for one year. God willing we hope to be in our new monastery by March next year. At the moment we are building the novitiate, professed dormitory and few work rooms, and the rest of the buildings will follow as Providence stretches his hand towards us. Young people are getting to know us and we are receiving applications of those wanting to see us more closely. We thank you for your prayers and implore you to continue so that God's praises may resound in this part of the world.

*We are in a very new diocese where the Bishop has no residence or official cathedral and therefore we cannot hope for any financial assistance from the diocese. Please pray that we may get willing hearts to help us complete our monastery. Many people are longing for a quiet place. Retreat house is our next place of concern. If you wish to help us with anything, do not hesitate to contact us.
Sr. Joyce Gabriel, O.P.*

• **The Homiletic Directory and Dominican Preaching**

A call on the Dominican family to reflect on and discuss the Homiletic Directory

On February 10, 2015, the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments presented to the Church a document on the homily titled, "Homiletic Directory".

We recall that Pope Francis devoted an important chapter to the homily in his Apostolic Exhortation "Evangelii Gaudium" (Chapter Three, Part II, nn.135-144). He says there that "the homily can actually be an intense and happy experience of the Spirit, a consoling encounter with God's word, a constant source of renewal and growth" (Evangelii gaudium, n.135).



As a result of positive and negative aspects of the state of the homily today as expressed by the synod of bishops, Pope Benedict XVI also offered guidelines for homiletics in his Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortations *Sacramentum Caritatis* (2007) and *Verbum Domini* (2010).

The Homiletic Directory was prepared bearing in mind also the provisions of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, and subsequent magisterial teachings, especially as contained in the Introduction to the Lectionary and the General Instruction on the Roman Missal.

The Homiletic Directory is a 106-page document divided into two parts and nine chapters. It also has two appendices.

The first part deals with the nature, function and specific context of the homily, the preparation, the presenter and the recipients.

The second part deals with the essential questions of the method and context the homilist must take into consideration in preparing and delivering the homily. It proposes interpretive keys for different cycles of the Church's calendar. Here the criteria outlined in the first part are put into practice.

In conclusion, there are two appendices. The first shows the link between the homily and the doctrines of the Church as they are presented in the Catechism of the Catholic Church. The second appendix lists Magisterial teachings on preaching.

As we prepare to celebrate the Jubilee of the 800th anniversary of the Dominican Order, we are reminded of the fact that the Order was commissioned to evangelize through the preaching of the Word of God. With the theme of the Jubilee, "Sent to preach the Gospel", the Order seeks to renew itself by entering into a dynamic process that culminates in sending the friars to preach anew. As those called to preach today, how does this document relate to us? How will it help us to preach anew?

The Master of the Order, fr Bruno Cadoré, is calling on all members of the Dominican family to reflect on this document and to discover how it relates to our preaching mission.

Download the Homiletic Directory here - onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/HomileticDirectory.pdf

• **DOMINICAN CHURCH OF OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY OF MANAOAG, NOW A MINOR BASILICA**

On February 17, 2015, the Shrine of Our Lady of the Rosary of Manaoag was solemnly declared as a Minor Basilica. The decree conferring the honorific title was issued by Pope Francis on October 11, 2014.

The solemn proclamation took place during the 4:00pm Mass with H.E. Luis Antonio Cardinal Tagle as the main celebrant, accompanied by H.E. Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales, H.E. Orlando Cardinal Quevedo, Archbishop Socrates Villegas, more than forty (40) other archbishops and bishops, and more than 300 diocesan and religious priests, as concelebrants. It was also well-attended by the Dominicans from the Dominican Province of the Philippines and from the Our Lady of the Rosary Province, led by Br. Gerard Francisco Timoner, OP, Prior Provincial, and Br. Jerry Manlangit, OP, who wore a black mozetta being the Rector of the Shrine. Archbishop Giuseppe Pinto, the Apostolic Nuncio to the Philippines, represented Pope Francis. During the entrance procession, which started from the newly renovated patio, the processional cross was followed by the symbols of the new status of the Shrine as Basilica: the Basilica insignia; the papal umbrella (ombrellone), the papal bell (tintinnabulum) and the banner of the crossed keys together with the breve apostolico mounted on a board.

The proclamation was attended by thousands of devotees from all walks of life. Some of the dignitaries who graced the occasion were President Benigno Aquino III's sisters: Ms. Balsy Aquino-Cruz and Ms. Viel Aquino-Dee; Gov. Amado Espino Jr., Vice Gov. Jose Ferdinand Calimlim, Reps. Gina de Venecia, Kimi Cojuangco, Rosemary Arenas, and Dagupan City Mayor Belen Fernandez.



After the Kyrie, Cardinal Quevedo read the apostolic brief signed by Most Rev. Arthur Roche, Archbishop Secretary of the Congregation of Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, in the name of Pope Francis, granting to the Shrine dedicated to God and in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the title and dignity of Minor Basilica. Cardinal Quevedo read the said proclamation in Latin and English. The apostolic brief was formally given to Br. Jerry Manlangit, OP, by Cardinal Tagle, followed by the blessing of the papal umbrella (ombrellone) and papal bell (tintinnabulum). The faithful and devotees erupted in joy, and the Gloria was solemnly sung.

In his homily, Cardinal Tagle stressed the honor and mission that the title Minor Basilica entails. Guided by the Scripture readings chosen for the celebration, he expounded on three points.

The Minor Basilica is a sign of God's abiding presence in our midst. It is God's dwelling place where one can feel God's presence. Likewise, he compared the basilica with Mary, whose image is enshrined in it. Mary became God's dwelling place. He challenged the faithful to imitate Mary and allow God to dwell within them.

The Minor Basilica is a house of prayer. However, Cardinal Tagle emphasized the need to pray for others, before praying for oneself.

The Minor Basilica is a place of visitation. It is here that one can visit Mary, to have an encounter with her and her Son. However, this visit should empower one to visit others, the poor and the needy, just like Mary visiting her cousin Elizabeth. Such can be an effective way of continuing the works of Mary, whom we consider as our Mother.

After the post communion prayer, the Te Deum was sung, and Archbishop Villegas delivered his words of gratitude to the Lady of Rosary. It was a reminiscent of his journey from the Diocese of Balanga to the Archdiocese of Lingayen-Dagupan, wherein he heard Mary's voice calling him to shepherd God's people in Lingayen-Dagupan. It was the fulfillment of the promise he made to our Lady to honor her with his life and ministry. Archbishop Pinto's words of gratitude followed.

The celebration was capped by a solemn procession of the image of our Lady joined by the faithful from all over the archdiocese and neighboring dioceses.

Indeed, to Apo Baket, Our Lady of Manaoag, no honor is enough. We shall never get tired of praising you (Mary) until we see your face, with the face of your Son in heaven, forever and ever. Amen.

By Br. Hilario V. Sicat Jr., OP

● **Paths of St Dominic: Proposal Tour of Dominican Historical Sites**

In view of the Jubilee for the 800th anniversary of the foundation of the Order, different communities and groups belonging to the Dominican family around the world are planning to visit places connected with the life of St Dominic in Spain, France and Italy.

For this reason, those responsible for the promotion of the Jubilee in Spain, in collaboration with the Agency IDEATUR, have developed a proposal called "Paths of St Dominic" to help the pilgrims who want to visit the Dominican places. To see the proposed visits click here (text available in English and Spanish).

Paths of St Dominic 2015-2016 -

www.op.org/sites/www.op.org/files/public/documents/fichier/ways_of_saint_dominic_2015-2016.pdf

● **Solidarity and sharing with the poor: a prophetic witness to the vow of poverty**

On 2nd February 2015, Feast of the Presentation of the Lord in the Temple and Day of Consecrated Life, the Dominican Nuns of the Monastery of Our Lady of Peace, Rweza, Burundi wanted to reflect on the Year of Consecrated Life. Two elements inspired our reflection: the intention of Pope Francis on January 2015 for evangelization, and the solidarity of the Order which allowed the electrification of the Monastery of Our Lady of Peace of Rweza.



"That in this year dedicated to consecrated life, religious females and religious men rediscover the joy of following Christ and engage with zeal at the service of the poor." Two things caught our attention in this intention for evangelization of Pope Francis of January 2015 namely, joy and the service of the poor. These are two favorite themes of the Holy Father strongly emphasized in his Apostolic Letter to all consecrated on the occasion of the Year of Consecrated Life. Joy is the first expectation of Pope Francis for this year of grace. "Come out of yourselves and go forth to the existential peripheries", this is the fourth expectation of the Holy Father who asks us "to work concretely in... drawing near to the poor."

How can contemplative cloistered nuns (with papal enclosure) live that joy, come out of their monastery to go forth to existential peripheries and be close to the poor? For the Dominican nuns of Rweza, the expectations of Pope Francis are realized through the prophetic witness of their prayer life and their vow of poverty expressed into concrete gestures of solidarity and sharing with the poor. Since its founding in 1974 by the monastery of Taulignan (France), the Monastery of Our Lady of Peace, Rweza has always lived in great poverty: modest buildings, lack of electricity, running water, good guest quarters and profitable economic activities. For many years the nuns lived in these difficult conditions, singing the evening Divine Offices with candles or lighting from a few solar panels, very low and of short duration, which damaged the eyes of the sisters to the point that all of them started to wear glasses.

Thanks to the solidarity of the Order (Spem Miram Internationalis and especially the Nuns Fund of the Order), our sisters have finally electricity. What joy! The extension of the connection goes from Gashikanwa center to the main line Ngozi-Kirundo to Rweza on a distance of five kilometers (5 miles). This project, which cost millions of Burundian francs was made possible thanks to the Fund of the nuns managed by Spem Miram Internationalis, the organization for solidarity of the Order. For people who see this and do not know where the money came from, they say that the sisters have a lot of money, the nuns told us. But for the Order and for the sisters, this project is a witness to our vow of poverty expressed into concrete gestures of solidarity and sharing, not only with the nuns but also with the inhabitants of the hill (village) of Rweza.

Indeed, this extension does not benefit only to the monastery but to the whole hill. Among the main beneficiaries there are the clinic and health center that has a laboratory, the primary and secondary school, and the people who are now connecting to this line without paying financial compensation to the sisters. What joy to see this hill once forgotten, transformed today. People's lives have changed. Small businesses now use fridge where you can buy cold drinks, keep meat and fresh fish. Young people open small business (kiosk to recharge cell phones - cyber cafe for the Internet will not delay!). Women will no longer go to Ngozi or no longer use traditional pestle to hull their rice and other grains. In the evening, the main road is illuminated by street lights. We saw this ourselves on February 2.

The nuns are infinitely grateful to the Order, the Master of the Order and the contributions by nuns to the Nuns Fund of the Order. The sisters now have electricity, but they still do not have water, computers for study, neither a good hospice to welcome people in search of silence, meditation and rest. Do not hesitate to offer them again your help for one or the other project.
fr. Gabriel Samba, op

Official News

• [A New Regional Vicar in Venezuela](#)

On March 17, 2015, the friars of the Regional Vicariate of the Province of Our Lady of the Rosary in Venezuela elected Fr Angel Gabriel Bermudez Villasmil as their new Regional Vicar. The election has been confirmed by Fr Javier Gonzalez Izquierdo, the Prior Provincial of the Province of Our Lady of the Rosary.

The new vicar is a native of Maracaibo-Zulia in Venezuela. He was born in 1969 and entered the Order in 1987. He made his first profession in 1989 and was ordained to the priesthood in 1996. At the time of his election, he was the superior of the House and Shrine of St Martin de Porres in Maracaibo.



Our best wishes and prayers go to our brother Angel Gabriel and all the friars of the Vicariate as they begin a new stage in their preaching mission in Venezuela.

• **Fr David Macaire, OP is the New Archbishop of Fort-de-France, Martinique**

Fr David Macaire has been appointed Archbishop of Fort-de-France by Pope Francis. He succeeds Bishop Gilbert Marie Gilbert Marie Michel Méranville, Archbishop of Fort-de-France since 2004, having reached the age limit.

He was born in Nanterre (Hauts-de-Seine) in 1969. He grew up in the parish of Morne-Rouge, in the shadow of Our Lady of Deliverance entrusted to the Dominicans.

Son of the Province of Toulouse, fr David entered the novitiate in Marseille in 1994, was professed in 1995 and has studied philosophy and theology at Toulouse and Bordeaux. He was ordained priest in 2001.

Between 2001 and 2011, he was the Master of Student brothers at the convent of Bordeaux then Prior of the Convent of Bordeaux. It was former prior of the Convent of Sainte-Baume and Rector of the Shrine of Sainte-Baume.

He was High School Chaplain, he had an apostolate in the street, and led gospel groups. Talented orator, he was called to preach everywhere. A Masters in Theology, he wrote, among other things, a "reminder of faith" on this question: Is the pope infallible?

The Diocese of Fort-de-France has: population 390,371, Catholics 312,296, priests 54, permanent deacons 12, religious 151.

• **Fr Pascal Paulus, OP has been reelected as the Vice Provincial of Pakistan**

At their Elective Chapter (28 February – 7 March), the friars of Ibn-e-Mariam Vice Province in Pakistan have reelected fr Pascal Paulus, OP as their Prior Vice Provincial. The Master of the Order, fr Bruno Cadoré, OP has confirmed the election and fr Pascal has accepted the election.

Fr Pascal was born in 1968, he made his first profession of vows in 1991 and he was ordained to the priesthood in 1996.

He was first elected on 1 March 2011.

Calendar of the Master of the Order for April 2015

31 March-8 April: Visitation to the Central African Republic

9-10: IEOP Meeting at Naples, Italy

14-29: Canonical Visitation to Brazil

30 April-4 May: Canonical Visitation to Chile

All articles are available on www.op.org