



ORDER OF PREACHERS



The Ongoing General Chapter of Trogir, Croatia



First half of the General Chapter of the Order of Preachers in Trogir has passed, much has been done and there is much more to be done. What do the delegates do all day? What are they talking about in their meetings? How do we sum up the Chapter so far? We have tried to answer these questions in this article and the embedded hyperlinks. Click on them for more information.

On the Feast day of St. Mary Magdalene, the [first day of the General Chapter](#), Dominican friars from 45 countries, elected by their home provinces, gathered in the Croatian city of Trogir. During the opening Mass, the [Master of the Order](#) established the spiritual guidelines of the event. This General Chapter is expected to continue until August the 8th 2013. During this time, delegates are expected to discuss many topics of importance for the future of the Order: the Jubilee of the Order in 1216, preaching, formation, study, common life, government and the continued renewal of the Order.

To know more about the General Chapter and why Dominicans consider themselves as an authentic evangelical democracy, you can listen to an interview with Vivian Boland OP, Vicar of the Master of the Order, which he gave to Vatican Radio on the [challenges of democracy](#).

The day to day activities of the Chapter consists of working in commissions dedicated to one of the major topics the Chapter wishes to address. Written conclusions of these commissions are then discussed in plenary sessions. Conclusions approved in the assembly will be published as the *Acts of the General Chapter in Trogir*. This is a cumbersome and lengthy work and the delegates cannot do it all alone. They need the help of experts in Canon Law like the former Master of the Order [Carlos Alfonso Azpiroz Costa](#).

There are also many practical issues to take care of during the proceedings and outside official meetings. That is the job of the [moderators](#). There are three of them, one for every official language of the Order. Yes, there are three languages in use and not many friars speak all three of them. That is where interpreters and translators come in to make sure that the [Spirit of the Pentecost](#) does not turn into the Tower of Babel. Praying together and [celebrating the liturgy](#) in different languages also help the brothers to understand each other better.

The General Chapter is not just a group of brothers (young and old) discussing uninteresting issues of governances in the Order. Indeed, they strenuously debate issues of great interest to the entire life of the



Order. Probably one of the most talked about topics is the 2016 [Jubilee](#) celebrating 800 years of the Order of Preachers. Co-operator brothers have not been forgotten, some of them were invited to share their [story of vocation](#) with the delegates. There was a special focus on the future of the [International Dominican Youth Movement \(IDYM\)](#) through which the Order of Preachers fulfils the Holy Father's wishes to reach out to young people around the world.

After a very busy first week, the brothers used Sunday July 28th to visit the natural beauties which the National Park of Krka has to offer and to get some [spiritual refill](#) in the Franciscan convent on Visovac Island, a perfect spot for meditation and prayer in harmony with nature. On the following Monday morning, the brothers resumed their work. And if the work progresses quickly enough, some of them may even get a chance to jump into the sea before the General Chapter ends.

Fr. Mirko Vlk OP

Making Biblical History

A new translation of the Bible, available online with commentaries and interpretations from different sources and historical era: this is the project from the Biblical and Archaeological School of Jerusalem presented by Br. Marcel Sigrist OP.

General Chapter does not consist only in delegates from all the Dominican provinces around the world, but in guests too. Some of them perform important functions in the administration of the Order, others are members of the Dominican Family or representatives of various institutions incorporated into the Order of Preachers.

And one of foremost concerns which General Chapter addresses in its sessions are certainly the intellectual undertakings of the Order. Dominicans are not just intellectuals, scientists and professors working individually at different academic organizations. The Order in itself includes many esteemed academic institutions as the Pontifical University of Angelicum in Rome, Universidad Santo Tomás in Bogota (Columbia) and Salamanca University in Spain etc. And one such institution more than worthy of mention is the École Biblique et Archéologique Française de Jérusalem, a birthplace of the the [Jerusalem Bible](#). This research center is one of the most respected biblical academic institutions in the world.

Br. Marcel Sigrist OP, director of the school, is one of the guests of this General Chapter. Thanks to this participants had an opportunity to hear first-hand about the exciting new project going on in Jerusalem.

Brothers in Jerusalem decided to push their work regarding study of Bible in the 21st century. Jerusalem Bible is famous because of footnotes explaining to readers many unknown concepts, terms and notions in text of the Holy Scripture. Brothers in Jerusalem are working on a new, online Jerusalem Bible, which will offer even more: multiple historical versions of the same biblical text and different interpretations of the same biblical text from different sources and historical eras. Meaning, reader will be able to read an interpretation of a certain biblical text from a Jewish rabbinical tradition, from early Christian Patristic tradition, from Medieval Scholastic tradition and so on until modern times.

Project is called "Bible in its traditions" and you can check out how much has been done [here](#).

Fr. Mirko Vlk OP

One Big Dominican Family

Although the General Chapter in Trogir is a highest legislative assembly of Dominican friars, since 'we are all members of one big Dominican Family' other branches of the Family sent their representatives to participate as guests. What then do they have to say about the state of the Dominican Family? Or about its common mission and about topics discussed by the Chapter delegates? To find out, we have the views here of Klaus Bornewasser OP, Sr. Josefa Strettiova OP and Sr. Sara Bohmer OP.

What common challenges and difficulties does the Dominican Family face today in pursuing its shared mission of preaching?



“We need to come even closer! Dominican lay fraternities are connected mainly with friars so we need to develop closer relations with the nuns and apostolic sisters. This requires investing time and synchronizing different schedules so we can come together to pray, work and discuss how best to realize our shared mission. For example, in my home province we have a joint project: Dominican churches are always open to anyone wanting to come in and ask about God and faith, and there’s always someone in the church ready to answer or just talk. I had some wonderful experiences with this project because people often rather talk to a lay Dominican. So I was able to help a fair number of persons to get in touch with their faith once more.”

Frater Klaus Bornewasser OP, representative of Dominican Lay fraternities

Is the Dominican 'Family', bringing together friars, contemplative nuns, apostolic sisters and lay fraternity in one worldwide organization, really a family?

“Dominican Family is real and it is a family in every sense of that word. Without warm and close connections between different branches of Dominican Family my own community in Prague would not exist today. We started during communism as tertiary sisters in house of studies belonging to Dominican friars. Our brothers have always supported communities of Dominican sisters and lay fraternities. And my community continues that tradition of cooperation by heading out together on evangelisation missions to parts of our countries where Christianity has not yet spread.”

Sister Josefa Strettiova OP, representative of Dominican contemplative nuns

What do you think about this General Chapter and its work regarding the Dominican Family? What message would you like to hear capitulars send to Dominicans of all kinds everywhere?

“This is a General Chapter of Dominican friars, not of the Family. But the delegates will discuss many topics common to all branches of our Family so their conclusions will help the rest of us in our own work and in our shared efforts. I’m eager to hear what the Chapter has to say about Dominican contribution to the renewed project of New Evangelisation and what will it propose regarding the threats of individualisation and privatisation of community life in convents. Collaboration in preaching is also an important subject because of its great potential. I can testify based on my own experience how sisters are able to reach people in situations where friars cannot. For example, helping and being there for women and children from broken families.”

Sister Sara Bohmer OP, representative of Dominican Apostolic Sisters
fr Mirko Vlk, OP

“Cooperator Brothers Add Flavour to Our Fraternal Life”

fr Joseph May Van Tuyen is a cooperator brother from the Province of Vietnam and a participant at the on-going General Chapter of Trogir. In this short interview, he reminds us of the importance of the vocation of the cooperator brothers in our Order.

Hear him;

“Cooperator brothers are those who follow Jesus through the spirituality of St Dominic but do not feel the call to become a priest. The cooperator brothers and the clerical brothers share the same mission which is to preach the Word of God but we preach in different ways. The clerical brothers preach through their homilies while the cooperator brothers preach by bearing witnesses with their lives and in serving the community. We also teach catechesis in Elementary and High Schools, we teach at different levels in colleges and other schools.

From the beginning of the Order, St Dominic had cooperator brothers. Among the first sixteen brothers that St Dominic sent out on the Feast of the Assumption, there were two cooperator brothers. So, the vocation of the cooperator brothers started from the very beginning of the Order. It has always been present in the Order and it has its own value.

I think that the vocation of cooperator brothers is very important. The vocation of cooperator brothers in the Order is a reminder of the fraternal life which we must live. In a community that has no cooperator brothers,



the fraternal life lacks flavour. This is why the vocation of the cooperator brothers can help our communities to have a more vibrant fraternal life.

It has been a blessing to the Order in the past 15 to 20 years to have vocations of cooperator brothers even though at certain times, there are more and at other times, there are less.

In Vietnam, we presently have 37 cooperator brothers and each year, we have a few new candidates. There are other provinces like the Philippines and Pakistan which have cooperator brothers but not as many as in Vietnam”.

175 YEARS AS A PROVINCE

This year the Province of St Pius V (Malta) celebrates the 175th anniversary of its establishment. The official act of its foundation took place on the 12th of July 1838 when the former Congregation of St Pius V (which formed part of the Province of Sicily) was declared as an autonomous province by a decree of the then Master of the Order Bro. Angelo Ancarani during the pontificate of Pope Gregory XVI. The theme chosen to mark this occasion was *175 Years at the Service of the Word*.

This event was marked by various celebrations. The first among these was a *Soirée Academique* that took place on the 24th of May at Jesus of Nazareth Church in Sliema under the aegis of Mgr. Joseph Mercieca, Archbishop Emeritus of Malta. It included an introductory speech by Bro. Paul Gatt, Prior Provincial and a keynote address by Bro. Lawrence Attard which outlined the history of Dominican presence in Malta leading to its establishment as a province and the work that it has carried since its foundation. The Jesus of Nazareth Choir directed by Bro. Saviour Galea provided a fitting backdrop to the occasion.

At the beginning of July the Province welcomed Bro. Vivian Boland, Vicar of the Master of the Order, who together with Bro. Bernardino Prella, Socius for the Provinces of Italy, Malta and the Iberian Peninsula, arrived in Malta in order to lead the main celebrations. On the 11th of July he addressed the members of the province during an assembly that took place at Our Lady of the Grotto Priory at Rabat. He referred to three key moments in the foundation of the Order which also marked its mission and purpose. These were:

Dominic’s encounter with the owner of a tavern in Toulouse where he and Bishop Diego were staying for the night while on their way to Denmark. This encounter was marked by a night-long discussion and the subsequent conversion of the host from Albigensianism;

Bishop Diego’s and Dominic’s encounter with the Cistercian mission to the Albigensians at the gates of Montpellier, wherein the former encouraged the delegation to embrace poverty as an effective witness to the true faith ;

The dispersal of the first community of preachers in Toulouse to the whole of Europe, especially Madrid, Paris, and Bologna. It was a decision that characterized Dominic’s profound faith in God as well as an act of hope that his work and his prayers would bear fruit in spreading the Word of God.

The anniversary celebrations reached their climax on the 12th of July when Bro. Vivian led a concelebrated Mass attended by Mgr. Paul Cremona, Dominican Archbishop of Malta, and His Excellency Dr George Abela, President of the Republic. In his homily Bro. Vivian spoke of the vocation of the Order which is grounded in the prayerful study and reflection on the Word of God. He also dwelt upon the history of the province and its work in the strengthening and subsequent diffusion of God’s word through its missionary work in Malta and abroad especially in Brazil and Albania.

In order to commemorate this anniversary the Maltese Dominican Province has also published two works. The first is entitled *Fahhar, Bierek, Xandar: L-Ghan, il-Hajja u l-Hidma tal-Ordni tal-Predikaturi (To Praise, To Bless, To Preach: The Purpose, The Life and the Mission of the Order of Preachers)* written by Bro. Joseph Ellul. It is a short study about the Dominican charism and its relevance in the modern world. The second is entitled *175 Sena: Provincja Dumnikana Maltija San Piju V 1838-2013 (175 Years: The Maltese*



Dominican Province of St Pius V 1838-2013) compiled by Bro. Pawl Gatt and Bro. Bernard Caruana. It is a pictorial documentary of the history of the province and the key events that have shaped its history.
Bro. Joseph Ellul O.P.

Spiritual Refill

Members of the General Chapter in Trogir used their Sunday to see what natural beauties National Park of Krka has to offer, to experience the unique spirituality of the Franciscan convent on Visovac Island and to visit the city of Šibenik. To find out what impressed them, take a look at the photo gallery bellow.

Sunday July 28th was scheduled as day of relaxation for the members of the General Chapter. After a whole week of ceaseless work, they sorely needed a rest. But this does not mean they spent all day sunbathing on the beach. “Au contraire!” brothers from France would say. Just after holy mass with barely any time for breakfast, two buses appeared in front of the convent of Saint Cross and the adventure could begin.

Members of the Chapter visited the National Park of Krka to see the waterfalls, which made this place famous. Many of the delegates were impressed with its natural beauty and used this opportunity to enjoy a bit of solitude and silence. “We needed a change of pace like this after days on end of just sitting in meetings and sessions.” Br. Joe Trout commented.

Chapter members then visited a Franciscan convent on the island of Visovac in the middle of a lake, also a part of the national park. Many commented how this convent is a perfect spot for a hermit, surely created by God for meditation and prayer in harmony with nature and without distractions, just right for St. Francis. Brothers felt a spiritual boost in this place and left regenerated.

The last episode of the day’s journey was a visit to the city of Šibenik. Members of the Chapter visited the Cathedral of St. Jacob and were greeted by the Bishop of Šibenik, Msgr. Anto Ivas. Local Dominican sisters of the Congregation of Holy Guardian Angles also welcomed Chapter delegates to their city. So in the end, this trip proved an excellent opportunity for strengthening a sense of fraternity, not only between Chapter delegates but with members of the Dominican Family in Croatia as well.

The ‘adventurers’ returned just in time for dinner in good form and although physically tired, well rested in spirit. On Monday morning they will continue with their work, no matter how hot it gets. Keep them in your prayers so that their tasks don’t become too difficult and that all of their labours might ultimately be fruitful. Who knows, maybe some of them may even find time to dip into the sea before the end of the General Chapter.

Fr. Mirko Vlk OP

Who is a Moderator?

INTERVIEW WITH BROTHER JOHN O’CONNOR OP – BROTHER FROM THE ENGLIHS PROVINCE AND MODERATOR AT THE GENERAL CHAPTER OF THE ORDER IN TROGIR

Who is a moderator and what would his role in the General Chapter be? Interview of Brother John O’Connor, from the Dominican Province of England.

You attended the Chapter in Rome three years ago as a delegate for your Province, and here, in Trogir, you are a moderator. What is your impression of the Chapter in comparison to Rome in 2010?

The General Chapter in Rome was exciting because we were electing a new Master of the Order. And this Chapter, here in Trogir, has its own kind of excitement, for example, all the preparations for the upcoming Jubilee of the Order. And for me personally it’s exciting because of my duties as a moderator. I’m learning new things and skills every day.

So what does a moderator do? What prepared you for this function?

Being a moderator primarily means helping with the plenary sessions: remain neutral during discussions and seeing to it that the democratic proceedings of such an assembly are being followed and respected, keeping order so everybody doesn’t speak at the same time, adhering to the schedule and so on. In short we are here to facilitate the functioning of the Chapter and help with practical issues that arise.



There are three of us, one moderator for every of the three official languages of the Order. And, of course, we support one another during plenary sessions and outside them. We share work depending on the language of a particular commission.

Duties of prior in Oxford prepared me somewhat for my work here, yes. I learned how to manage and lead a meeting which has been tremendously useful here. Because it's important for the delegates to feel their voices and concerns are being heard. Moderators are here to help the brothers share their ideas and views. Also things I see and learn here will be valuable once I get back home and continue as prior.

If you could choose your role on the next General Chapter, would you rather be a delegate or a moderator?
If I had a choice, I would be a moderator again. Responsibility of a delegate is immense; to represent your whole province is no small thing. But there is a certain charm in being a moderator I find attractive, the challenge of the job I guess. In any case, it's an honour for me to do whatever I can for the Order. Especially when this Chapter, significant in being the last one before the Jubilee, gives us a chance to consider how can we speak to the world in new ways and show what does it mean to be a Dominican.

Fr. Mirko Vlk OP

Young people, our partners in preaching

During World Youth Day, Pope Francis called on the young people of the world to take the Church to the streets and shake things up. Simultaneously the General Chapter of the Order of Preachers addresses the question of how to even more support Dominican lay youth all over the world in preaching the Gospel.

All last week the media was full of news of the Pope's visit to Brazil and his participation in the events of World Youth Day. Pope Francis obviously values the Catholic youth as the driving force of the Church both today and in the future. This can easily be discerned from his repeated statements that young Catholics need to "make a mess," to shake up the complacency and self-satisfaction of a Church closed in on itself. Now what does all of this have to do with the General Chapter of the Order of Preachers meeting in Trogir on the other side of the world?

Only a week before the start of World Youth Day in Brazil, the International Dominican Youth Movement held its own assembly in Bogota, in neighbouring Columbia. Dominican youth from all over the world came together to think about and discuss their role in the preaching mission of the Order and how to best contribute to the New Evangelization movement and the mission of the Church. So it seems that young people of the Dominican Family are most definitely in sync with the Pope's message for young Catholics of the world. Many of them showed that directly by travelling from Bogota to Rio de Janeiro to greet the Pope. As Br. Wojciech Delik, member of IDYM says, "The meeting in Bogota concluded that young people don't have to be mere listeners to our sermons and conferences, a subject of our pastoral care. They can be and often want to be our partners in preaching."

And far from being a group of old men talking about tedious legislative issues, the General Chapter is actually very interested in the International Dominican Youth Movement and its activities. The movement was brought into existence not because Dominicans need new vocations or because there are no more young religious. World Youth Day in Brazil showed the situation is quite the opposite. The International Dominican Youth Movement was founded with the idea of connecting with young people all over the world and making them partners in the mission of evangelization. The Gospel must be preached and Dominicans need to invite into their mission all the faithful young people who can preach to their peers. So in supporting the International Dominican Youth Movement wholeheartedly, the General Chapter is following the Pope's lead in reaching out to young people of the world.

Fr. Mirko Vlk OP

The Celebration of the Jubilee of the Order of Preachers in 2016

The celebration of the Jubilee of the Order of Preachers in 2016 is set to be a quite special event. The General Chapter, in session currently in Trogir, in Croatia, has set up a working group to examine [how to



mark] this upcoming celebration. Expectations are high, and all the Chapter participants are keen to play their part.

To celebrate a Dominican Jubilee of this kind is a special occasion. It's not like you get to do it every century! We couldn't celebrate the 700th properly in 1916 because of the First World War. And that's what makes marking the 800th anniversary of the Order something really special. Just think about it: so much time has passed since the first brothers heard the preaching of St Dominic and said to themselves: "I want to be just like him and do what he does!" That desire and passion have continued unabated, despite the vicissitudes of time.

That's why Dominicans worldwide have been preparing for the 2016 Jubilee since the Season of Advent in 2005. It all began by commemorating the founding of the first Dominican community in Prouilhe - the birth place of the Holy Preaching. Then it continued every year under a different theme, this year's theme being: "Do unto me according to your Word" (Lk 1:38) - Mary: Contemplation and Preaching of the Word". The General Chapter in Trogir is not immune to this spirit of preparation for the Jubilee!

Expectations are high, given that this Trogir meeting is the last (scheduled) General Chapter before the year of the Jubilee itself: and important decisions have to be made.

In order for the members of the Chapter to have some idea what's been done so far and what has yet to be done, the Master of the Order, Br Bruno Cadore OP, invited the general promoter for the Jubilee, Br José Gabriel Mesa Angulo OP, to give a presentation on the progress of the preparations for the 2016 Jubilee. This presentation was thorough and extensive.

Now a special committee has been set up, as I said at the outset, a 'commission on the jubilee and renewal of the mission and evangelisation of the Order'. This group is expected to come up with a concrete set of proposals in relation to what the Order as a whole ought to do, in order to mark this upcoming Jubilee in an appropriate manner. Of course, all the participants at the Chapter are interested in the topic of Jubilee so the Commission on Jubilee will not suffer from a lack of suggestions!

Br Mirko Vlk OP

The Liturgy of the General Chapter

The General Chapter is a gathering of brothers from all over the world, brothers with different languages and cultures. One thing that binds them all together is our common Dominican Spirit. Therefore, when the brothers gather, it is a big task to organize a common liturgy for them. For the General Chapter of Trogir, that task fell on the shoulders of fr Srečko Koralija, the Cantor of the General Chapter.

According to fr Koralija,

"The liturgy can really help the brothers to become more aware of our visible unity which is also the meaning of the Chapter. Through prayers, through the Eucharist, we celebrate, we learn a better way to contemplate, to understand the world in which we live especially the Dominican world.

I see many cultural and linguistic differences and I try to find their unity in this Chapter. We see this through the different ways in which we sing or celebrate the Eucharist. This invites us to a communion of diversities which reflects the democratic spirit of the Order.

As Cantor of the General Chapter, I try to understand the three different languages and the three different liturgies so that I could create a booklet that is a concrete sign of our liturgical unity. Many different styles meet in the liturgy of the Chapter and it is a way for the brothers to know one another on a different level. Even if one does not understand the language, one can still learn a lot through silence and listening and this is very beautiful."

We continue to join the brothers in prayers for a success Chapter.



Interview with Carlos Alfonso Azpiroz Costa

When a General Chapter [of the Order of Preachers] is convened, former Masters of the Order are also invited and can give the benefit of their wisdom to the assembly. Brother Carlos Alfonso Azpiroz Costa, who served as Master from 2001 to 2010, has experienced the importance of Chapters for the Order and, besides, can offer a word in relation to how the Dominican democratic tradition can be of assistance in the wider world.

Dominicans often like to point out how democratic their Order is because of the way they govern themselves and create their laws by means of their General Chapters. But in reality, how effective is all this talking in plenary sessions and in work groups? Is it the best way to go about governing an international religious institution like the Order of Preachers?

This is my sixth general chapter so I'm pretty acquainted with the way the things are done. When you have this kind of experience, you notice things like the constant repetition of certain topics. Someone who is not a member of the Order may think this makes everything futile: but this is not true. What it does mean is we learn from our history and don't take anything for granted. Rather, we strive constantly for the renewal of our Order, so it can meet contemporary challenges in the best possible way.

The Catholic Church may be described as a polychromatic symphony of different institutions, organisations, spiritualities and paths of holiness. There is no right or wrong way to govern a religious order. Our way of governing ourselves is a method of seeking unanimity, not uniformity. When we say our Order is democratic, we don't mean the rule of majority but rather general concord for the good of all, including the minority. This is not an easy path, but it is admirable. I can vouch for it from my personal experience not just as a former Master of the Order but on the basis of all my years as a Dominican.*

This is your first General Chapter since your term as Master of the Order ended. How does it feel to be 'just one of the brothers', without all the responsibility? What is your role now in the General Chapter? In what way does your extensive knowledge as a professor of canon law help the delegates with their work?

You always have to remember that the Master of the Order of Preachers is foremost one of the brothers, a first among equals. He does not control the Chapter, but facilitates its functioning and helps everything to go smoothly. But it's true, I do feel relieved because the burden of responsibility has been lifted from my shoulders and I can just be together with my brethren working, helping in whatever way I can. In this Chapter, for instance, I serve as a member of the Commission on the Order's Constitutions. It's not easy to find members [willing] to serve in this commission, people capable of translating into canon law all the decisions the Chapter will make. But I'm here to do my part for the Order, and I am glad to do it.

In your opinion, what can the Order of Preachers teach the world regarding democracy, especially taking into an account the apparent failure of the rule of law and order in some countries?

First of all, we mustn't confuse postmodern western democracies with the way we have practised democracy in the Order for the last 800 years - and continue to do so. An important difference is this: we strive not to impose the rule of some over others through 'behind the scenes' politics; and our government doesn't make its decisions just in order to win the next election! Rather, we hold our Chapters to talk about the issues that concern us and to share experiences regarding what is basic in our lives as Dominicans: preaching, community life, studying, formation, etc. This is the lesson 'modern' countries should learn from us: to feel the moment, to probe our reality and express the needs of all through discussion always keeping in mind the final goal of creating an environment of freedom for everyone to live in and grow, both individually and as a community.

Fr. Mirko Vlk OP

Interview with Vivian Boland OP on the General Chapter

Brother Vivian Boland OP, Vicar of the Master of the Order of Preachers, gave an interview to Philippa Hitchen of Vatican Radio on the nature and importance of the General Chapter that is taking place in Trogir, Croatia.

Listen to the broadcast provided in the link below and discover why Dominicans cherish the tradition of government where the brothers come to discuss issues and take decisions together in Chapters. The Order of



Preachers is one of the oldest democratic organisations in the world, an authentic evangelical democracy. So can a General Chapter like this one effectively direct the Dominican Order in the current Church-wide New Evangelisation? Listen to Brother Vivian Boland to find out.

<http://www.news.va/en/news/dominicans-open-general-chapter-in-croatia>

A Spirit of Pentecost

“Although we speak in so many different languages, we all understand each other really well because love, readiness to listen, and desire for togetherness makes understanding easier.” Fr. André Luís Tavares OP from Brazil

How do hundred Dominicans from different parts of the world communicate when they gathered together for a General Chapter? How do brothers from Kenya, Chile, and Vietnam talk to each other? The answer may seem simple: just speak in English! After all, everybody understands it at least a little bit, right? Well, not really ... A fair number of brothers do not know a word in English. In many countries, English is not taught in schools, it is rarely used in the media, and thus they did not really need it until now. So, what is the answer? Fifty years ago, everybody would just speak in Latin and that would be that. But the Second Vatican Council happened and many other different languages came into use in the Catholic Church. This reduced the prevalence of Latin to the degree that it is not possible to use it as a lingua franca at a General Chapter anymore.

General Chapter of Trogir 2013: Day 1 – Mass of the Holy Spirit

On the feast of St. Mary Magdalene, patroness of the Order of Preachers, little over a hundred Dominican friars from all over the world, elected by their brothers to represent them, celebrated Holy Mass in the Church of the Holy Cross on the Island of Čiovo and thus started the General Chapter of the Order of Preachers in Trogir, Croatia.

The Master of the Order, fr. Bruno Cadore, OP, celebrated the Holy Mass together with his predecessors fr. Timothy Radcliffe, OP and fr. Carlos Aspiroz Costa, OP. All the members of the Chapter, diffinitors, guests, and hosts alike participated in the liturgical celebrations. The Church of the Holy Cross and the Dominican convent of the same name were built in the 15th century. The builders of the church could have never imagined a General Chapter being held inside its walls.

During the first plenary session, the Provincial of the Croatian Dominican Province, fr. Anto Gavrić, OP, welcomed all the members of the Chapter. The Mayor of Trogir, Mr. Ante Stipčić, also welcomed the capitulars on behalf of all the citizens of Trogir and the surrounding area. The chapter's work started in good spirits.

During the afternoon session Msgr. Želimir Puljić, Archbishop of the city of Zadar and President of the Croatian Bishops Conference visited the chapter and in a short address welcomed all the delegates to Trogir and to Croatia.

Some of the important topics that will be discussed by the delegates during the various plenary and work group sessions are: Jubilee of the Order in 1216, preaching, formation, study, common life, government and continued renewal of the Order.

The first day of the General Chapter ended on a solemn note with vespers spreading through the hallways and the cloister of the convent of the Holy Cross. After evening prayers, there was a Rite of Reconciliation and Eucharistic Adoration.

The Chapter is expected to convene and continue its work until the 18th of August, 2013.

The Glorious Meeting of Dominican Youths

The experience of a living faith in the concrete reality of the Church in Colombia served as the horizon for the meeting which had as its central theme "MUISCA: It is I in person" in reference to one of the indigenous



groups that historically inhabited the geographical location known as Colombia. It is also in recognition of the fact that the human person in his integral values and worldview is a guiding testimony to the Dominican youths of Colombia and the entire world.

With this in mind, about 200 youths gathered from all over Colombia and indeed from different parts of the world to celebrate their faith. They were accompanied by the Master of the Order, fr Bruno Cadoré, some brothers from the general curia; fr Gabriel Samba (Socius for Africa) and fr Carlos Rodrigues Linera (General Promoter for Justice and Peace) and members of the International Commission of IDYM; Sr Ginevra Maria Rossi (Secretary General), Sr Cecilia Tonde and fr Wojciech Delik. The Dominican family in Colombia were also fully represented. They fully supported the meeting from its conception to its actualization and conclusion. The meeting was held at St Albert the Great Campus of St Thomas University, a place of study in the beautiful and exotic plains of Bogota.

In his address to the youths, the Master of the Order reminded them that although IDYM is a small group, it must remain a focal point of true friendship, compassion, faith, hope and truth that must accompany the world in its development. With reference to the new encyclical of Pope France, *Lumen Fidei*, fr Bruno told the youths that they must establish small groups that will reflect the light and joy of faith. Jesus is the source of light and joy and there are great expectations for this light and joy in many parts of the world. We must therefore bear witness to the light and joy of Christ. The Mission of IDYM is to evangelize and evangelization is to encounter Jesus and to present him to the world as a true friend. The encounter with Jesus is achieved in the Word of God because Jesus is the Word of God.

During their deliberations, the youths took a critical look at their existence as youths and particularly as Dominican Youths, the main projects of the Order and their responsibilities. They also examined their role in the current dynamics of the Universal Church and the local Churches where they find themselves.

The meeting gave the youths the opportunity to live the fundamentals of the Dominican Life by praying, studying, sharing fraternal life and preaching together. They visited and shared in the apostolates of the Dominican family in Colombia especially the teaching apostolates and the apostolates to the poor and needy. They also had the privilege to visit the National Marian Shrine of Our Lady of Chiquinquirá.

At the end of the gathering, a greater understanding of the ever increasing responsibilities of young people in the life of the Order was evident among the youths. As people who embody the Word in the Dominican way, the youths were able to find new hopes in the future, a future in which the actions of God will be present to transform their realities.

“Now, I understand that I have other brothers and sisters who are doing other things in other places, but we are all together fashioning a way to build a faith community..., with all our problems and dreams”, the testimony of Andrea, one of the participants.

For more pictures - <http://www.flickr.com/photos/orderofpreachers/sets/72157634555680893/>

Fray Jorge Ferdinando Rodriguez Ruiz, OP,
Province of San Luis Bertran de Colombia

“Africa, Rise Up!” - Preaching and Social Media

Twenty Dominican Sisters in Africa have risen-up and gathered at Koinonia Center in Johannesburg, South Africa! In keeping with the emphasis on evangelization by the 2009 African Synod and in the subsequent message of Benedict XVI, *Africae Munus* (2011), these Sisters from 19 Dominican congregations in 13 countries are participating in the workshop, “Communication and Evangelization: DSI – 2.0 Connecting Dominican Sisters in Africa”, 1-14July 2013. Half of the participants come from Francophone countries and half come from Anglophone countries of Africa.

Dominican Sisters International is sponsoring the workshop that has these objectives:

To provide Sisters with a good knowledge of basic tools of Communication and Social Media;

To make them aware of the specifics of Web 2.0 and its potential for their mission in Africa;



To teach them how to use social media for development and to increase social awareness in their congregation and among the people in their communities;
To use ICT for their formation;
To strengthen the networking and collaboration among Sisters in Africa.

During this first week of the program, Sisters are studying principles for effective communication through social media such as websites and “Facebook”. Such media are key means for preaching the Good News in our contemporary culture. Participants have had creative opportunities to apply their learnings. Sisters interviewed various individuals and visited area service organizations, including “Bienvenue Shelter” (refugee women and their children), “Mercy House” (homeless working people) and “Nazareth House” (orphaned, hospice and elderly residents). Based on this experience, Sisters working in teams of two wrote articles that would be suitable for website publication. After the teams shared their articles in a plenary session, the presenters and other participants offered both affirmation and critique. The process was a helpful learning exercise for all.

Later in the week, Sisters will have other opportunities to practice developing content for social media. The weekend will bring an excursion to Soweto, the largest Township in South Africa and a key site for the anti-Apartheid struggle. The second week will involve additional practical work with a variety of social media, as well as “low-tech” approaches to effective communication within and among congregations. Koinonia Center, an apostolate of the Oakford Dominican Sisters, has provided excellent hospitality and extraordinary support both before and during the workshop.

DSI is grateful for the collaboration of the Order’s General Promoter for Social Communications, Eric Salobir OP (France) and his colleague, Fr. Gilles Lherbier (Diocese of Military Services, France), who are providing the design, content and process for the workshop. Thanks are due Patrizia Morgante, Elizabeth Perugachi and Flavia Angi, former and current members of the DSI Secretariat, whose hard work made this program happen.

This workshop was made possible through financial backing by a foundation that has consistently assisted DSI over the years and which chooses to remain anonymous. Watch for the next update on this effort to help equip Dominican Sisters of Africa with additional tools to preach the Good News using the expanding “language” of our culture’s social media.

Toni Harris OP

DSI Staff Person On-Site in Johannesburg

Official News

The Solemnity of Our Blessed Father Dominic

The Solemnity of Our Blessed Father Dominic.

St Dominic, pray for us.

Happy Feast Day!

The Provincial Vicariate of Rwanda and Burundi Has a New Vicar Provincial

Gathered in Kigali for their General Assembly, the brothers of the Provincial Vicariate of Rwanda and Burundi elected on Friday August 2, 2013, fr Sixbert HATEGEKIMANA as their new Vicar Provincial, for a four years term.

After consulting his Council, fr André Descôteaux, Prior Provincial of Canada, who is also participating in the Assembly, confirmed the election. Fr Sixbert takes over fr Prudence HATEGEKIMANA.

Fr Sixbert, who is a Canonist made first profession in the Order in 1993 and was ordained to the priesthood in 2003



It should be noted that this is the first time that the Vicariate is electing its Vicar during a General Assembly.
Fr. Gabriel Samba, OP

Apostolic Blessing for the General Chapter of Trogir and for the Entire Order

For the divine graces necessary to achieve a successful general chapter, the Holy Father, Pope Francis has imparted his Apostolic Blessing on the General Chapter of Trogir and indeed on the entire Order. He did this in a telegram addressed to the Master of the Order, fr Bruno Cadoré. The telegram was signed on behalf of the Holy Father, by Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, Secretary of State at the Holy See.

Here is an English translation of the Apostolic Blessing:

FRA BRUNO CADORE', OP
MASTER GENERAL OF THE ORDER OF PREACHERS
PIAZZA PIETRO D'ILLIRIA, 1
00153 ROMA

ON THE OCCASION OF THE GENERAL CHAPTER OF DIFFINITORS OF THE ORDER OF PREACHERS WHICH WILL BE HELD IN TROGIR IN CROATIA, IN THE CONTEXT OF THE YEAR OF FAITH, THE HOLY FATHER FRANCIS, GRATEFUL FOR THE FILIAL EXPRESSION OF ADHERENCE TO HIS MAGISTERIUM, EXTENDS TO THE PARTICIPANTS HIS CORDIAL AND BEST WISHES, RELYING ON THE ASSISTANCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, AND PRAYS THAT THIS IMPORTANT MEETING WILL INSPIRE A RENEWED PURPOSE OF HOLINESS AND FIDELITY TO THE IDEALS OF THE CONSECRATED LIFE FOR THE BUILDING OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND THE GENEROUS SERVICE OF THE CHURCH, ACCORDING TO THE SPECIFIC CHARISM OF THE ORDER, FOLLOWING THE BRIGHT EXAMPLE OF THE VENERABLE FATHER SAINT DOMINIC AND OF ALL THE SAINTS OF THE DOMINICAN FAMILY. THE HOLY FATHER ACCOMPANIES THESE ASSURANCES WITH A SPECIFIC REMEMBRANCE AT THE CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST AND, IN ASKING YOU TO PRAY FOR HIM, THROUGH THE INTERCESSION OF THE VIRGIN MARY, QUEEN OF THE ROSARY, HE GLADLY IMPARTS TO YOU AND TO ALL THE BROTHERS GATHERED FOR THE CHAPTER, THE APOSTOLIC BLESSING YOU REQUESTED, GLADLY EXTENDING IT TO THE ENTIRE ORDER.

CARDINAL TARCISIO BERTONE
SECRETARY OF STATE OF HIS HOLINESS
00120 VATICAN CITY

Bishop Guido Breña López, OP dies at the age of 82

Bishop Guido Brena Lopez, Bishop Emeritus of Ica, Peru passed away on the 9th of July, 2013 at Miami, USA. He is fondly remembered as the Bishop of the people due to his exceptional works among the poor and needy. This was evident during the aftermath of the earthquake that struck Pisco, Ica and Chincha in 2007.

Bishop Guido Brena who is the oldest of 5 children was born on July 9, 1931 at Puquio-Lucanas-Ayacucho. At a very young age, he felt the calling to the religious life and at the age of 16 he responded to that calling by entering the Dominican Novitiate in 1948. After his religious and priestly formation, he was ordained to the priesthood in 1954. He was appointed the Bishop of Ica by Pope Paul VI and installed in 1973.

For over 30 years, he has been a true shepherd of the faithful of Ica and he left an indelible mark, spiritually and physically in the life of the people and on the landscape of Ica. This has earned him the admiration of the faithful, the Catholic Church and the government of Peru. This admiration is expressed in the many awards he received in his lifetime.



Without any premonition, his Dominican brothers in Lima and his family and friends anticipated his last birthday and had a celebration for him at the Convent of the Holy Rosary of Lima. That same evening, he traveled to Miami in the United State where he died.

His remains will be brought back to Lima where he will be laid to rest by his Dominican brothers of the Province of St John the Baptist, Peru.

May his gentle soul rest in peace. Amen

The Calendar of the Master of the Order for August 2013

July 20-August 10: At the General Chapter of Trogir, Croatia

11-31- On Recess

All articles are available on the website of the Order – www.op.org