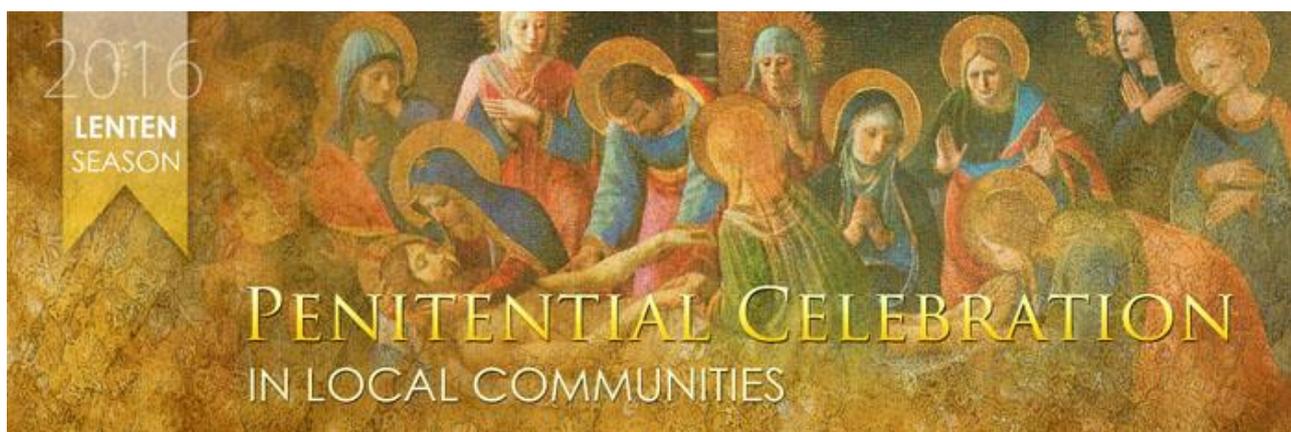




ORDER OF PREACHERS



Penitential Celebration in Local Communities



Date: Lent of 2016

Location: Provinces, convents, local communities and fraternities

Coordination:

Steering committee of the Jubilee : iubileum2016@curia.op.org

Liturgical Commission OP : commissio.liturgica@curia.op.org

Provincials and local superiors

Provincial Promoters for the Jubilee

The General Chapter of Trogir recommended that "in order to provide spaces of renewal and healing of our fraternal relations, all communities include at least once a year a time of communal reconciliation among the brothers" (ACG Trogir, 66).

In response to this invitation, and extending it to all communities of the Dominican Family, the Steering Committee of the Jubilee, with the help of the Dominican Liturgical Commission propose a common guide for a communal celebration of the sacrament of reconciliation. This celebration seeks to invite us to live in our communities the dynamics of metanoia and self-renewal of this jubilee.

Provinces and local communities are invited to keep in their calendars a space for this celebration during the time of Lent of 2016.

Download the ritual of the Penitential celebration here: text

www.op.org/sites/www.op.org/files/public/penitential-celebration-eng.pdf

• A Diocesan Priest, A Dominican Priest, A Married Priest

The fact of having Diocesan Priests as members of the Dominican Order through the Priestly Fraternities is still new to many. What would you say about a married Catholic Priest who is a Dominican and a Prior of the Fraternity? That is Fr John Joseph Saward of the Priestly Fraternities of Our Lady of the Rosary in the Province of England.



Fr John is married with three daughters. In 1965, he studied Theology and trained as an Anglican minister at St Stephen's House, Oxford. At the completion of his training, he was ordained as an Anglican clergyman in 1972. During his life and work as an Anglican minister, he maintained close contact with the Dominicans in Oxford in the cause of his studies. For his Master's programme in Theology, he was supervised by Fr Cornelius Ernst, OP of the Blackfriars, Oxford. Fr John has always worked as a curate, a chaplain and a teacher of Theology.

However, in 1979, he and his family were received into the Catholic Church at Campion Hall, Oxford. In 2003, he was ordained a deacon in the Catholic Church and a priest later that same year for the Diocese of Birmingham.

After series of discussions with his Dominican friends, he received the scapular and started his novitiate as a member of the Priestly Fraternities of St Dominic in the Province of England in 2011. In 2012 he made his profession and was subsequently elected the Prior of the Priestly Fraternity of Our Lady of the Rosary.

The Fraternity has about eight members, of which four were formerly Anglicans, one was a religious, and the other three, including Fr. John (the Prior) were formerly Anglican clergymen, and married.

Fr John has continued to teach Dogmatic Theology in various Catholic Institutions and he has authored eight books, many booklets, articles and contributions to collected works.

The presence of the Priestly Fraternities in the Order expresses the dynamism that exists in the life, mission and spirituality of the family of St. Dominic. With grateful hearts for such gifts, we celebrate this part of our heritage as we continue to collaborate with one another in our common mission.

• UST Simbahayan Co-hosts Philippine Dominican Justice, Peace and Care for Creation Assembly

Last January 14, 2016, the University of Santo Tomas, through its Simbahayan Community Development Office, hosted the Philippine Dominican Justice, Peace, and Care for Creation (JPCC) Assembly, convened by Rev. Fr. Gallardo Bombase, O.P. The assembly that served as historical, missionary and pastoral important for the Philippine Dominican Family to gather together. The assembly created space to reminisce, review, reflect, share, and learn from the JPCC engagement of different Dominican Religious congregations in the Philippines. UST Rector Rev. Fr. Herminio V. Dagohoy, O.P. delivered the welcome remarks.

Fr. Bombase set the perspective of the assembly by emphasizing the importance and challenges for JPCC for the whole Philippine Dominican family. To be able to bring back and strengthen the JPCC apostolate is to ensure the networking, collaboration, communication and strong relationships between and among Dominican Family members. To be able to make these aspects working, it is about time to look for and develop working structures that will facilitate the strengthening of JPCC apostolate among the family members. Most importantly, it is necessary to formulate or to review or to adopt the vision, mission and goals of JPCC apostolate.

The assembly participants were enlightened in the issue of human trafficking thru the sharing of Sr. Cecille Espenilla, O.P. and three women survivors from human trafficking. Human trafficking is a contemporary human slavery in the different forms of labor, sex and tourism. Human beings were being trapped in the law and supply demand process and became simply one of the resources or materials that can be utilized, consumed and exploited in the name of economic power of few and exploitation of men over children and women. The campaign and engagement against the human trafficking of Sr. Cecille's congregation is a work closely coordinated with the Visayan Forum, a non-government organization (NGO) working for the rights and development of children, families and women.

Fr. Clarence Victor C. Marquez, O.P. and Sr. Rose Yaya, O.P. shared about the history of JPCC engagement of the Dominican Order. Their sharing was entitled Pagbabalik-Tanaw: Relieving JPCC in the Dominican Order. The Philippine Dominican have already plotted a JPCC vision, mission and plans. Most importantly, it already shared and engaged a lot in the JPCC from the past thru environmental issues' campaigns and



actions, United States (US) Military Bases Clean-Up, human rights advocacy, health and social services/programs and, social action and community development apostolates.

Fr. Quirico T. Pedregosa Jr., O.P., current Rector of the UST Central Seminary, a former Provincial of the Dominican Philippine Province and an active JPCC promoter and advocate of the rights and development of workers, farmers, urban poor, indigenous peoples and, other marginalized sectors, shared experiences and learnings from his past and on-going JPCC engagements. He mentioned some challenges to the assembly such as the following: (a) to be more and concretely engage in JPCC is a need for Dominicans and lay partners; (b) to be more and be felt in action than words if we want to be a JPCC advocates and promoters; (c) we have to be clear of the distinctions and similarities of mercy and JPCC; (d) we are not really addressing the issues that sacrifices human dignity because issues are structural problems; (e) we need new and to be more creative in our JPCC strategies. Usual strategies such as petition letters, rallies, strikes, mobilizations and others are not working anymore; (f) collaborative projects between and among promoters and advocates is a strategy that needs to be highly considered; and; (g) a question raised “what now after this?” assembly.

During the open forum, varied sentiments, opinions, and stand points were raised. Some of these were: (1) JPCC was gone for nothing or it took its course that contributed a lot for the love and solidarity with the poor; (2) The Philippine worse and complex situation has losses the fate and fire of the faithful in relation with JPCC values and actions because it does not really address and resolve the real issues; (3) The importance of documentation and communication systems must be establish to come-up with the accounts of JPCC engagements; (4) Justice should start and live within ourselves and; (5) JPCC must be a relational. In general, revitalization of Philippine Dominican JPCC is a common sentiment of the assembly.

The participants of the assembly raised different recommendations and commitment for JPCC engagement to be done collectively by the Philippine Dominican Family and respective local of mission of the different Philippine Dominican religious congregations and affiliated groups. The assembly triggered the participants’ senses and feelings on the urgency and importance of JPCC engagements where Dominicans and partners are into. The importance of living with the periphery to be able to see, to feel, and to act was emphasized.

• The Second Member of the Priestly Fraternities of St Dominic from Africa makes Profession

The recognition of the members of the Priestly Fraternities of St Dominic as a part of the Order is still very new in most parts of the Order in Africa. Even in the Order at large, many friars and sisters still do not understand how a Diocesan priest can be a Dominican at the same time. This is why the just concluded International Meeting of the Priestly Fraternities of St Dominic is very important to awaken and spread the knowledge of the existence and true identity of this branch of our family.

At the just concluded meeting, there were two participants from Africa. Fr Charles Ukwe, the Prior Provincial of the Province of St Joseph the Worker, Nigeria and Ghana and Fr Ray-Maria Jackson Umoh, a priest of the Diocese of Uyo, Nigeria. Fr Ray-Maria has become the first member of the Priestly Fraternities of St Dominic from Nigeria and the second from Africa.

He attained this status when he made his profession on Wednesday, 24th of February in the hands of fr Bruno Cadoré, the Master of the Order.

Fr Ray-Maria was a member of the Order in Nigeria from 1983 to 1988 after which he left to join his home diocese. That period was enough for him to study and fall in love with the works of great Dominicans (like St Catherine of Siena, Henry Suso, Meister Eckhart etc.), The Life of the Brethren and the Dominican Spirituality. He embedded the Dominican tradition of assiduous study and community life so much that it never left him even after he left the Order.

After his ordination as a diocesan priest, he was sent to the Anglicum to study Theology with and under the guidance of the Dominicans. During that period, with the encouragement of his Dominican friends and tutors, he felt once again the burning desire to return to the Order.



Fr Ray-Maria is currently a Parish Priest and a Chancellor in his home diocese. “Working with my Bishop in the Chancery everyday reminds me of St Dominic and Bishop Diego of Osma”, says Fr Ray-Maria. He is elated for the opportunity to return to his first love – the Dominican life and spirituality. He sees it as “a home coming”.

The Archbishop Emeritus of Luanda, Angola, Cardinal Alexandre Do Nascimento has been the first and only member of the Priestly Fraternities in Africa. Fr Ray-Maria is now the second member.

• **The Dominicans: A Family of Preachers**

Dominic de Guzman (1170-1221) founded the Order of Preachers over 800 years ago to proclaim the gospel to all people. In 1206 he began with a small group of women in Prouilhe, France. He catechized these Cathars; they became Catholics. The Cathars held a dualistic world view through which they lived poor, simple lives and preached the gospel.¹ In the next few years community members and buildings at Prouilhe grew to embrace the sisters, the friars, and women and men of the Dominican laity.

According to Barbara Beaumont OP, “the sisters were part of its mission from the outset, and by no means just a pious adjunct.. Their prayers were complementary to the preaching mission in that they were in themselves efficacious for the salvation of souls.”² It is here at Prouilhe that the Holy Preaching, an early name for the Dominicans, became a foundation for the Dominican family.³ In 2010 the Dominican Order web page describes the family of Preachers, Dominicans preach the Word of God. This is our one vocation, lived out in a variety of states of life: friars, cloistered nuns, apostolic sisters, and many different groups of lay people. We are a religious order within the Roman Catholic Church.⁴

Dominican spirituality consists of four pillars, namely, prayer, study, community, and preaching.⁵ Contemplation, the first pillar, is the source of life and preaching. Ann Willits describes Dominic, “The primary source of Dominic’s preaching was Dominic’s contemplative relationship with God which gave him the silent strength, the joyful gusto, the profound peace to make the WORD his home.”⁶

A thirteenth century Dominican, Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), described the Order, “We contemplate Truth and offer it to others through preaching and teaching. Contemplare et contemplata aliis tradere.”⁷

Assiduous study is a second pillar. Here Thomas Aquinas live study as a spiral that embraces and connects prayer to apostolic preaching, teaching and writing. Dominic emphasized study “as the vital tool for effectively preaching the Word of God and correctly interpret it for the salvation of God’s people”⁸

Catherine of Siena, a Dominican lay woman (1347-80), contributes to Dominican life. After joining the Mantellate, a group of Dominican widows, she lived in a solitary room within her family home in her room for three years. In her solitude, Catherine was wrapped in God. In her Dialogue, we hear of her profound mystical experience with God and revelation from God. Catherine was reluctant to leave her room. However, she learned through prayer that Christ had other plans. As she wept, she heard Christ saying to her, “Dearest daughter, remember that I have laid down two commandments of love: love of me and love of your neighbour. ‘On these two commandments,’ as I myself bore witness, ‘depend the Law and the Prophets.’ It is the justice of these two commandments that I want you now to fulfil. On two feet you must walk my way; on two wings you must fly to heaven.”⁹

Catherine left her seclusion and spent many years in caring for the poor and victims of the Plague. She became a peace-maker for the warring Italian city states and restoring the papacy by bringing back Pope Gregory XI from Avignon to Rome. She formed her “family” of followers with whom she kept up voluminous correspondence. Her great love for the crucified and risen Lord moved her to seek the common good at no small cost to herself.

Community life is a third pillar. By living together members learn how to contemplate and study as well as how to be sister or brother to one another. Members share their joys and frustrations, their insights and limitations. They strengthen one another in daily living, in conversation, in study, in sharing meals and



praying the Hours of the Church. Dominicans are sent out for their preaching ministry from a local community and return there to share the experience.

A story in the tradition describes the importance of common life as a basis for the fourth pillar, preaching. In 1510, Spanish Dominican Friars arrived in Hispaniola (Dominican Republic and Haiti). There they saw how Spaniards treated the Indians cruelly and unjustly. They considered them as less than slaves. The friars befriended many indigenous people. They shared life with them daily. When the friars complained to the authorities of their inhuman treatment of the Indians, the authorities patronized the Friars.

Finally, the friars knew they could not remain silent. They prayed, studied the gospel and wrote a homily together. They signed their names to the text. Antonio des Montesinos was chosen to preach in Advent, 1511. His homily was based on, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness. . ." (John 1:23).

Montesinos preached, 'I am the voice of Christ crying out in the desert of this island. Therefore, it would do you well to listen with all your heart to this voice which will be the most novel, the sharpest, the toughest, the most shocking and dangerous voice you have ever heard. You live and die in mortal sin for the cruelty and tyranny done against these innocent peoples. With what right and by which justice do you hold these Indians in such horrible servitude? With what authority do you carry out such detestable wars against the people of these lands – people so meek and peaceful? – How can you hold these peoples so oppressed and fatigued? You kill them in order to acquire your precious gold every day. Are these not human beings? Are you not obliged to love them as you love yourselves?'¹⁰

Montesinos was asked to retract his homily. He did not. He died before there was any substantial change in the treatment of the indigenous people. 500 years later the new Master of the Dominican Order, Bruno Cadoré, speaks of his attraction to the Dominicans because of their joyful community life and prayer. As a pediatrician he was sent to Haiti for two years. There he learned the gospel with the people. As Master of the Order, fr Cadoré will learn about the varied ministries of the Dominican family throughout the world.¹¹

One group is the Dominican Sisters International (DSI) that was established in May 1995. Their goals include: Supporting one another in living out our identity as women preachers; facilitating communication and networking; fostering a more compassionate world through promoting peace and justice, integrity of creation and human rights; exploring and fostering collaborating initiatives among the Dominican family.¹²

Another group is the Dominican laity of Austin, Texas. Since 1993, the Dominican Preaching Team formed fifty members in three communities (English and Spanish). They meet monthly for two hours for prayer, study, dialogue and decision making. Each group lives the four Dominican characteristics, in particular, ministry of the Word, is at the heart of their lives. The Team encourages each member to define a preaching ministry before making permanent commitment to the Order. Some Spanish-speaking have given three-night evangelization missions in the neighbourhoods to form small faith communities. Many accompany the Team in giving Parish Missions. Some present the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults in their parishes, others give reflections at wake services or while taking Communion to the sick. One member has been a street preacher for years working with drug addicts.¹³

The Dominican family has a long tradition of world-wide witness for the Holy Preaching.
Mary Margaret Pazdan, OP

¹ For more information about the Cathars, see <http://www.cathar.info/>

² Barbara Beaumont, OP, "The Coming of the Preachers," at <http://www.domlife.org/2006Stories/InternationalCommissions.htm> AR

³ Ibid.

⁴ <http://curia.op.org/en/>

⁵ Don Goergen, OP, http://www.domlife.org/dlc/Resources/DonGoergen_Pillars.pdf. In this article, he re-names the "pillars."

⁶ Ann Willits, OP, Catherine's Café, <http://catherinescafe.blogspot.com/> October 15, 2009.

⁷ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, Q. 188, A. 7.

⁸ Joseph Ellul, OP, "Master DOMINIC and the Grace of Preaching," <http://www.op-stjoseph.org/author/Gillen/2010/02>

⁹ Raymond of Capua, *The Life of Catherine of Siena*, trans. Conleth Kearns (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1980), part two, chapter 1, section 121. .

¹⁰ http://curia.op.org/roma2010/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&i...

¹¹ You Tube, *Order of Preachers*, September 7, 2010.



12http://www.dsiop.org/web/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=53...

13 Helen Marie Raycraft, OP.

- See more at: http://www.sinsinawa.org/news_events/jubileeOP-family-preachers.html#sthash.0fkwfSBw.dpuf

• **The Consoling Love of Christ: A Reflection on John 11:1-44**

This weekly series of posts is from Dominican Friars Health Care Ministry of New York, a ministry of the Province of St. Joseph centered at St. Catherine of Siena Priory in New York, NY.

According to the Gospel of John, Lazarus of Bethany, the brother of Martha and Mary, was ill, and his sisters sent word to inform Jesus. “Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus,” the Gospel tells us. Still, Jesus stayed where He was for two days before journeying with his disciples to Bethany. By the time Jesus arrived, Lazarus was already dead and buried. Martha went out to meet Jesus and, in her grief (and perhaps with a hint of anger), said to Him, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” Soon afterward, Mary came to Jesus and, falling at His feet weeping, said the same thing: “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” In Jesus’ response to the grieving sisters and to their dead brother Lazarus, all of whom He loved, we can recognize the ways in which Jesus shows His love for us when we sick or dying or stricken with grief or sorrow.

Jesus responds to Martha by telling her, “Your brother will rise.” Then, to clarify exactly what He means, He says to her, “I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die.” He asks, “Do you believe this?” to which Martha replies, “Yes, Lord. I have come to believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who is coming into the world.”

To Mary, Jesus says nothing. Instead, “When Jesus saw her weeping... he became perturbed and deeply troubled.” What follows is the shortest verse in the Bible: “And Jesus wept.”

Jesus’ response to Lazarus is well known. “Jesus said, ‘Take away the stone.’ ... And when he had said this, he cried out in a loud voice, ‘Lazarus, come out!’ [And] the dead man came out.”

In each of Jesus’ responses to the siblings in Bethany, we can recognize a corresponding dimension of Jesus’ consoling love for the sick and sorrowful.

Let us first consider the response of Jesus to His friend Lazarus in raising him from the dead. This might strike someone who has lost a loved one as being anything but consoling. After all, Jesus does not ordinarily bring our loved ones back to life. Why, one might ask, did Jesus, who had the power to raise Lazarus, not raise up my husband or wife or father or mother? Does Jesus not love that person like he loved Lazarus?

Jesus certainly does love us and our loved ones as He loved his friend Lazarus. To recognize this, there are two things we might consider. One is that the raising of Lazarus, unlike the resurrection of Jesus, was temporary. Lazarus was restored to life, but he would die again. Jesus permitted Lazarus to die just as He permits us and our loved ones to die. Another thing to consider is that Jesus seemed to be unconcerned about Lazarus’ illness. He waited two days before setting out for Bethany to visit Lazarus. However, as Jesus said to his disciples at the time, his delay was not out of unconcern, but “for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through [Lazarus’ illness].”

These considerations show us that Jesus had a loving purpose for Lazarus and what might have seemed like unconcern to Lazarus and his sisters was actually for their good and for the glory of God. Jesus demonstrated through them that He is indeed “the resurrection and the life.” As a result, the Gospel tell us, “Many of the Jews... began to believe in [Jesus]” (John 11:45).

This brings us to Jesus’ response to Martha. Jesus exhorts her to believe that her brother will rise, that he will rise not only on the last day, and that because of his belief in Jesus, he will never die. Jesus tells Martha to believe this even before He raises Lazarus. In saying this, Jesus is asking Martha to trust Him. His message to us is the same. We can trust in Jesus even when he seems to have been absent. We can trust in Jesus even in the face of death, believing that death is not the end because Jesus is “the resurrection and the life.”



Now we come to Jesus' response to Mary. "Jesus wept." He wept even though He knew He was about to raise Lazarus from the dead and that Lazarus would share in His resurrected life forever. He wept because He loved Lazarus and the death of His friend made Him sad. He wept because Mary was weeping. Jesus loved Mary and in His love He shared in her grief. Jesus weeps with us too. He loves us as He loved Mary. Jesus is fully human. He loves us with a human love and shares in our human grief. Jesus sympathizes with us in every way (see Heb. 4:15). He is a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief (see Isa. 53:3). In his tears, we know the consolation of his love.

Fr. Jonah Pollock, O.P., Associate Director, Dominican Friars Health Care Ministry of New York

• The President of Malta visits the Social Development Centre of the Maltese Dominican Community in Albania

H E President Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, and Mr Preca, on the 18 February during her state visit to Albania visited the Social Development Centre for Children and Youths in Lagjja Mirdita, Durres, which is run by the Maltese Dominican Community in Albania. To accompany the president a large Maltese delegation was delighted by the festive and grateful welcome of the local Albanian community.

Following a programme of traditional folk music and dance, the President was shown around the premises by the director of the center Father Geoffrey Bugeja O.P. Who in his address showed how " Three years ago plans were prepared foreseeing a Social Centre with the best possible conditions to serve the many needs of the people in this village and in the villages nearby. The foundations of this centre were laid and today we can appreciate the completed project. Here we now have halls in which to teach catechism and where personal and social education can be offered. We hope soon to start activities at the kindergarten and also to offer basic medical help and organize after school activities, together with other types of recreation and sports. We wish to offer a healthy environment in which the various services could be offered in the context of the holistic formation of people.

All along these twenty years we have intensely and constantly felt the support of the Maltese people who, although they live on a small island with few natural resources, they are immensely generous. Their generosity shows itself both through their financial support through different fund-raising activities, and by a hands-on experience of voluntary work here. Many are the persons and groups who at their own expense come to Albania and freely offer their material and educational services in support of our mission."

The President inaugurated the new kindergarten facilities of the Centre, which like the other parts of the Centre were made possible thanks to the financial contributions of people from Malta and Gozo.

The President, who previously visited Durres two years ago when the Centre was still in its early construction stages, remarked that seeing the progress which has been done in the space of two years "is a big surprise, but it also touched my heart", and that the whole centre is a reminder and a confirmation of the kind-heartedness of the people of Malta and Gozo.

Whilst addressing those present, the President said that she looks forward to welcoming the young people of Durres to Malta as she proposed that youth exchanges between Malta and Lagjja Mirdita are organised.

On the 19th of September 2015 in a festive environment, a new and bigger church situated near the centre was blessed by the Maltese Auxiliary Bishop of Tirana-Durres Mgr. George Frendo O.P. and the Centre inaugurated by the Master of Dominican Order, Fr. Bruno Cadoré O.P. For this occasion were many volunteers from Malta who participated.

• St Thomas Aquinas' Summa Theologica in the palm of your hands

The Summa Theologica of St Thomas Aquinas is now available in an App for Android devices. The App is called "Sth It"

This application allows users to read, search the Summa by keywords, by parts, by treatises and by indexes all in Latin. In it, each item of the Summa has its own identification number – index of the Corpus Thomisticum project. (<http://www.corpusthomisticum.org>).



Users can navigate the menus in five different languages: English, Spanish, French, Polish and Italian.

The App was designed and developed by fr Andrzej Nakonieczny, a son of the Province of Poland. Copyright of the Latin text belongs to the Fundación Tomás de Aquino (2015).

The aim of the application is to provide students and scholars a tool for basic research on Thomas Aquinas, tools that could also be useful during lectures, seminars etc. According to the developer, it can also be an open source project for anyone who is interested.

The App is available for free download and once downloaded it is available offline. You can download it either from Googleplay Store or from Amazon Store.

• **Thomism for the New Evangelization**

Free e-booklet online

"What is the significance of Thomism in our own era? Why be a Thomist today? The answers presented here serve only as a thumbnail sketch, a little charter regarding the challenges of evangelization—the new evangelization in the Church today and why St. Thomas's theology is so vital for this task. I am going to give six brief points as to why Thomism matters.

I remember talking to a young priest many years ago after we had done some evangelization in England for a weekend retreat, and he said to me, "You know it's funny how much of the battle is in the mind." What he meant was that we think the struggle for the Catholic faith is primarily in the heart—that conversion is in the heart. Of course, a lot of the battle is in the heart—to discover Christ, to give ourselves to God, to consent, to surrender, to trust, to love, to find peace; but it is also the case that half the battle is in the mind. And that means that actually, a lot of the message of the Church regarding human happiness is about the intellect—intellectual happiness. How does the intellect provide for our deepest happiness? By giving us ultimate perspective. If you know where your true good lies, you can love that good, and in loving that good, you can remain at peace, even in the midst of the storms of life."

A new booklet from fr Thomas Joseph White OP, Director of the Thomistic Institute in Washington DC begins in this way, and it is being offered online in PDF format as a resource particularly for University students. In an increasingly secular age, the truth expounded by St Thomas Aquinas can help re-orientate us and chart a way forward for those seeking true perspective, happiness and meaning in life. In our Jubilee year, the Order has been blessed by God to have in St Thomas a distinctive gift to the Church and to the world: the perennial philosophy of St Thomas, who thus remains the 'common doctor' of the Church. This short booklet explains why, and it can be downloaded freely from here and shared widely.

• **The Dominican Bethesda Center at Isiro for People with Disabilities**

Witnesses of Compassion: A Series on the Vocation of Cooperator Brothers in the Order

The vocation of the Cooperator brothers in the Order remains a vital part of our preaching mission. In a bid to promote this Vocation, we will be featuring the works of different Cooperator brothers from different parts of the world. We invite you to follow this series on the website of the Order (www.op.org) and on IDI. This month, we are featuring:

Brother José BOLABOTO of the General Vicariate of DR Congo and the Bethesda Center for People with Disabilities at Isiro

Living with the Deaf is not a phenomenon that would outrage the world today, though it takes some understanding and appropriate behavior to achieve it.

The Bible does not remain indifferent towards the good ways of living with the deaf (cf. Lev. 19:14). And the same Bible teaches us how to be advocates for people with disabilities in general and especially those who cannot speak for themselves (cf. Prov. 31:8-9).

It is in this context that the Order of Preachers does not remain silent to these urgent calls to offer compassion to our brothers and sisters with reduced mobility, especially the deaf from the town of Isiro in



the north of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Four members of the Dominican family are now working together to share the warmth of this apostolate, two Dominican brothers (one priest brother and one cooperator brother), a sister of the Dominican Missionary Evangelizers of the Family and a lay Dominican.

In this apostolate, the team takes care to educate and teach children with disabilities in a center which includes a special school complex, a physiotherapy service, a cutting and sewing workshop and a pharmacy. Still in development are the carpentry, mechanical, and computer workshops and a polyclinic.

1. Education of the Deaf and Training of Teachers

At first, the formation of our sign-language teachers takes a period of two weeks before they start their work; surprisingly, they demonstrated a facility to collaborate together but there is still much more to do for the special training of the group. This training is more focused on sign language and learning to live with the deaf.

Because we cannot claim to work with the deaf through an integrative framework without thinking of improving their environment, this training will also strive to demonstrate to the people of Isiro an awareness of the importance and the relevance of schooling for deaf-mute children. At the beginning our school for the Deaf in Isiro had 18 students. Today the number is a little higher.

2. Evangelization of the Deaf-Mute in Isiro (Historical Aspect)

“In that day the deaf will hear the words of the scroll, and out of gloom and darkness the eyes of the blind will see.” (Isaiah 29:18). That day in Isiro was Sunday, September 15, 2013 at 6:30 a.m. when the first Mass was celebrated by Fr. Emmanuel of the Consolata Congregation at Saint Kizito Church. The scripture passage from the Old Testament was fulfilled in Isiro through the sign language interpretation of our brother trainer MONTENDA LIBANGE MONGA Alomo at the Mass.

As is the custom in Catholic schools in our country, a Mass of thanksgiving for the opening of the school year 2013-2014 was organized within the Bethesda center with the provision of sign language interpretation.

3. Catechesis for the Deaf-Mute

We would not overlook the aspect of offering catechesis to the deaf because the Lord Jesus Christ himself recommended it as recorded in the Gospel of Matthew (28,19-20): "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all ...".

Certainly as it is said, “faith comes from hearing the word of God” (cf., Rom 10:17). Due to this response found in scripture, the Dominicans of the Bethesda Centre in Isiro say that for someone to hear well the Word of God (catechesis), it has to be in an appropriate language, that is to say, a language that someone can understand, hear, and speak well; because of this, the language used for those who are deaf-mute is sign language. Since, the sacraments are the source of life for all Catholic Christians, they are desirable even for those who are deaf-mute granted that they are administered in a language they can understand.

“How do we administer the sacraments to this group of people?” This question is not new to this century. However, the available literature indicates that the Catholic Church did not remain indifferent to it. She tried, gradually, to address this issue through the mediation of significant persons in the Church and many other lay people (the faithful). Such people include: Saint Jerome (fifth century), St. Thomas Aquinas (thirteenth century), The abbot of E’pée (1712 to 1899), Montenda Libange Alomo Monga (currently an educator and interpreter for the deaf and mute in Bethesda Centre in Isiro)

4. At Isiro, Hope is Reborn for the Deaf-Mute

Today, people with disabilities are shown hope when we can better carry out the evangelization of the deaf, first by learning their language (sign language) and by following the examples and experiences of those noted above.

Together with the help of the Lord who is the overseer of all and our own commitment and determination, always praying, especially to the Blessed Virgin Mary who is the patron of the Order of Preachers in general, as well as the deaf-mute, we can succeed.



At Isiro, this apostolate that did not seem to interest the people, or even the parents of our deaf children, now begins to raise awareness to those around us. The protective arms of love, patience and prayer emerge and attract men and women to the bedside of this category of people who were long considered useless and stupid.

A special mention to the Italian Episcopal Conference who have continued to support the construction of the Centre where we will erect buildings for workshops and classrooms.

Brother José BOLABOTO, OP

• **Iraqi Religious Sister's Plea**

My name is Sr. Caroline Saeed Jarjis. I was born in Baghdad, Iraq, into a Catholic Christian family. My father is a now retired engineer and my mother was a teacher and principal at a High School. I graduated from the Technical Medicine University in the field of hemodialysis. I entered the Congregation of the Daughters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in 1998. I professed my solemn vows in 2007.

My congregation, founded in 1911 by Fr. Abdal Ahad Rais, who studied with the Dominicans in Mosul, has suffered many tragedies throughout its history. The most tragic being that of our first martyr: Sr. Cecilia Moshi Hanna. On August 15, 2002, three armed assailants entered our convent in Baghdad and found our seventy-one year old Sister Cecilia preparing to quietly retire to her room. She was brutally attacked by the dagger-wielding assailants and repeatedly stabbed to death. Sr. Cecilia's neck was slit and her head severed from her body.

ISIS has misplaced more than 100,000 Christians and other minorities following attacks. Many were given less than half an hour to flee their houses. Most of the displaced Christian adults are educated professionals – doctors, engineers, architects, government workers, teachers and university professors– who were providing services to the Iraqi people. Now their future is uncertain.

Our congregation responded to the needs of our Christian brothers and sisters and others by opening our Generalate House to welcome displaced girls and women (ages 13-50) and a rest home for elderly women. However, in December 2014, ISIS bombed the Generalate House destroying it completely, leaving only the cross of our church standing (!) This has served as a beacon to our sisters that all will pass and that someday we will return!

I started my bachelor's degree in the Faculty of Social Sciences at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas in 2010 after a recommendation from the Dominican friars in Mosul who play an important role in Iraqi society and in my own personal life. I was convinced that through my studies in the social sciences combined with the Catholic social teaching of the Church and the Dominican tradition of social justice, which are the main characteristics of this Faculty, I could better accompany my Iraqi people from darkness into light, from a culture of death to a culture of life that respects the dignity of every human being.

For my fellow Iraqi religious sisters and me it has been extremely difficult to find funding to continue our studies and pursue our dreams. My dream is to return to Iraq and especially help abused, neglected and trafficked women with my studies at the Angelicum. I'm on my final year of the license program after having obtained my bachelor's degree in 2014.

Other Iraqi religious sisters, brothers, priests and laymen and women may follow in my footsteps to the Angelicum. The Church in Iraq has been a shining witness amid the misery. Two bishops, several priests, and more than 100 displaced sisters are still living among the people, helping them and sharing in their sorrows. My fervent plea to you is to care for your Iraqi Christian brothers and sisters that are suffering! Help us help them!

To help, you can donate through The International Dominican Funds by clicking here) – <http://internationaldominicanfoundation.org/donate/>



• **Conference “The Sciences of Islam, Between Repetition and Innovation: What is it to comment in Islam?”**

The news of this month was marked by an important event: the hosting of an international conference. It was the first time IDEO organized such a conference, and, according everyone’s feedback, it was a successful one. This newsletter is in large part dedicated to it.

Conference “The Sciences of Islam, Between Repetition and Innovation: What is it to comment in Islam?”

On January 14–16, IDEO organized a conference devoted to the genre of commentary in post-classical Islam (6th–13th century A.H./12th–19th century A.D.). Opened by the President of Al-Azhar University, this conference concluded the “200 Project” which began in March 2013 and aimed at the historical contextualization of the works of 200 major authors of the Arabic and Islamic heritage. The “200 Project” was funded by the European Delegation in Cairo.

The results of the “200 Project” are available on the online catalogue of our library. For each book, in addition to the classical information displayed on the left side of the screen, we present, on the right side, information regarding the works themselves: their editorial history, their cultural history (commentaries, refutations, complements, imitations...), and the relations that their authors have with other authors (masters, disciples, family...) After three years of research, we have processed around 190 authors, which represents 15% of the 200,000 bibliographical records that our catalogue contains.

The January conference aimed at continuing the work of Mellon Sawyer Seminary (University of California, Berkeley, October 12–14, 2012) which was devoted to the commentary genre and its sub-genres (margins, glosses, notes...). Sixteen speakers presented a paper, coming from twelve countries and eight universities. They also met in small groups to share their insights. Fifty people attended the conference. Here, we will present only the questions that were posed at the end of the conference.

Two Visions of the Commentaries

It seems that there are two conflicting visions. The first vision focuses on the irreducible diversity of commentaries, according to place, epoch, relevant science, and the forms these commentaries take. This vision refuses to search for common points between them. The second vision tries to characterize periods, evolutions, and constants. On this behalf, it seems that the systematization on the Ottoman madrasas in the 8th century A.H./14th century A.D. is a turning point in the intellectual activity and the production of commentaries.

The Sociology of Teaching Commentaries

Whatever these broad visions may be, the speakers all agree that any serious study of a given commentary cannot ignore the sociological context in it was produced (sponsors/patronage, pedagogy, the authors’ motivation).

The Functions of Commentaries

The Berkley seminar studied in depth the varied functions of commentaries, in particular in philosophy. Some speakers presented texts that served a bases for pedagogical commentaries, although they contain ideas that oppose a given teaching (which could be labeled an a contrario teaching). Some speakers also insisted on a function of commentaries being that of a harmonisation between two opposing theories. Commentaries on medicine or on jurisprudence, often functioned to update the teaching of the author to work in new contexts. Lastly, one speaker highlighted a “liturgical” sufi function held by some theological commentaries in South-East Asia.

Issue 32 of MIDEO is devoted to this topic, and will publish certain papers from the conference as well as remain open to other contributions.

Lectures

From January 27–31, fr. Alberto Ambrosio, OP gave a session on Sufism to the Dominicans sisters at the monastery of Saint-Jean Baptiste in Orbey (Alsace).



On January 30th, fr. Emmanuel Pisani, OP delivered a lecture on the topic of “Is Islam Intrinsicly Violent?” This lecture was delivered at the Agora-Tête-d’Or in Lyon, during a study day titled “Turn the Other Cheek? Violence & Religion” organized by the Jesuits, the Oratorians, and the Dominicans of Lyon.

Visits

This month we received at the Scholars’ house, Mr. Zoltán Szombathy, professor at the Catholic University of Budapest, in the context of our continuing cooperation together.

Publications

Alberto Fabio Ambrosio, *Quand les soufis parlent aux chrétiens. À la rencontre d’un islam fraternel*, Paris : Bayard, 2016.

Alberto Fabio Ambrosio, « Libertà religiosa: Diritto di libertà interiore » in *Missioni consolata* 118, January-February 2016, p. 63–67. To read the text online...

• St Dominic and the Preaching of Mercy

I consider it truly providential that the Dominican Jubilee to celebrate 800 years of the Order of Preachers should overlap with Jubilee Year of Mercy. St Dominic’s life was characterised by the practise of mercy and, ever since, his example has inspired men and women to follow him in the Order as Preachers of God’s mercy.

St Dominic’s legacy to the Church is an Order that at its best faithfully lives its motto of Veritas (truth). St Dominic realised that the truth was not merely something that we know, but a way of living which saves. He was acutely aware of how many people, even within Christendom, had not properly heard this saving truth and, motivated by mercy, he desired to share this truth with as many as possible. He saw the lie in any attempt to oppose mercy to truth. Pope Francis expresses this same insight when he says: ‘The Church condemns sin because it has to relay the truth: “this is a sin”. But at the same time, it embraces the sinner who recognises himself as such, it welcomes him, it speaks to him of the infinite mercy of God. Jesus forgave even those who crucified and scorned him.’ Mercy does not ignore sin, nor does it reject the sinner.

The accounts of St Dominic’s life are not as full as one would wish, but we learn from them of a hugely impressive character, worthy of emulation. One surprising element of his life is just how reactive it was; there was no single pivotal moment of divine inspiration in which the shape of his life’s mission and the Order became clear to him. We observe a man continually reacting to changing circumstances, and always with mercy and fidelity.

St Dominic was born in the small Spanish town of Caleruega in the early 1170s. At an early age, he was marked out by his parents for a clerical career. Even before the foundation of the Order, whilst he was still a university student in Palencia, we see mercy manifesting itself in his life. There was a severe famine and people were dying of hunger; so Dominic sold everything he owned, including the books which were so precious to him, to provide for the needy, saying, ‘I do not want to study dead skins, while people are dying of hunger’. He saw need, felt compassion, and acted.

Similarly, we know that whilst he was in Rome in 1217, liaising with the Pope on what form the Order would take, he would regularly go and visit the recluses who lived in often appalling conditions in the old walls of Rome. This calls to mind Pope Francis’s visiting of the slums and his constant and necessary refrain that nobody is beyond the mercy of God. As he says, the Church must take God’s mercy to these people now, not wait for them to take the initiative. This is precisely what St Dominic would go on to do.

Travelling with his Bishop whilst still a Cathedral Canon of Osma, St Dominic became aware that, in certain parts of the Church, there was a chasm between what the Church preached and how its clerics behaved. He saw that the answer was not to water down the teaching, but to live it more radically. He was prepared to undertake whatever hardships were necessary to bring the mercy of God to sinners and saw that it was going to be necessary to be increasingly like the Apostles. He had not sold his books in Palencia because he had renounced learning. Nor was his decision permanently to leave his position as a Canon in Osma because he



no longer wished to live in one place. Rather, because he saw so much suffering due to sin, he was moved to do something different from what the Church was currently doing.

His compassion for sinners would often result in him spending nights before the Cross, weeping and crying out to the Lord to have mercy on sinners and he was often heard beseeching the Lord, ‘What will become of sinners?’ People were starving for truth and he was determined that they should hear it and he desired that they be converted through love, not coerced by force.

It is worth returning to those books he sold in Palencia briefly. We can be sure that when money was available he would have bought books again, and he always travelled with St Matthew’s Gospel and the Pauline Epistles. From the very outset he wanted the Order to be present in the major university cities. He wanted his friars to be well-educated; for to live as a Christian we must know what Christianity is. Theology is an effort to listen attentively to what God has to say to us, and we do well to listen because He knows us better than we know ourselves and He loves us better than we love ourselves. Theology is at once doctrinal and practical and we cannot separate the two aspects. The truths of dogmatic theology do not fall away in the pastoral realm. Christ is at once Truth and Life and we cannot separate our knowledge of Him from our life in Him.

St Dominic would have recoiled at the notion, held by some, that mercy is nothing more than an absence of justice, whereby the fullness and grandeur of mercy is reduced to the notion of doing nothing in an instance where, but for compassion, there would have been punishment. This is a false notion. God’s gratuitous mercy is not a miscarriage of justice. God’s mercy is active and not a feeling which suspends action.

Over the course of his life, it became increasingly clear to St Dominic that the Church required a permanent preaching mission bringing the truth in love where there is error. As Cardinal Nichols has written, we all long ‘for the embrace of mercy, the love that accepts us as we are, and, at the same time, calls us to become what we are made to be.’ Christian love is demanding because it asks us to do awkward things. Most of us, I hope, would be happy not to stone someone committing adultery. The tough part in our current day and age is inviting them to stop sinning even if on some level they seem happy.

This to me is a great challenge for today’s Dominicans and the Church at large. We need to make the cliché of ‘Love the sinner, hate the sin’, a reality. Too often, the Church’s teaching is heard as condemning people, and undoubtedly on occasion, I have spoken the truth in a way divorced from love, at which point it ceases to be the Truth, who is a person and who is Love. At the same time, as Archbishop Charles Chaput points out, we cannot abandon truth, for while, ‘truth without compassion wounds and repels; mercy without truth is a comfortable form of lying.’ Speaking the truth, even when it is uncomfortable is a proof of our love. Yet that truth will only really convince when it is felt to be motivated by love. This was the motivation of St Dominic’s life and we are called to make it ours in this Jubilee and beyond.

Br Toby Lees OP

• **Launch of Online Exhibition - Jubilee 800**

Cambridge University Library is hosting an online exhibition revealing 800 years of Dominican books: Pipeline from Heaven.

The exhibition is the result of a fruitful collaboration* between academics and the Dominican friars at Blackfriars priory in Cambridge. It offers a dazzling array of images accompanied by fascinating commentary, exploring everything from medieval illuminations to modern woodcuts, and much more.

Since their beginnings in the 13th Century, Dominicans have created a rich heritage of books to support their life and mission: illustrated biblical texts and commentaries; liturgical books; theological treatises; manuals for confessors; sermon collections; and histories of the New World which champion the rights of indigenous peoples. The works display a diversity of illustrations from medieval miniatures, to 17th-Century engravings, to woodcuts made by Eric Gill and his circle of Lay Dominicans at Ditchling.



>>>VISIT THE EXHIBITION<<<

<https://exhibitions.lib.cam.ac.uk/dominicans/case/pipeline-from-heaven/>

* The exhibition is curated by Professor Nigel Morgan and Fr Richard Finn OP, and based on books and manuscripts held by the Cambridge University Library, the Fitzwilliam Museum, and the Cambridge colleges.

Official News

• Fr Rafael Colomé is the New Vicar Provincial of the Vicariate of the Province of Hispania in South America

Fr Rafael Colomé Angelats has been elected as the Vicar Provincial of the Vicariate of the Province of Hispania in South America. This happened at the first Elective Chapter of the friars of Uruguay and Paraguay held at Montevideo, Uruguay.

Fr Rafael was born in 1956 at La Granada, Barcelona, Spain. He made his religious profession in the Order in 1976 at Valencia and was ordained to the priesthood 1982 at Coban, Guatemala. He has degrees in Theology and Psychology and has been involved in various pastoral and academic apostolates. Before his election, he was the Prior and Master of Students at the Convent of San José, Buenos Aires.

The following brothers were also elected into the Vicariate Council; Fr Fernando Sola, Fr Santiago Fernandez, Fr Edgar Amado Toledo and Fr Ramón Figueras.

Calendar of the Master of the Order for March 2016

Feb 28-March 6: Visitation to the Province of Bohemia
7: Meeting with the Archbishop of Bologna at Bologna
8-10: New Provincials Workshop at Santa Sabina
13-19: Visitation to Slovakia
24-28: Holy Week and Easter Celebrations at Santa Sabina
March 30-April 2: IEOP Assembly at Croatia

All articles are available on www.op.org