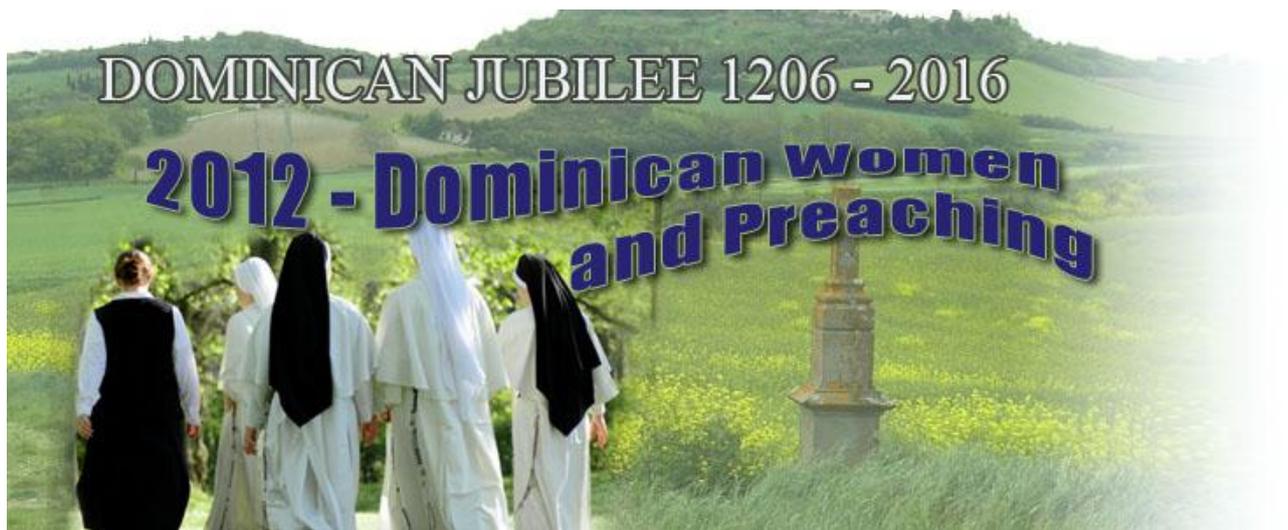




ORDER OF PREACHERS



Dominican Women and Preaching

During this year that the Order has dedicated to the reflection on “female” preaching, it is appropriate to ask ourselves whether we Dominican women are truly preaching, what is the scope of our announcement and what message are we conveying.

I have asked myself these questions and with nostalgia for Dominic, I must admit that my preaching after many, too many years at the Superior General level in my congregation, is not turned to the Cumans, rather to the inside of the Order and of the Church.

In fact, I preach to the sisters from various congregations in addition to those of our Union and to the Novices from North-Western Italy. It is to them that I convey what *I have seen and heard* and my message focuses on three topics that have been at the centre of my reflection for years.

I firstly Preach the “Presence”, the Shekinah as our Hebrew brothers would say, because the perception of the Lord constantly by my side gives strength and hope to my life and service. What goes through my hands is guarded by the Lord who entrusts me with it and I am certain that He supports it with care, preventing me to ruin it with my fragility and incompetence.

The awareness of the divine Presence keeps us in apprehension and in confident expectance of His help and inspiration.

That is why I preach the need to listen, especially an invitation to an obedient listening of the Word of God in a constant fidelity to the exercise of study and prayer of the *lectio divina*.



In an atmosphere of silence, to which I invite every community, I preach the beauty of the Scriptures and the joy of discovering in them the face and the “style of God” to learn to live as His relatives.

However, I also urge to listen to the instances of history through which God speaks to us. I invite to document ourselves to know the truth and to look at the events of the world and the circumstances of our daily life with the optimism of those who know that *everything cooperates for the good of those who love God*, but also with the responsible commitment and prayer of those who know they live in the “*already but not yet*”.

I preach the communion, as a fruit of the evangelical announcement, in a constant opening to welcome new sisters and brothers. I invite to live in communion, not with a strenuous voluntarism rather with a humble acknowledgement of the respective fragility that opens to an exchange and gratitude. I preach the communion that stems from a convergence toward the only Lord and is founded on the mercy received and given.

That is the only way you may contemplate the beauty of Dominic’s *nacelle*, where, as Sainte Catherine says, all are at ease, whether perfect or imperfect.

Strengthened by this communion, I once again pose my questions to all my Dominican sisters:
Are we, Dominican women, truly preaching?
What is the scope of our announcement?
What is our message?

“May the Lord transform us into a temple of preaching, a house of prayer and of perennial praise”

Sister Edvige Tamburini, Union of Dominican sisters of St. Thomas of Aquinas

Echoes from The Canonical Visitation in The Province of Toulouse

From Wednesday 7 to Sunday 18 March 2012, the Master of the Order, Bro. Bruno Cadoré was on a canonical visitation in our Province. It is an exceptional moment which happens ones in an average of 5 to 10 years. The objective of such a visitation is to support the Dominican Life in the Province.

On Monday March 5, the two assistants of the Master of the Order, Bros. Vivian Boland and Bernardino Prella arrived in Bordeaux to work on various issues with the provincial. The tone was set: fraternity and serious work.

At his arrival, the Master of the Order quickly moved on to various meetings with brothers in all the convents of the Province, setting aside the communities of Haïti and La Réunion for later. He began with a long meeting with each community, in order to feel the situations and to give a feedback after all the personal meetings. Particularly, he meet with the provincial Council on Formation, the students brothers of Bordeaux and Toulouse; some members of the Dominican Family etc.

On the Sunday, March 11, the Master met with different Sisters and Nuns Prioresses in Prouilhe. At this meeting, the Master raised the awareness of the importance of collaborative works between the sisters and the friars.

Numerous issues were tackled during this canonical visitation . Issues like; common life, liturgy, study, formation, the Jubilee of the Order, promotion of vocations, new evangelisation, apostolic involvements in the Church and in the world, collaborations in the Dominican Family etc. It seems



overwhelming but it has to do with the richness of the Dominican life in the Province of Toulouse just as it is in all the other provinces of the Order.

The canonical visitation ended with the intervention of the Master of the Order, on Sunday April 18, at the convent of Toulouse, in front of the provincial council. This concluding intervention will be completed by a written text which will indicate some elements of reflections, giving ideas to the friars, the convents, the Dominican family on the various issues discussed

All the friars have witnessed the fraternal spirit of this visitation, as well as the deep work of our visitors, who were willing to recognize the existing good in the province and prompted us to take further steps to progress. What a beautiful Dominican Charity! It has been a grace filled visitation which will bear much fruit with time.

The Divine Mercy: V.I.P. Access

Over the past decade I have noticed that everything seems to be offered to consumers with a “V.I.P. upgrade.” There’s the sporting event or concert that has an upgrade to include dinner, valet parking, and a collector’s item from the home team or the band. Then there’s the V.I.P. ticket to the amusement park, which lets you bypass the long lines while the average Joe waits for hours. Now that we’re in the digital age, there are many websites that have free content, but if you want the full experience or unlimited access, you can [opt for the “platinum” \(or V.I.P.\) membership](#). Of course, unless you’re a person with “connections,” all of these upgrades come with a price tag.

To draw a somewhat playful analogy, you might say that the Catholic Church offers the V.I.P. experience of Christianity. Oftentimes you’ll hear this referred to in more sober terms as “the fullness of the faith.” Now, the paramount privilege of our Catholic faith is the grace we receive through the sacraments, and this Sunday we celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday, which calls our attention to the sacrament of Reconciliation in particular.

Established by Blessed Pope John Paul II in the year 2,000 (the Great Jubilee year), Divine Mercy Sunday now marks its twelfth anniversary on the General Roman Calendar. Although Christ’s revelations to Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska, as found in her diary, remain private revelations and need not be accepted by the individual believer, it is well known that Pope John Paul believed in their authenticity and that they played a key role in prompting him to establish Divine Mercy Sunday. In the diaries, Jesus calls Saint Faustina his “Secretary of His Divine Mercy” and speaks of the love and mercy that he desires to lavish on aching humanity.

In his homily for Divine Mercy Sunday in 2001, Blessed John Paul wrote, “Jesus said to Sr. Faustina one day: ‘Humanity will never find peace until it turns with trust to Divine Mercy.’ Divine Mercy! This is the Easter gift that the Church receives from the risen Christ and offers to humanity at the dawn of the third millennium.”

This Sunday’s Gospel recounts how Christ established the Sacrament of Reconciliation when he appeared to the Apostles in the upper room (John 20:19–31). “Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained.” We can read this in light of Christ’s words in the Gospel of Matthew: “Without cost you have received; without cost you are to give” (10:8). In the Sacrament of Confession, through Christ’s Divine Mercy, we have “V.I.P. access” to the forgiveness of our sins and the healing of our sick souls—free and without charge. Whether it’s been a week or several years or half a lifetime, this weekend go to Confession and use your V.I.P. access to Divine Mercy.

[Br. John Maria Devaney, O.P.](#)



Inter-Europe Order of Preachers Assembly: Lisbon 2012

The Dominican brothers in Europe met at Lisbon for the 2012 assembly of the Inter-Europe Order of Preachers (IEOP). The assembly took place between the 11th and the 14th of April, 2012 and reflected on the theme, “The New Evangelization in Post-Modernity”. The brothers were fully represented by their superiors.

The following were at the assembly; fr. Francisco Javier Carballo Fernández (Provincial, Spain), fr. Gilbert Narcisse (Provincial, Toulouse), fr. Jean-Paul Vesco (Provincial, France), fr. Riccardo Barile (Provincial, St Dominic, Italy), fr. Daniele Cara (Provincial, St Catherine of Sienna, Rome), fr. Francesco La Vecchia (Provincial, St. Thomas Aquinas, Italy), fr. Máté Barna (Vicar General, Hungary), fr. Johannes Bunnenberg (Provincial, Teutonia), fr. Krzysztof Poplawski (Provincial, Poland), fr. Esteban Pérez Delgado (Provincial, Aragon), fr. Benedikt Tomas Mohelnik (Provincial Bohemia), fr. Anto Gavric (Provincial, Croatia), fr. José Manuel Valente da Silva Nunes (Provincial, Portugal), fr. Miguel de Burgos Nunez (Provincial, Betica), fr. Bernard M. Vocking (Provincial, Netherland), fr. Patrick Lucey (Provincial, Ireland), fr. Marcel Braekers (Provincial, Flandria), fr. Paul Gatt (Provincial, Malta), fr. Christophe Holzer (Provincial, South Germany/Austria), fr. Didier Boillat (Provincial, Helvetia), fr. Michel Van Aerde (Vicar General, Belgium), fr. Saulius Rumsas (Vicar General, The Baltics), fr. Maciej Rusiecki (Vicar General, Russia/Ukraine), fr. Reginald Adrian Slavkovsky (Provincial, Slovakia), fr. Pedro Juan Alonso Merino (Regional Vicar, Holy Rosary), fr. Paul Dominique Masiclat (Vicar Provincial, Dacia) and fr. Ivan Arzensek (Vicar Provincial, Slovenia).

The curia team was led by the Master himself, fr. Bruno Cadoré. He came with; fr. Vivian Boland (Socius for North-West Europe/Canada), fr. Wojciech Delik (Socius for Central/Eastern Europe), fr. Bernardino Prella (Socius for Italy/Malta/Iberian Peninsula), fr. Prakash Anthony Lohale (Socius for Apostolic life) and fr. Michael Mascari (Socius for Intellectual Life). The following sisters and brothers were at the assembly as translators; Sr. Marie Laetitia Youchtchenko, Sr Marie-Theo Manaud, fr. Philip McShane, fr. Leo Almazan, fr. Mario Jabares and fr. Jean-Ariel Bauza-Salinas. The task of organizing and coordinating the whole assembly rested on the secretary general of IEOP, fr. Filipe Rodrigues.

Before the reflections began, fr. Jose Manuel Valente da Silva Nunes, the provincial of Portugal welcomed all the brothers to the assembly. The current chairman of IEOP, fr. John Paul Vesco also welcomed everyone especially the new provincials. Papers were delivered by different brothers on different issues relating to the main theme of the assembly. On the first day, fr. Bento Domingues set the balls rolling with a reflection on the question, “What is Modernity?”. Later that same day, Bros. Francesco La Vecchia, Saulius Rumsas and Benedikt Mohelnik gave different accounts of the challenges of post-modernity to evangelization in their different entities.

The Master of the Order, fr. Bruno Cadoré started-off the 2nd day of the assembly with a presentation on the topic, “The Challenges of the New Evangelization in the Heart of the Mission of the Order”. This was followed by a debate among the brothers after which the Master gave the brothers an update on happenings in the Order; the changes in the curia, the new developments from the internet, the new website and IDI, the changes in the institutes under the Master, the preparations for the next general chapter and the Jubilee of the Order. Later that same day, the Master celebrated the Holy Eucharist to mark the 50th anniversary of the restoration of the Portuguese Province.

On the 3rd day of the assembly, there was a workshop on the challenges of post-modernity on initial formation and the intellectual life of the Order in general. To spices up the debate, frs. Vivian Boland, Gilbert Narcisse, Michel Van Arde, Miguel de Burgos and Michael Mascari all made



beautiful presentations. During the sharing, the brothers expressed common concerns from their different provinces; the lack of vocation and the lack of desire for assiduous studies were prominent. There was a call for a common direction in the intellectual formation of the brothers since we share a common intellectual life. The collaboration between the provinces in the form of student exchange was commended and encouraged. In formation, Thomism is part of our tradition, however, we need a common and consistent understanding of Thomism today. In our quest to live a common life, there is still the danger of individuality and diversity even within a province or a community. The brothers all agreed that indeed, we are a universal Order and this must always reflection in our formation.

The last day of the assembly was a more relaxed one. The brothers reflected on; economic matters, the conduct of the assembly and next assembly. It was decided that the next IEOP assembly will be in Mainz, Germany from the 2 to 6 April, 2013 and the brothers will reflection on the documents of Vatican II on religious life.

The assembly was not just for academic reflections and debates. In between the papers and workshops, the brothers had the opportunity for excursions to interesting places to soothe their nerves. They also had good food and rest throughout the assembly. They unanimously acknowledged the fact that the assembly was well organized and they thank fr. Filipe Rodrigues and the host province. Brothers were happy with the presence and input of the Master and the representation from the curia. To end it all, the brothers paid a courtesy call to the Patriarch of Lisbon, José Cardinal Policarpo.

Krakow student journal Teofil celebrates its thirtieth edition

Since 1992, the student-brothers of the Province of Poland have edited *Teofil*, a journal of philosophy and theology. Our journal emerged in the first years of post-Communist freedom within the Krakow priory, which is among the largest Dominican communities in Europe. Over the past two decades, *Teofil* has accompanied readers through an astoundingly creative period in the life of the Church in Poland, examining complicated themes such as the Christian understanding of the human body, ecumenism, Jewish-Christian dialogue and Islam. This semester, in our twentieth year, we are proud to present the thirtieth issue of *Teofil*.

In our anniversary issue, we investigate the mission and identity of our own beloved Order. Included among the 20 articles published in this issue is an unprecedented collection of personal testimonies from seven Dominicans of the Polish Province representing several generations. The oldest of these men entered the Order in 1959 and the youngest in 2009. Among them are a missionary, a parish priest, scholars, a master of formation, students... even a librarian. Each one represents a unique expression of the Dominican charism; each tells the reader in simple, honest terms why he chose the way of the preacher, and why he continues on this path.

Our thirtieth issue also includes new translations of some key texts in the history of our Order, including the first Polish translation of a homily for the Feast of St. Dominic by St. Vincent Ferrer and a large fragment of Henri-Dominique Lacordaire's renowned 1839 essay for the reestablishment of the Order in France, which appears here in the first new Polish translation since 1840. All of our translations are composed and edited by the brothers themselves. We are also proud to bring our readers articles from prominent contemporary Dominicans, including Fathers Allan White and Benedict Ashley.

Our hope is that this anniversary issue, 2000 copies of which are being distributed through Dominican communities and in bookstores around Poland as well as over the Internet, will be of



interest not only to Dominicans. In it, we ask two questions that are fundamental to everyone's life, but which we rarely dare to ask aloud: Who am I, and why am I here?

www.teofil.dominikanie.pl

The 50th Anniversary of The Restoration Of The Dominican Province of Portugal

This year (2012), we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of the restoration of the Portuguese Dominican Province. This will be an occasion of joy, thanksgiving and primarily, of remembering the past not forgetting to evaluate the present and consider the future!

The history of the Dominicans in Portugal is a long one and as we might expect, full of crucial events. The first Dominican friar to arrive in Portugal (1217) was one of saint Dominic's first companions, Fr. Soeiro Gomes. The following year, a convent was established in our territory (Montejunto/Santarem) and in 1275 the Vicariate of Portugal of the Iberian Province was created. The Portuguese Province of the Order of Preachers, however, was not established until 1418.

After centuries of great apostolic work in Portugal and the mission territories, the Dominicans, as all the other religious Orders, were suppressed in the whole of the Portuguese territory (1834). From the beginning of the 20th century, there were renewed interests in the Dominican vocation in our country. Finally, in 1948, some friars from Canada came to Portugal to help in the restoration of the Province and this took place in 1962, with the nomination of Fr. Louis-Marie Sylvain as Provincial. The entire Dominican Family is invited to participate in the commemorative events of the anniversary and especially in the Holy Eucharist. The whole celebration started with the Holy Eucharist on the 11th of March at Fatima. But before then, there were courses in Preaching and Communication at the Convent of St Dominic, Lisbon (Jan 28 – March 17). Before the Eucharistic celebration at the Convent of Our Lady of the Rosary, Fatima, there was also a presentation of a book titled "Portugal Dominicans: Past and Present". On the 12th of April, the Master of the Order, fr. Bruno Cadoré, OP together with the European Provincials celebrated the Holy Eucharist for the anniversary at the Convent of St Dominic, Lisbon. This was at the IEOP Assembly. On the 24th of May, there will be another presentation of the book, "Portugal Dominicans: Past and Present" but this time at the parish of St Dominic of Benfica, Lisbon. There will also be Mass on that day for the feast of St Dominic. On the 6th of October, there will be a colloquium on, "The Restoration of the Dominican Province of Portugal: Memories and Challenges". The closing Mass for the anniversary will be on the 7th of October, at the Convent of Christ the King, Port.

Fr. Jose Nunes

The Monastery of St Catherine of Siena, Cordoba celebrates 400 years

The nuns of the Monastery of St Catherine of Siena, Cordoba in Argentina are filled with joy and immense gratitude to God for giving them 400 years. It has been 400 years of witnessing through the monastic life. The monastery is the first contemplative monastery in the whole of Argentina and it was founded on July 2, 1613.

From May 31, 2012 (the feast of the Visitation of the Virgin Mary) to July 2, 2013, the nuns will be celebrating the 400th anniversary of the foundation of their monastery. According to the prioress of the monastery, Sr. Sandra Monica Lopez, OP, the Jubilee celebration will begin with a Holy Mass on May 31 at the monastery church. The year long celebration will include various religious and cultural events with themes alluding to the commemoration, the contemplative life, cultural and ethical values. After each event, the nuns will entertain their guests with choral renditions. All these will take place in the monastery church on the first Friday of every month.



Sr. Sandra Lopez, OP recalls in history how the monastery started with a humble beginning in the center of the city when Cordoba was just a hamlet. Thanks to God and the Virgin Mary, the nuns have remained in the heart of the big city for 400 years despite the vicissitudes of the past.

The nuns are filled with great joy to inform the whole Order, the entire Church and indeed, the whole world that they have received Apostolic Penitentiary for the grace of gaining a plenary indulgence in their church. This plenary indulgence is for all who visit their church during all solemnities and feasts of the Order throughout the jubilee year.

The nuns are commending the entire celebration into the hands of Our Lord and His Mother for their favour. They are optimistic that it will be a fulfilling celebration and the fruits of the celebration will be for the Church in Argentina, the whole Order, the universal Church and the entire world.

As they continue in their apostolate of prayer, the nuns are asking for our prayers and support specially during this jubilee year.

Shaping our Future with Realism, Daring and Hope

Future of Religious Life of Dominican Sisters

This publication stems from the desire of DSI to share these reflections with others who may find insights here for themselves and their own communities. Approximately two years before the Sixth DSI General Assembly held in Rome in May of 2010, we felt the need to respond to the many hopes and anxieties that we have heard from 153 Congregations of Dominican Sisters about the future of Religious Life and how to prepare for a different tomorrow without being caught unprepared.

A future forecasted for several years has included several concerns and uncertainties, for example, reduction in vocations, financial crises, and poor theological and Dominican formation. We felt that such shared challenges could only be faced in a communal manner and in typical Dominican style: *contemplata aliis tradere*. In order to prepare for the future, we attempted to understand its signs in the present reality, to listen to them, read them and interpret them in light of the Word of God and of experience. This path of contemplation materialized over these two years through the work of Sr. Fabiola with several Congregations in approximately 28 nations of the world, the meeting of experts (Think Tank Meeting, November 2009) in Rome, and the dossier with responses of Sisters to the questionnaire prepared on the theme of the Assembly.

At the end of this long shared path, DSI convened the General Assembly where the General Prioresses or their delegates openly discussed the possible paths to take today, in order to prepare for the future and to prepare ourselves, to contribute to the prophetic action of the Holy Spirit in this history of ours. This publication is the result of this “communal” journey of reflection and analysis. We wish to share it with the rest of the Dominican Family as well as with other religious groups who feel they are facing similar challenges.

The text is structured on the three key words selected for the 2010 Assembly: Realism, Audacity and Hope. This publication provides much the material gathered to date regarding the three topics. Each section is arranged so as to leave the final word to the Sisters as they respond to suggested questions related to the collected materials. Our objective is not to provide a collection of recipes or a final word, rather to allow each section to be a fertile space for reflections and ideas. even if it



may appear somewhat inarticulate and confused. Each one will take and process what he or she mostly needs. We wish you a good personal and communal journey.
Read the full article on [DSI website](#)

Vocation Promoters Meeting in Huissen

Vocation Promoters in North Western Europe met at Huissen, the novitiate house of the Dutch province, April 17-18, 2012 to discuss the situation in that region regarding vocations to the Order. At the meeting were, Bros. André Lascaris, Jan Laan, Wijbe Fransen and Sr. Holkje vd Veer of the recruitment commission of the Dutch province. With them at the meeting were Bros. Gerard Dunne (Ireland), Alain Arnould (Belgique Sud) and Vivian Boland (Santa Sabina).

Bro. André spoke about the situation in the Netherlands, explaining the dramatic change from a 'pillared society' in which people's identity was determined completely by the religious and/or political group to which they belonged to a situation from the 1950s onwards of trying to get beyond that stratification. The history of Dutch Catholicism since Vatican II is well known and at present there are few if any vocations to religious life in the country.

Bro. Gerard has been fulltime promoter of vocations for the Irish province for twelve years. He spoke about the initial challenge of the task, his experience in making contact with young people, how he presents the Order, and how he understands what motivates the current generation of young Catholics. He spoke about being visible, e.g. on university campuses, and about his work of accompanying candidates for the Order. His work has borne fruit: a group of 13 entered in 2009 and a group of 6 this year. He spoke also about the changing situation for the Church in Ireland with substantial anger and disaffection as a result of abuse scandals.

Bro. Alain spoke about the situation in Belgique Sud. Some years ago the general vicariate had brothers joining but there has been another gap until this year when there is one novice in Brussels. As in Ireland, most potential vocations learn about the Order from the internet. The general vicariate prefers brothers to study abroad for at least some years of their formation.

Bro. Vivian spoke about the situation in England where he was master of students from 2004 to 2011. Over there, one brother is vocations promoter and another is vocations director. There is a steady stream of vocations with an average of 1-2 novices each year. The Order has a high profile in England and quite a number of brothers are converts to Catholicism.

A number of issues emerged from these presentations. It was agreed that a province needed to be convinced that Dominican life is worth living if it is to be proactive in promoting vocations. Good Dominican preaching is one way of promoting vocation.

Many newer members of the Order come from movements and communities active in the new evangelization and this challenges the Order to recover aspects of its own missionary and evangelizing tradition. The older brothers need understand what younger brothers are looking for in religious life. When new brothers come, the community also must be prepared to adjust. Relating with the many immigrant communities living in Western Europe is also part of the Order's mission in Europe today. At the same time younger brothers seem more focused on 'home missions' rather than on 'foreign missions'.

The process of admission was compared in the different entities and the use of psychologists and other professionals was discussed. It was felt that between 25 and 35 years is generally the best age for entering the novitiate in the provinces of our region.



We should not create a profile of potential candidates that will be too detailed. People aspiring to the Order should have a desire for study, a willingness to learn and an appetite for thinking. The most be people of faith too: the relationship with God is the spark that awakens people to their vocation.

It was generally agreed that the meeting had been worthwhile despite the low turnout. A future meeting will be arranged and the possibility of involving other vocation promoters in Europe was encouraged.

By fr. André Lascaris, OP (Huissen) and fr. Vivian Boland, OP (Santa Sabina)

Initial Formation: Between Postmodernity and New Evangelization

IEOP Assembly, Lisbon April 2012

Recent general chapters on formation

The section on formation in the acts of the general chapter of Rome is quite short (chapter VI). It does, however, clearly identify the goal of formation: ‘making a Dominican preacher’ (§185). So what is a Dominican preacher as distinct from any other kind of preacher and how is a person made into one? The acts speak of a common zeal to share the fruits of our contemplation of the Word of God and of a culture of mission: this zeal for contemplation and culture of mission constitute the environment in which the Dominican preacher develops. They are also two of the virtues he needs to have, contemplation and mission.

In the final paragraph on formation the acts give us more of a definition: the Dominican preacher is there identified as ‘a preacher of grace’ and ‘a true witness’ (§200). The first phrase is from the *O Lumen* and the second echoes a well-known passage in *Evangelii nuntiandi* (1975), Pope Paul VI’s great charter on evangelization, that modern people ‘listen more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if they do listen to teachers it is because they are also witnesses’ (EN §41). It is a perfect description of the insight that came to Diego and Dominic in Montpellier: if they were to preach the gospel effectively it would have to be not just as teachers with a particular expertise and style but as witnesses living in a way that was visibly evangelical.

The Rome general chapter encourages us to read again what Krakow 2004 and Bogotá 2007 said about formation. Krakow emphasised that vocations to the Order are a gift – a grace already – that call us to understand the ‘fast paced age’ and ‘diverse world’ in which people are joining us. Where are they coming from? What are they bringing with them? What needs do they have that lead them to us? What gifts are they offering us? Bogotá has a very good section on formation, speaking of contemplation and Dominican spirituality, and emphasising the role of communities as agents of formation alongside the individual brothers and the novice and student masters. Bogotá also discusses characteristics of the contemporary world that affect all of us, not just the younger people joining us. It lists among the challenges to formation the need to help men to be self-critically free and the need to encourage them to be bold in inventing new solutions and as witnesses to the gospel by their lives.

I would like to take these two themes from what the last general chapters have said about formation, that it is about making ‘preachers of grace’ and ‘true witnesses’. What light might be shed on these themes by the contrast set up for us between postmodernity and new evangelization?

Postmodernity : giftedness and grace

A first reflection is to say that the notion of gift is problematic in postmodern thought and might be in danger also of being misunderstood by some proponents of new evangelization. In postmodernity each one can offer the gift he cherishes knowing that there are many alternative gifts, that people are free to choose, and that the reasons for their choice may remain unavailable. We talk about



‘lifestyle choices’ which are regarded as matters of taste and preference. Is a religious vocation, even the Christian faith itself, another such choice?

On the other side, some English speakers will be hesitant about the word ‘evangelisation’ because in English it has associations with a kind of proselytizing that people experience as intrusive: ‘I have come with the gift you need, whether you know it or not’. To be between postmodernity and new evangelization in the matter of gift, is to be between on the one hand a plethora of gifts none of which claims total seriousness for itself and, on the other hand, a gift that seems to want to impose itself in a way that is invasive, claiming too much for itself.

‘Can a gift be given?’ is how Kevin Hart summarises differences between important postmodern thinkers (*Postmodernism: A Beginner’s Guide*, Oxford, 2004). Questions about the gift – or grace – are at the heart of postmodern philosophy, according to Hart. He focusses on Jean-Luc Marion in France and John Milbank in England. In Marion’s philosophy the first thing to be said is not about consciousness, or about being, but about givenness. Nothing can show itself unless it first gives itself, Marion says. Most deeply the human being is not a self-awareness, or a detached rational subject, but is gifted, given by what we receive. Marion’s philosophy leaves room for revelation, for the gift of Christ, and he is a believing and practising Catholic. It is a kind of *praeambula fidei*, opening a door to a fresh appreciation of the love of God as the most fundamental gift.

John Milbank is keen to be a conversation partner with Marion, and is also much exercised by the question of the gift, by grace. He criticizes Marion, saying that his thought remains within the limits set by modern philosophy even though he (Marion) is trying to go beyond those limits. Milbank himself argues for a reciprocity of gift-giving: to express gratitude, for example, does not destroy the character of a gift, does not necessarily turn it into just another quasi-commercial, perhaps manipulative, exchange.

The reflections of Marion and Milbank on the character of the gift are abstract and theoretical. Zadie Smith, in her novel *On Beauty* (2005), expresses more clearly one aspect of what they are getting at. In this passage ‘Howard’ is an unbelieving father, ‘Jerome’ is his believing son, and ‘Lee’ is his indifferent son:

‘What I’ve really realized is Howard has a problem with gratitude’, pressed Jerome, more to himself than to his brother. ‘It’s like he knows he’s blessed, but he doesn’t know where to put his gratitude because that makes him uncomfortable, because that would be dealing in transcendence – and we all know how he hates to do that. So by denying there are any gifts in the world, any essentially valuable things – that’s how he shortcircuits the gratitude question. If there are no gifts, then he doesn’t have to think about a God who might have given them. But that’s where joy *is*. I’m on my knees to God every day. And it’s amazing, Lee’, he asserted ... ‘it really is’ (page 237).

In modern times people tried to hold on to the idea of essentially valuable things while gradually forgetting that such things are possible only if they are gifts, there for us but before us, and without us. Only occasional honest radicals (like the moral philosopher Peter Singer and the theologian Joseph Ratzinger) not only see that you cannot have one without the other – the essentially valuable can only be a gift – but they also spell out, in very different directions, the logical consequences of detaching them.

Thomas Aquinas too, in his treatment of the virtue he calls ‘grace, or gratitude’, is already alert to some of the questions raised by modern philosophers. He considers both the asymmetry or inequality which Marion believes is necessarily involved in gift-giving as well as the reciprocity which Milbank prefers to stress. Ancient philosophers already saw something problematic in



gratitude: it seemed impossible to contain within the limits of justice and obligation. Thomas argues that gratitude makes complete sense only in a context of justice, friendship, and grace (*Summa theologiae* II.II 106,5). Love transforms all indebtedness, he says, for the more love loves, the more it ought, always seeking to return more. Aristotle saw that reciprocity in gratitude sets up an exchange that seems to be without end and disallows such reciprocity because, he says, virtue cannot be about something infinite. Thomas, however, says that in the context of love or charity it is not inappropriate that the obligation of gratitude should be without end (106, 6 ad 2).

What have these philosophical questions about the gift and gratitude got to do with initial formation among the friars preachers? As the Krakow chapter said, the brothers who come to us are gifts, their vocations are matters of grace. We need to be thankful that God is sending vocations to the Order. In some countries, for reasons that remain mysterious, there are vocations to the Dominicans even when there are no vocations to other religious orders.

But the giftedness is reciprocal, for the Order that receives these vocations is also a grace for them. We offer to them the gift of fraternity, of belonging to a brotherhood. In my experience for most of the young men coming to enquire about us community life is one of the main reasons they are attracted to us. Of course they speak also of study, of liturgy, and of the preaching mission, but the fact that we do these things together, in the context of a common fraternal life, is powerfully attractive to them. Maybe, at the beginning, it is the idea of community life that attracts them, the ideal of a joyful fraternity at the loving service of the Word of God. Later they come to learn what is involved in the incarnation of this grace, that our living and working together is a matter also of flesh and blood, and is marked by sin even though it is established on grace.

The first thing a new brother ask of us is ‘the mercy of God and yours’ – he asks for a grace, a free gift. In profession, the act that incorporates him into the Order, he offers the gift of himself, of his whole life, to God, to Mary and Dominic, and to the brotherhood, to the *ecclesia domestica* that we are. To give one’s life in this way is to acknowledge that there are essentially valuable things, that the gift of a vocation to follow Christ in this way can only be received by me through an unreserved giving of myself in return.

Initial formation is, then, an education in gratitude. If we are trying to make preachers of grace the best way to do it is to give people experiences of grace, and an understanding of grace. At the heart of our lives is prayer, and the contemplation of the Word of God. In these radical practices we learn how to receive. We are mendicants firstly before God. Our preaching of grace appears as the fruit of a life lived in the experience of grace. Of our celebration of the liturgy, LCO 57 says

... the brothers, together with Christ, glorify God for his eternal plan and for the wonderful workings of grace. They pray to the Father of mercies for the whole Church, for the needs and salvation of the whole world. Thus, the celebration of the liturgy is the centre and heart of our life, the basic source of our unity.

In speaking later of the ministry of the Word the constitutions return to this experience of grace in the Eucharist:

The Eucharist is the centre of the Church’s life, the source and the summit of all evangelization. The brothers should meditate attentively on the grace of this wonderful sacrament, pondering its importance for their salvation and that of others (LCO 105 §II).

In our study we take pride in placing the theme of grace at the centre of our theologies. In our life together each of us, sooner or later, experiences the mercy of our brothers in very concrete ways. The Eucharist is our great act of thanksgiving, itself given to us as a gift. The fundamental ethical



disposition is gratitude. The liturgy of the hours is about praise, petition, and thanksgiving. The theme, style, and (we hope) effect of our preaching is grace. In all these ways Dominic was *praedicator gratiae* and we seek to be like him. So our initial formation can be described as an education in grace in order to make preachers of grace.

It might seem strange that self-consciously postmodern thinkers, Marion and Milbank, help us to remember essential things about our own tradition. We are more familiar with postmodernism being regarded as relativistic, even nihilistic and atheistic. But we are asked not just to lament the world in which we find ourselves living but to try to understand it and to find in its concerns and questions evidence of human need and divine purpose.

New evangelization: what kind of witness?

The other theme I found in what the general chapter of Rome said about formation is that we are forming men to be ‘true witnesses’. What does it take to be a true witness today? Postmodernity can seem fast and superficial, offering a diet of passing images and fleeting sound bites. The time required for study, for contemplation, for initiation into a traditional way of living, for practising virtue: all of this seems like a luxury. The Rome chapter says the preachers of grace and true witnesses will be characterized by genuine personal maturity, the practice of prayer, fidelity to the vows, common life, continual study, and active solidarity with the poor. These are all things that require time, as well as virtues like patience and perseverance, a relationship with time which postmodernity does not encourage.

Kevin Hart says that in postmodernity, religion is either rejected as fundamentalist or embraced in one of its liberal forms. Whereas before, fundamentalism was a pathology of religion – one of the ways in which religion could go bad – it is more common now for any serious religious commitment to be described as fundamentalist. Unless one remains agnostic, or sits lightly to what one professes to believe, people fear extremism and a closed mind. Any serious religious commitment seems to mean one is taking things too seriously.

Postmodernity in some of its manifestations is atheistic and nihilistic. Some Christians see this too as a kind of *praeambula fidei*, a philosophical approach to faith except now along the *via negativa* rather than the *via positiva*. Aquinas teaches people how to be atheists, is how one Catholic philosopher of religion puts it (Denys Turner, ‘How to be an atheist’, *New Blackfriars* 83 (2002) 317-35). Donagh O’Shea, a brother of the Irish province and former master of novices, in a paper entitled ‘Formation in the Postmodern Age’, says that the loss of God as ‘object’ is to be welcomed because it entails the loss of self as ‘subject’ and this opens the way for ‘an intimate kind of knowing’ (the phrase is Derrida’s) when words fall away and we open again to what the mystical traditions teach about a knowledge beyond subject-object knowing. This mystical, apophatic, theology has, of course, an honoured place in our own theological tradition.

That is one way of responding to what postmodernity has to say on religion. My experience is that it will appeal to the older brothers among us, those who have lived through the past thirty years or so in the Order. The new evangelization, however, will be more attractive to younger brothers and many of our present vocations are coming to us from groups and movements that are explicitly concerned with the new evangelization. It seems to imply a re-assertion of positive theology in the face of postmodern skepticism and relativism, a straightforward proclamation of the truth of the gospel, calling people to share the joy there is in living with Christ.

The natural temptation for the Church, as for ourselves, is to adapt our way of being and working to what seems reasonable and necessary in our own time. Everyone, whether they like it or not, is being formed by the values and voices of the cultures within which they live and that come to live within them. A question for any new evangelisation is whether it too might be ‘postmodern’ in its



style: fast and superficial, content with the kind of visibility that makes for striking images and clever slogans, a kind of ‘theme park’ Catholicism of tee-shirts, mugs, and other merchandise. This certainly ensures a certain kind of visibility and witness, one that seeks to be counter-cultural and undeniable. But what about the deeper things, that take time to mature, in silence and through experience? What about the less glamorous aspects of life, things that are less photogenic, the routine of prayer, study, and pastoral care?

The light of evangelical preaching can sometimes seem like a trapped light, an affirmation of faith that is earnest but a bit tense, as if hiding a deeper insecurity. One task for would-be evangelisers, as for all of us, is the purification of motive: why do I want to share the gift I value with this person? Is it really for the sake of the other that I am acting or is it to re-assure myself? It brings us back to the question of whether the gift I offer is really a gift or has also other meanings. The politics of postmodernity, according to Hart, is conservative. Whether he is right about this or not is an open question but he thinks that postmodernity will have no place for the poor whereas modernity at least still had a place for them. Postmodernism attracts liberals, he says, whereas postmodernity attracts conservatives. (Postmodernism refers to trends in the arts, postmodernity to the historical period in which we find ourselves.) It is striking, then, that the acts of the Rome chapter add ‘active solidarity with the poor’ to the its list of virtues that characterize the preacher of grace and the true witness. I should add immediately that I know brothers of quite different generations and quite different theological styles who have been in active solidarity with the poor.

Christ, of course, is the centre of any evangelization. Initial formation between postmodernity and new evangelization has to concern itself with Christ. How are we thinking of him? How are we relating to him? How is access to him possible for us, access to his teaching, to his life, to his person? Pope Benedict returns often to this theme, saying that our task is to facilitate the encounter with Christ, to see how we can bring it about that people come to meet Christ and experience the joy there is in giving oneself to Christ. Jean-Luc Marion has written some beautiful pages on Christ as the revelation of God. As a man of faith this is his personal answer to the question posed by his philosophy about the possibility of revelation. John Milbank also speaks frequently about Christ but one of the dangers for a philosophical theology such as his is that Christ comes to be regarded as a theory and not as a person with whom we can be in relationship. We would want to say, would we not, that the fundamental gift is Christ. He is the eternal Word spoken by the Father and so the first to receive himself by being given. All other gifts flow from this primordial one, from the gift of the Spirit who is this giving and receiving, to the gift of creation and the grace of salvation.

The new evangelization calls us back to Christ, invites us to taste again the joy that comes from faith in Him, to have the confidence to offer others this possibility because we have come to know that he is the way, the truth and the life for all human beings. Philosophical theologies run the risk of turning Christ into an idea or a theory, new evangelization runs the risk of stimulating a merely subjective, emotional relationship with Christ, one that may not survive the harder questions life will present over time.

Where do we turn? Well perhaps that ‘active solidarity with the poor’ is the key to a way forward. We encounter Christ in his body. This is how human beings experience things and it is, we can say, why the Word became flesh. And his body is the church, the community of those who believe in him and the community of those for whom he laid down his life. The Dominican preacher of grace speaks with authority out of his experience of grace, not because he has read the books and understood them, but because he has come to know what grace means. We only come to know that along the way of our vocation, through contemplation and mission. We know it through contemplation: Donagh O’Shea says that contemplation is perhaps the only way forward at present. And we know it also through living together in a missionary fraternity, what the Rome acts call ‘a



culture of mission'. We encounter Christ embodied in his community, *in medio ecclesiae*. The heart of Christ's teaching is that we encounter Him in responding to the poor, to the neighbor, to the one who has a call on our care and mercy and love (think of the good Samaritan, the great commandment, the last judgement scene in Matthew 25).

Modernity tended to reduce theology to ethics where postmodern theologies seek to orient us entirely to the love of God, the gift of gifts. What about the new evangelization? Is it about calling ourselves and others to what Saint Paul names 'the obedience of faith' (Romans 1:5)? Is it about watching and listening for a Christ who escapes our control, who interrupts our ways, unsettles our convictions, topples our idols, and calls us sharply to account?

The encounter with Christ, if it is to be understood in a Catholic sense, can only be a communitarian, ecclesial, fraternal experience. This experience must feed our minds and our thinking, not just our feelings. But it must not neglect our feelings or dismiss the role of beauty. This experience must become social and institutional and not remain simply personal and private. Christ is the sacrament of our encounter with God (as Edward Schillebeeckx put it) and the Church, as Christ's body, is the sacrament not only of communion with God but also of unity among people. Our constitutions remind us often that our fraternity constitutes an ecclesial community, an *ecclesia domestica* (without actually using that phrase). The Dominican preacher, a preacher of grace and a true witness, speaks with authority when he has experienced grace. He speaks with authority to other human beings out of an experience of living with other human beings. The vows of obedience, chastity, and poverty are understood in our tradition to be about freedom, a freedom that comes from imitating Christ and being united to the Church. The constitutions say that our vow of poverty brings a freedom in imitation of Christ that 'draws us closer to the poor we are sent to evangelise' (LCO 31 §II).

Conclusion

This brings us back to the insight of Diego and Dominic at Montpellier. An effective preaching of the gospel, effective evangelization, requires preachers of grace and true witnesses, men who not only know about these things but who understand them through experience and live them out. This is the kind of man we are trying to produce when we talk about making a Dominican preacher.

Of course we cannot organize or guarantee experience for people even when we put them in the way of experience. The acts of the Rome chapter also contain an important meditation on preaching and formation, which quotes Humbert of Romans saying that 'the only teacher of the preacher is the Holy Spirit' (ACG Rome §53). This has always been a key point in our theology of grace, that the capacity to receive grace is itself a gift of God.

What the last general chapter says about formation is short but provocative: we are trying to make preachers of grace and true witnesses. The real agent of this making is the Holy Spirit. Our most important tools are contemplation and life in a missionary fraternity: traditional things like prayer, liturgy, study, common life, and apostolic engagement. I believe we can be confident that the way of life we have received contains resources that will enable us respond effectively to the questions of our time and to the preoccupations of the Church. It is a blessing that so many men, young and not so young, are keen to share this way of life. Their presence is a joy and an inspiration to us.

By Bro. Vivian Boland, OP (Socius for North-West Europe/Canada)

<http://www.op.org/en/content/initial-formation-between-postmodernity-and-new-evangelisation>

A Glorious Rosary

The light of the feast of Easter shines still in our hearts and we are now in the days which separate us from Pentecost, in what we call the Paschal Season.



It would be regrettable to think that Easter is a full stop of Lent, and that our spiritual attention should relax. In fact, the Resurrection of the Lord causes us to enter into a glorious time which gives us a taste of the splendor of heaven. After the training of Lent when we sought to cultivate our relationship with the Lord, we will continue on our momentum, with our rosary beads of course! It would be regrettable to abandon the good habits taken since Ash Wednesday... and if have not taken them, let us not be discouraged! It is never too late to do so!

No question then to sleep on our laurels of the Resurrection. Certainly Christ came out of the tomb victorious. Certainly Christ conquered death. But he does not do so just for himself. It is all of us whom he leads towards his Ascension. It is on all of us that he will spread his Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost.

And Mary, by her Assumption and her Crowning in Heaven, announces that which all believers are called to: the glory of heaven! And what better way to reach it than to meditate the mystery of the holy Rosary of the Virgin Mary? The Paschal Season, then, will be the perfect opportunity to meditate especially the glorious mysteries. Our Paschal Rosary will therefore be a glorious Rosary!

Certainly we will continue, day by day, to meditate the different series of mysteries, but they will have, over the coming weeks, a particular tonality, a particular color. Behind each mystery will lurk the Glory of the Risen One!

So then, to each and everyone, good Paschal time, good time of Glorious Rosary!

Fr. Louis-Marie ARIÑO-DURAND, o.p.
General Promoter of the Rosary

[Visit *Rosarium*, the official site on the Rosary of the Order of Preachers !](#)
[The author of this article \(in French\)](#)

An Historic Cooperator Brothers Meeting

An historic meeting of the Cooperator Brothers from all the four provinces in the USA was held at [St. Albert Priory](#) in Oakland, California March 30-April 1, 2012. This was the first in a series of regional meetings to take place in all provinces of the world. The purpose of these meetings is to discuss the Cooperator Brother vocation and to make recommendations to the Master General, who commissioned that these meetings be held by the Brothers in order to investigate the drastic decline in numbers in recent years. It is the hope that all information collected will be reviewed and discussed at a future international congress on the Cooperator Brother vocation. The meeting was presided over by commissioners selected from the four provinces, St Albert the Great (Central), St Joseph (East), St Martin de Porres (South) and the Most Holy Name of Jesus (West). Much thought on a wide variety of topics were shared and discussed by the participants.

This is only the beginning of a process that is expected to take several years to complete. It is the hope of the Master that each brother in the world be given an opportunity for input on this important topic through regional meeting, like this one, or individual interviews if the brother is unable to assemble with others. It will be of particular interest to review data from different countries and analyze how different cultures respond to the questions given to us from the Master and his staff. We pray for the success of these meetings and that the information gathered may help to enliven this valuable vocation and provide a catalyst for a general renewal of the entire Dominican family.
By: Br. Gabriel Dault, O.P.



Dominican Study and the New Evangelization: Initial Impressions

Brothers, I would like to share with you my initial impressions of study in the Order from the perspective of the evangelization that we must undertake and the way we may make it effective. When I came to Europe in September, the Order sent me to study Italian in Florence, where I took classes with students who could easily have been my children, almost my grandchildren. When I introduced myself as a Dominican friar and a Catholic priest, my classmates responded with looks of genuine puzzlement. One young woman from Norway whispered to her neighbor, “What is a priest?” I could have said I was a man from Mars and have been more easily understood. Perhaps most troubling was how my classmates identified themselves in terms of religion. From Holland, Norway, and England, I expected the response of Calvinist, Lutheran, or Anglican. From Bavaria, Austria, and Spain I expected the answer Catholic. What I heard instead was “Io sono ateo,” “Io sono agnostica,” “Io non lo so.” This was all very surprising to my perhaps naive American ears, where people may not go to church each week but where most everyone believes in God.

What is the problem? In Europe, West and East, as well as in the United States and Canada, our Atlantic culture is experiencing a genuine crisis of meaning. We may describe this in the language of post-modernism, which has critiqued the possibility of universal categories, general understanding, and objective truth. Or we may reflect upon my experience in Florence, where I was surrounded by bright young men and women, all of them people of good will and generous spirit, who nevertheless have been cut off from the faith that shaped their culture as Europeans. As Europeans and North Americans, we are politically free and, until recently, economically secure, yet the men and women in our culture increasingly find their lives empty, without real purpose and direction, disappointed with the things they have, hungry to find meaning, longing for something that will integrate their fragmented lives.

What is to be done? Certainly as Dominicans, ours is a philosophical and theological vision that shows the fundamental unity, intelligibility and meaning of all creation. Although our Thomistic tradition continues to provide this compelling vision, we cannot simply assert it in our world like the first apostles who proclaimed the kerygma. Rather, like the patristic fathers and the early apologists, we must appeal to the minds and hearts of our listeners by constantly striving to find connections, to make the link, to respond to the questions of the men and women of our time both intellectually and through the witness of our fraternal life. Dominican study must do more than ground us in the neo-Thomism of the first half of the twentieth century or even the historical Thomism of the second. It must be responsive to the questions, to the critique, and to the search for meaning that is one of the defining characteristics of men and women today, whether it is the postmodern philosopher, or the young person caught in the materialism and the individualism of our contemporary culture.

We must consider seriously how the contemporary fields of physics, biology, medicine, psychology, and law shape our thinking and the way we view our world. How can our own Dominican tradition engage these, not merely by showing their errors and false moves, but by allowing these perspectives to deepen our own understanding of truth so that we might indeed be better ambassadors to our world? Our brother, Marie-Dominique Chenu, reminds us that our Dominican tradition is one that recognizes the creative tension between different presentations of truth. In the dynamic of the dialectic, through the use of critical reason and through the experience of shared relationship and openness to the other, we are able to come to a more profound and more complete grasp of the truth. How does our theological and philosophical engagement with the world of science, law, and medicine help us to do this and even to transform our own thinking? Similarly, how does the digital world in which we live with our I-phones, and I-pads, or YouTube, and Facebook challenge our presuppositions about human relationships and even our view of reality? To what extent does our Dominican intellectual tradition take into account this virtual world, which



the young people of today live and breathe, and are perhaps more at home with, than with the world of *esse* and actual being? Again, for European and North Americans, where increasing contact with Islam and the great religious traditions of the East have begun to transform our societies, how does our own Dominican understanding of God's presence in the world and our relationship to him as people saved by Christ Jesus in the power of his Spirit address the challenge of these other religious traditions? It is, I think, this culture of dialogue, this dynamic of the dialectic, which we as Dominicans have especially to offer to the Church.

As Dominicans we know that the good preacher and the good teacher is the one who not only knows his content, but also is attentive to the questions of the men and women before him. We observe, we listen, we struggle to make the connection, to establish the relationship before we speak. Dominican study therefore cannot take place in a vacuum, it must truly be one that is rooted in the world where we live and work and pray. Our provincial programs of study must therefore provide us both with the theological and philosophical grounding on which to stand with confidence, as well as the suppleness and flexibility to engage others critically and humbly, so as to probe more deeply in our search for truth. It is for this reason that the last Chapter has called for a revision of the *Ratio Studiorum Generalis*. As provincials and vicars who are responsible for the life of study in your provinces and vicariates, we would ask that you reflect upon the intellectual needs of your province and region at one of your provincial council meetings or at your provincial chapter before the next meeting of regents in Avila so that we can address these concerns in the revision of the *Ratio*.

This clarity and firm ground, as well as this flexibility and adaptability, must also be apparent in our own institutions of study. Our recent general chapters have urged provinces and centers of study to think strategically and to share their intellectual resources rationally so that the Order may have the greatest impact possible. At the same time, we are aware of our own provincial needs, the need for professors in our own centers of study that will contribute to the life of our provinces. How do we share what we have, without giving up the particular perspective that we have to offer, our local ability to flourish, our capacity to form our students with the kind of initial formation that we believe they should have? I am aware of the fragility of many of our centers of institutional studies; they often suffer from the same weaknesses: lack of professors, too few students, and not enough money. This same analysis could be applied to the centers under the immediate jurisdiction of the Master: not enough money, too few professors, and a lack of qualified students. How do we balance the individual good of the province, with the common good of the region and of the universal Order?

We must look first and critically at what we have to offer and how we might best respond to the theological questions and the longings of the men and women whom we serve in our provinces and regions. For this reason, we have asked the moderators of our centers of institutional studies to take an inventory of the resources that we possess—beginning with our buildings, our endowments, our faculties, our staffs and administration, the number of our students. These inventories will be shared at the regional meetings of regents. This sharing of information is only the first step. We must proceed to the deeper and harder questions. Does our center promote a Dominican vision of study where there is a clear and visible link between the fraternal life and the intellectual life so that our brothers are rigorously trained in both? I am aware that some centers and formation programs do an admirable job in forming their students in community life and pastoral competence, but are weak academically. Then there are those programs where the academic training is rigorous but the pastoral and fraternal dimensions are lacking. Does our center and formation program do both? Does our center nurture the development of future teachers capable of making a contribution to both our fraternal and intellectual life? Does it present our theological and philosophical tradition in such a way that it takes into account the culture in which we live and the needs of the people whom we



serve in our province, in our region, and in the universal Order? Does our center of studies remain isolated from other centers, or does it see itself as part of the larger regional and universal mission of the Order?

We cannot fall into a kind of post-modern trap ourselves. We cannot allow our philosophy and theology to become self-contained systems that operate in a vacuum and that contribute to the fragmented vision of our world. In such a case we become simply one more esoteric group in a world of esoteric groups, people who can talk to each other but to no one else. As you know, this was not the vision of *Gaudium et Spes*.

Nor can we allow the needs of our provinces and the needs of the universal Order to be seen in isolation from each other, and even in conflict with each other, so that a kind of fragmentation takes place even in the Order. Our institutions under the jurisdiction of the Master must truly serve the Order, the provinces, and the centers of institutional studies. If the universal Order is to ask the provinces for professors and financial assistance for these institutions, then there must be a kind of mutuality where the provinces receive something back that is beneficial to them, where there is truly a mutual relationship. Brothers, these are a few of the questions that we must address as provincials and vicars, with the help of our regents, if we as an Order are to meet through our study the challenges of evangelization in a postmodern world.

<http://www.op.org/en/content/dominican-study-and-new-evangelization-initial-impressions-0>

Bro. Constantine Mamo, OP Moves On

Bro. Constantine Mamo who has lived and worked at the curia for the past 10 years has moved on to another apostolate. Up until March 2012, he was in-charge of the publication of the International Dominican Information (IDI). He is from the Province of Malta.

Bro. Cost (as he is fondly called) was born on the 1st of September, 1940. He started his religious life very early in his life and everything else followed. He made his first profession when he was just 19 years old and after his basic formation, he was ordained in 1965 at the age of 25. He started his missionary work soon after his ordination at Brazil where he worked for several years. He returned to Malta after his mission in Brazil and was later called up to Santa Sabina to assist at the curia. As a brother who loves art (drawing and sculpture in particular), he used his skills in various areas in the curia especially in the production of the monthly newsletter, IDI.

Bro. Cost is from a large traditional Catholic Maltese family. He has three other siblings in the religious life, a Dominican priest and two Little Sisters of the Poor. The entire family is blessed with longevity and good health and Bro. Cost has used that in his service of the Order, the Church and ultimately, in his service of God. This is why, at the age of 72, he is still willing to continue his missionary work, this time in Albania. From the curia, we want to wish him the best in his new mission in Albania.

Official News

A New Provincial for Philippines

Nine days after they started their Provincial Chapter, the brothers of the Province of Philippines elected a new provincial for the next 4 years. He is fr. Gerard Francisco Timoner III. He replaces fr. Quirico T. Pedregosa Jr. who has just finished his tenure.

Fr. Timoner was born on the 26th of January, 1968 at Daet, in the Province of Camarines Norte, Philippines. He made his first profession in the Order in 1989 and did his philosophical and



theological studies at the Dominican House of Studies in Quezon City and the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Ecclesiastical Faculties. At the completion of his studies, he was ordained to the priesthood in 1995. After his ordination, he obtained his Licentiate from the Catholic University of Nijmegen in the Netherlands.

Fr. Timoner has held several offices in his province. Just before his election as provincial, he was the rector of the University of St. Thomas Central Seminary. From the curia, we wish him a successful tenure.

Another Appointment for Fr. Wojciech Giertych, OP

The Holy Father has just appointed Fr. Wojciech Giertych, OP as a consultant to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. This appointment which was made on the 14th of April, 2012 is for 5 years. Fr. Giertych is from the Polish Province.

He was born of Polish parents on the 27th of September, 1951 in London, England. After graduating from Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, he joined the Dominican novitiate in 1975. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1981 in Krakow. He studied theology in Rome from where he obtained a licentiate in spiritual theology in 1983 and a doctorate from the Angelicum in 1989. In 1994, he started teaching moral theology at the Angelicum and from 1998, he held various offices at the General Council of the Dominicans at Santa Sabina, Rome.

His career at the Vatican began on the 1st of December, 2005 when he was appointed a theologian of the Papal Household. This is a legendary office which has been held by Dominicans since the Middle Ages. In this office, he acts as an adviser to the Holy Father on theological issues. Fr Giertych also serves on the Pontifical Committee for International Eucharistic Congresses and as a consultant to the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith and the International Theological Commission. And now, he is also a consultant to the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. From the General Curia, we wish him God's favour in his service to the Church.

The English Province Reelects their Provincial

The brothers of the English Province started their Provincial Chapter yesterday, the 15th of April, 2012 and right on the first day of deliberations, they reelected their current provincial, fr. John Farrell for a second term. The reelection was instantly confirmed by the Master of the Order, fr. Bruno Cadoré. fr. Farrell was first elected on the 31st of March, 2008 for his first term, now he has been reelected for another 4 years.

fr. John Farrell was born on the 9th of November 1950. He made his first profession in 1973 and was ordained in 1978. He has a doctorate in systematic theology. He has taught in various seminaries and had many courses for lay pastoral training in Southwark, Westminster, Hexham and Newcastle. Even as a provincial, he has continued to teach and he is also involved in retreat work and service training for priests and religious. From the curia, we wish him a successful second term in office

A President for the Leonine Commission

The Master of the Order, Fr Bruno Cadoré, OP has just reappointed Fr. Adriano Oliva, OP as the president of the Leonine Commission for another term of 4 years. Fr. Oliva is from the Roman Province of St Catherine of Sienna.



The Leonine Commission was established in 1880 by Pope Leo XIII as a special apostolate of the Dominican Order. The aim of this commission is to produce critical editions (not just mere translations) of all the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas. In this task of producing a critical edition, the commission seeks to restore to its final form the original Latin texts as it came from the authors pen. This entails a critique of all extant manuscripts, so as to select the best witnesses and to eliminate the weak ones.

Fr. Adriano Oliva, OP was born on the 20th of October, 1964. He entered the Order as a young man and made his first profession in 1987. At the completion of his basic formation, he was ordained to the priesthood in 1991. He has a doctorate in theology and he is an expert on historical texts and the works of St. Thomas Aquinas in particular. Apart from being the president of the Leonine Commission, he is also a member of the council of the library of Saulchoir and a research fellow at the Institute for the Research of Texts and their History, Paris. Although he is from the Roman Province of St Catherine of Sienna, Fr Oliva is currently living and working at Paris in the Province of France which is the seat of the commission. From the curia, we wish him a successful tenure.

The Calendar of the Master for May 2012

Apr 15 – 10: Canonical Visitation to Polish Province

13 – 26: Plenary Council Meeting at Santa Sabina

28 – 29: Meeting with Rectors of Institutions under the Master

31 - June 1: Meeting with Spanish Nuns

All articles can be found on the official website of the Order – www.op.org