
ORDER OF PREACHERS



Practical guide to « The Path of Saint Dominic»



In view of the Jubilee of the Order (1216-2016)

During the Jubilee year, different groups of pilgrims will visit the places connected with the life of Saint Dominic and the foundation of the Order, especially in Spain, France and Italy to explore “The Path of Dominic”. This is a way of entering into contact with the sources of the Dominican spirituality and charisma.

Therefore, the Coordinator of the Jubilee, in collaboration with the provincial promoters of the Jubilee, has published a guide with practical information directed to pilgrims and visitors. There is a detailed list of places you can visit, means of transportation and contact persons. The online version of the Guide in English can be downloaded by clicking here -

www.op.org/sites/www.op.org/files/public/documents/fichier/guida_giubileo_sandomenico_ed_inglese-online.pdf

The provinces, promoters and Dominican groups who wish to print and distribute the guide, can request for a ready-to-print file from the Coordinator of the Jubilee, fr Franklin Biutrago Rojas : iubileum2016@curia.op.org

• [Dominican Call to Justice 2015-2017](#)

North American Dominican Promoters of Justice, Peace, and Care of Creation

The North American Dominican Justice Promoters respond to the call for justice in our world today. Engaging in issues using the pastoral model of see–judge–act, we address injustice in a spirit of respect, compassion, and solidarity with the whole Earth community.

We support the proposed United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the universal set of targets that follow and expand on the Millennium Development Goals expiring at the end of 2015. Like its predecessor, the all-encompassing goal of the SDGs is to end poverty. To achieve this goal we must recognize and challenge the underlying bias regarding culture, race, and women, as well as the overarching issue of climate change and its impact on all justice issues.



In solidarity with our sisters and brothers around the world, we commit to study, advocate, and act in the following areas:

Climate Justice
Economic Justice
Human Trafficking
Migration/Immigration
Peace and Security for All Life

As members of the world-wide Dominican Family, we advocate for justice through our ministries, through our preaching, through our presence at the United Nations, and through our corporate socially responsible investing. We collaborate with all who seek a more just and sustainable world.

Click here for the full document of Dominican Call to Justice 2015-2017 –
www.op.org/sites/www.op.org/files/public/documents/fichier/dominican_call_to_justice_2015.pdf

• [A Statement to the UN on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons](#)

A statement by Archbishop Bernadito Auza, the Permanent Observer of the Holy See Mission to the United Nations

This is an excellent statement by our Dominican Priestly Fraternity member, Archbishop Bernadito Auza, the Permanent Observer of the Holy See Mission to the United Nations. It was delivered at the 5-yearly Review of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons at the United Nations, New York, 29 April 2015. The Dominican Delegation to the UN fully supports this statement on the need to eliminate and ban all nuclear weapons.

*Statement
by H.E. Archbishop Bernadito C. Auza
Permanent Representative of the Holy See to the United Nations in New York
At the Ninth Review Conference of the
Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
New York, 29 April 2015*

Madam President,

At the very outset, my Delegation wishes to express its solidarity and closeness to the populations struck by a powerful earthquake in Nepal and in neighboring countries.

Madam President,

My Delegation is pleased to congratulate you and the Bureau for your election, and to assure you of its active participation and collaboration.

Madame President,

This year marks the seventieth anniversary of the nuclear bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The victims are still with us. The Hibakusha are a living testimony calling all of us to take the right decisions today if we do not want to face similar situations tomorrow. Hiroshima and Nagasaki should be a reminder on the importance of the NPT Review Conferences as an instrument to rid humanity of the risks of nuclear war. The very reason of the NPT is anchored in the dignity of the human person and in the collective recognition of the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of any nuclear detonation.

The world's nuclear arsenals still contain far too many of these weapons. The theory of nuclear deterrence is too ambiguous to be a stable and global basis of world security and international order. On the contrary, these weapons are per se inhumane and unethical. This is why the NPT was negotiated. The hopes that have been placed by some in the system of deterrence as a strategy for preventing nuclear weapons use and for providing a stable security did not deliver the sort of peace and stability expected.



The risks of nuclear weapons are well known. The nuclear weapons states and non-nuclear states alike are aware of the exceptional instability caused by these weapons. The instability is greater in some regions than in others and more acute in some periods than others. The consequences of this instability are too important to be adopted as a basis for a genuine, peaceful and stable international order. The NPT is far from the idea that the balance of terror is the best basis for the political, economic and cultural stability in the world.

The risks and the instability connected with the existence of nuclear weapons are an urgent call to take concrete and effective steps to address this situation by renewing collectively the commitment to nuclear nonproliferation and nuclear disarmament which stand at the heart of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. There is no doubt that the safest and surest path toward non-use is the mutual and total renunciation of these weapons, and the effective dismantling of the infrastructure on which they depend. It is this vision and commitment of a future without nuclear weapons that brings us together. The NPT is an important instrument for the security of all. The failure to translate in good faith the obligations contained therein constitutes a real threat to the survival of humanity as a whole.

Madam President,

The discriminatory nature of the NPT is well known. The discrimination between countries with and countries without nuclear weapons cannot be a permanent solution. This situation was meant to be provisory. The status quo is unsustainable and undesirable. If it is unthinkable to imagine a world where nuclear weapons are available to all, it is reasonable to imagine, and to work collectively for, a world where nobody has them. Moreover, this is our reading of the letter and the spirit of the NPT.

The very possession of nuclear weapons will continue to come at an enormous financial cost. The expenditures, current and projected, represent resources that could, and indeed should, be put toward the development of societies and people. Pope Francis put it strongly in his message to the President of the Vienna Conference on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons: “Spending on nuclear weapons squanders the wealth of nations. To prioritize such spending is a mistake and a misallocation of resources which would be far better invested in the areas of integral human development, education, health and the fight against extreme poverty. When these resources are squandered, the poor and the weak living on the margins of society pay the price.”

In fact, the world faces enormous challenges: extreme poverty, environmental problems, migration flows, military conflicts, economic crises, etc. Only cooperation and solidarity among nations is able to confront them. To continue investing in expensive weapon systems is paradoxical. In particular, to continue investing in the production and the modernization of nuclear weapons is not logical. Billions are wasted each year to develop and maintain stocks that will supposedly never be used. Is it not legitimate to ask the question whether these investments are not in contradiction with the spirit of the NPT?

The possession of nuclear weapons and the reliance on nuclear deterrence have a very negative impact on the inter-relations of states. National security often comes up in discussions on nuclear weapons. This concept shouldn't be used in a partial and biased manner and never in contradiction with the common good. All States have the right to national security. Why is it that the security of some can only be met with a particular type of weapon, whereas other States must ensure their security without them? On the other hand, reducing peace and the security of States, in practice, to its military dimension is artificial and simplistic. Socio-economic development, political participation, respect for fundamental human rights, strengthening the rule of law, cooperation and solidarity at the regional and international level, etc. are essential to the national security of States. Is it not urgent to revisit in a transparent and honest manner the definition made by States, especially the nuclear weapons states, of their national security?

We are all aware that the goal of a world without nuclear weapons is not easy to achieve. As many say, it is a complex and difficult issue. All human realities are difficult and complex. But this is neither a reason nor an excuse not to implement the obligations undertaken in conformity with the NPT. For this, all energies and commitments are necessary. They are even more necessary in the times of international tensions. The role of international organizations, religious communities, civil society, and academic institutions is vital to not let



hope die, nor to let cynicism and realpolitik take over. Ethics based on the threat of mutually assured destruction is not worthy of future generations.

Lack of concrete and effective nuclear disarmament will lead sooner or later to real risks of nuclear proliferation. This Review Conference is a challenge for all States parties. Failure is not an option. The erosion of the credibility of the NPT could have catastrophic consequences for all countries and for the future of humanity as a whole.

To conclude, I would like to quote again Pope Francis: “Nuclear deterrence and the threat of mutually assured destruction cannot be the basis for an ethics of fraternity and peaceful coexistence among people and states. The youth of today and tomorrow deserve far more. They deserve a peaceful world order based on the unity of the human family, grounded on respect, cooperation, solidarity and compassion.” This is the raison d’être of the NPT.

I thank you, Madam President.

• **The Dominican Lay Fraternity in Glasgow**

Br Rui Carlos Lopes, Promoter General of the Dominican Laity, recently visited the Glasgow Fraternity, and was warmly welcomed by the members. Br Rui addressed the Fraternity on the subject of the shared charism of all members of the Order.

“You are lay Dominicans, you are truly Dominicans”, he said, “and I profoundly believe that you share the same charism with us friars, and with the nuns, the sisters and the youth movement.” Br Rui pointed out that St Dominic and St Catherine of Siena are two different expressions of that charism: one religious, the other lay; one male, the other female, united in the same preaching of the mysteries of the Lord.

In history, said Br Rui, the preaching of lay Dominicans took the form of works of mercy, and this was one of the ways in which Catherine made her impact, as well as by writing many letters to prominent figures – including the Pope. “Catherine knew how to talk to her own time. She spoke of the merciful love of Jesus, who is love and mercy of Jesus as the bridge to the Father, she spoke of the sea of the immensity of the love of the Trinitarian God, but also of the power of the Blood of Jesus Christ”, Br Rui reminded his listeners, and “she became the spiritual mother of many religious and lay people”.

In this year of consecrated life, every religious family witnesses its faith in apostolic service, in the various forms of social action for the Church and for the society in which they live, in the ecclesial and human realities where they find themselves. Br Rui emphasized that mutual enrichment is key: “I need your human skills, your experience of family life, your apostolic commitment, in places where we cannot and perhaps must not be present”, he said.

Radical fidelity to what defines us in the special dimension of a shared vocation, he pointed out, can help us to find the beauty of our complementarities. Br Rui concluded his talk with a call to preach as true Dominicans: “A warm, prophetic word that burns the world’s heart with love, that illuminates so much darkness with its light, a word that frees prisoners from their many cells, a word that unites in a new sense of fraternity – this is the word of us Dominicans, spoken differently by the friar or the nun, the sister or the layperson”. The Glasgow Lay Dominicans responded with great enthusiasm to this call to be true preachers in close collaboration with the other branches of the Order.

• **Reflections on the recent xenophobic attacks in South Africa**

The reflections of fr Philippe Denis, OP, the Regent of Studies of the General Vicariate of Southern Africa, and Professor of History at the University of Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa.

Sadly, xenophobia is again on the agenda in South Africa. In May 2008 a series of riots left more than sixty people dead, creating a lasting fear amongst foreigners. Xenophobic violence never stopped after that but it remained more or less under control. This month xenophobic attacks reach alarming levels for a second time. The exact number of casualties is not known because many are not reported in the media. In Pietermaritzburg, where we have a Dominican priory, Musa and Siyabonga, two young people to whom I



have spoken, saw dead bodies of foreigners in West Street, near the train station and under a bridge in Mayor's Walk. Some of the killers came singing and dancing from an informal settlement called Masukwane. It was frightening. Episodes of xenophobic violence were also reported in Imbali, the biggest black township of Pietermaritzburg, and in Northdale. Businesses and private houses occupied by foreigners have been looted and burned. Hundreds of expatriates have abandoned their houses and their belongings and returned to their countries of birth, some of them after many years of peaceful existence in South Africa.

There were some incidents against Pakistani and Bangladeshi in the Johannesburg area at the beginning of April, but xenophobia really started in Durban ten days ago. From there it spread to Pietermaritzburg and Johannesburg, especially around hostels occupied by Zulu people. Alexandra, a black township north of Johannesburg, is particularly affected. The responsibility of Goodwill Zwelithini, the Zulu king – a traditional leader who has no constitutional power but commands respect in the Zulu population, the biggest ethnic group in the country, and receives a comfortable salary from the government – in the upsurge of violence is undeniable. A few days before it started in Durban he asked, in a speech in Pongola, that “those who come from outside our country pack up their belongings and go back to where they come from”. He stubbornly refused to apologise, pretending, against all evidence, that his speech had been misinterpreted. Some of the killers explicitly referred to his speech when attacking foreigners.

It took a few days for the government to react. President Jacob Zuma interrupted a trip in Indonesia. Some of the killers have been arrested. It remains to be seen if they will be prosecuted. In 2008 very few were. We have been told that the army would be deployed in the KwaZulu-Natal province but we are still waiting. Civil society is mobilised. There are meetings, public statements and petitions everywhere. Stan Muyebe, a Dominican brother who heads the Justice and Peace Commission of the Southern African Bishops' Conference, told me of the campaigns made by the churches, mostly at the ecumenical level, to denounce the violence against foreigners and organise support for them.

This new episode of xenophobic violence concerns the Southern African Dominican vicariate because more than half of its members are foreigners. They come from countries, Zimbabwe and Malawi for example, which lost citizens during the attacks of the past few days. Fortunately none of us was attacked. The good news is that the universities of the countries, where no less than 70,000 foreigners are enrolled, were not affected. This being said, foreign students suffer from another form of xenophobia. In recent years it has become increasingly difficult for non-South Africans to obtain work or study permits. The Home Affairs Department, the South African police and the South African embassies in the various countries multiply the obstacles for those who try to study or work in South Africa.

Why this violence? It is, one should say, a bad response to a real problem. The gap between the poor and the rich keeps increasing in South Africa. By and large the ANC government has not kept its promises. There are resources in the country but they do not reach the poor because of corruption and inefficiency at all levels of government. During the past five years violent protests against the lack of delivery have multiplied. The recent xenophobic attacks resemble these protests. They have the same roots.

A more general problem is the absence of a coherent policy to welcome foreigners. From that point of view South Africa is not very different from Europe, North America or Australia. Hundreds of thousands of people in search of a better life cross the borders, legally or illegally, every year. Some of them are criminals. The tendency, therefore, is to consider each foreigner as a potential criminal. Most of them, in fact, are very peaceful. They are known for being hard workers. They left their country of birth because of war or poverty.

What depresses me most is that, in the short term at least, the instigators of xenophobic violence have been successful. They wanted the foreigners to pack and go and this is exactly what is happening. It will take a long time to recover from this shameful situation.

fr Philippe Denis, OP

Emaphetelweni Dominican Community, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, 23 April 2015



• Romero, Resistance and Resurrection

A reflection on Blessed Oscar Romero by fr Brian Pierce, OP

On March 24 this year the Church celebrates the commemoration of Jesus' Last Supper with his disciples. On the very same day this year, Christians in Latin America and throughout the world will also remember and celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the paschal death and resurrection of Archbishop Oscar A. Romero of El Salvador. For those of us who are preachers, Romero continues to be, in many ways, one of our greatest modern mentors. He was a preacher par excellence, one who knew himself to be called by God - in a particular place and time in history - to announce the Good News of Jesus Christ. His profound sense of call not only fortified his prophetic ministry, but also served as the basis of his deep humility. As he said in a homily not long after being named Archbishop of San Salvador, "I do not think I am that important. I believe that this message, which is only a humble echo of God's Word, enters your hearts, not because it is mine, but because it comes from God" (29 Oct. 1978).

Monseñor Romero, as he was affectionately called by his followers throughout the country, was aware that his preaching was seen as anything but "humble" by certain sectors of Salvadoran society. His courageous unmasking of lies and his speaking of the truth were denounced almost daily by the wealthy and the powerful - even by some of his own brother bishops. He knew well the risks that such a his ministry entailed. In his New Year's day homily, 1979, he said, "I was told this week that I should be careful, that something was being plotted against my life. I trust in the Lord, and I know that the ways of Providence protect one who tries to serve him."

Romero's deep "trust in the Lord," however, had little to do with being concerned with his own personal security; his greatest trust was in the transforming power of God's Word. Aware of the dangers of speaking the truth in a world help captive by lies, he said, "My voice will disappear, but my word, which is Christ, will remain in the hearts that have made it their own" (Dec.1978).

The death and resurrection of Christ was Monseñor Romero's daily bread, his sustenance, his hope. Just two weeks before his death, Romero gave an interview to the Mexican daily newspaper, *Excelsior*. In this interview he gave an eloquent summary of his understanding of a Christian's participation in the paschal mystery of Christ:

"I have frequently been threatened with death. I must say that, as a Christian, I do not believe in death but in resurrection. If they kill me, I shall rise in the Salvadoran people. I am not boasting; I say it with the greatest humility. As a pastor I am bound by divine command to give my life for those whom I love, and that includes all Salvadorans, even those who are going to kill me. If they manage to carry out their threats, I shall be offering my blood for the redemption and resurrection of El Salvador" (Sobrino, pp.99-100)

At first his words do ring with an almost haughty, messianic tone - almost as if he saw himself as another Christ - rising in the hearts of his disciples. Nothing could be further from the truth. There was no pride in Romero's encounter with death. He understood the death and resurrection of Christ in a way similar to how many mystics understand love - from the inside out, from lived experience. The French saint, Thérèse of Lisieux, frustrated at one point in her short life with the reality that she would never be ordained a priest or go to a foreign land as a missionary, said in a moment of mystical frustration, "Then I shall become love." For Thérèse, becoming love was not an intellectual affirmation; it was a vocation. She transcended all boundaries and limitations by allowing God to become love in her.

Romero, I believe, did the same. Like Bonhoeffer, Martin Luther King, Jr., and others, Romero moved beyond simply consenting faithfully to his belief in the resurrection of Christ; he became the paschal mystery. He so fully poured his own life out that the paschal Christ could become one with him - body, soul, and spirit. "I live, yet no longer do I live but Christ lives in me...and dies in me...and rises in me and in the Salvadoran people."

For us preachers, what is so very pertinent is that Romero was profoundly aware - convinced - that it was through his preaching, perhaps more than anything else, that he lived out his paschal union with Christ. It was the Word which he preached that would rise from the dead and live in the hearts and struggles of his



people. “A bishop will die,” he said in the Excelsior interview, “but the church of God - the people - will never die.”

After yet another attempt to bomb and destroy the YSAX radio station of the Archdiocese, Romero commented, “If some day they take the radio station away from us, if they close down our newspaper, if they don’t let us speak, if they kill all the priests and the bishop too, and you are left, a people without priests, each one of you must be God’s microphone, each one of you must be a messenger, a prophet” (8 July 1979). Romero had no doubts: the Word of truth is eternal and will rise in the hearts of the faithful.

For Oscar Romero, the very Word of God that took on human flesh in the person of Jesus of Nazareth was eternal. It was God’s voice weaving itself through history, through the universe. It is enfleshed in the words of those who speak the truth. God’s Word, hidden within the limited words of the prophet, is not subject to death. It sounds forth for all ages from the Cross of Christ and from the crucified Body of Christ, the Church. “My voice will disappear,” said Monseñor Romero, aware that he was nothing but a humble instrument of God, “but my word, which is Christ, will remain in the hearts of those who have wanted to receive it” (17 Dec. 1978).

Sources for the above quotes: Mons. Oscar A. Romero: Su Pensamiento (Arzobispado de San Salvador); James R. Brockman, S.J., The Church is All of You and The Violence of Love (Chicago Province of the Society of Jesus); Jon Sobrino, Archbishop Romero: Memories and Reflections (Orbis Books); Monseñor Romero: El Pueblo Es Mi Profeta (Equipo de Educación MAIZ, San Salvador, El Salvador).

● **JPCC of DPP organized a Conference on Bangsamoro basic law**

The Commission on Justice, Peace and Care of Creation (JPCC) of the Dominican Province of the Philippines (DPP)

The Commission on Justice, Peace and Care of Creation (JPCC) of the Dominican Province of the Philippines (DPP) in collaboration with the University of Santo Tomas (UST) Simbahayan Community Development Office held a conference on the proposed Bangsamoro Basic Law last Friday, March 27, 2015 at the UST Graduate School Rooms 201 to 205.

The speaker in the said conference is Fr. Eliseo “Jun” Mercado Jr., OMI. Father Mercado served as the Director for Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation (JPIC) for the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI) based in Rome from 2003-2006. As Congregational JPIC Director, he was also the Permanent Representative of the OMI to the United Nations (UN) as an Accredited NGO at the UN Department of Public Information and at the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), both in New York and Geneva.

The speaker divided his talk in three parts:

- (1) An overview and highlights of the content of the proposed Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL),
- (2) The constitutional limitations of the BBL,
- (3) The result of the congressional hearings and scenarios. Questions that were raised by the audience were answered by the speaker after each talk in an open forum.

The conference was attended by the JPCC/ JPIC promoters of Dominican Sisters, the Dominican student-brothers, some priests, some members of the UST Institute of Religion, some members of the Lay Dominican Fraternities, some faculty and staff of UST and members of other religious Orders.

Br. Gallardo Bombase Jr., OP, the JPCC promoter of the Dominican Province of the Philippines, gave the opening and closing remarks. In his message, he encouraged every participant to help in building better lives.

The conference ended with a Mass presided by Br. Gerard Francisco P. Timoner III, OP, Prior Provincial of the Dominican Province of the Philippines. In his homily he emphasized the importance of “befriending” in the pursuit of peace. He said, “We come in this conference because we long for peace... and we can only attain peace if we befriend each other.”

By Br. Paulo Sillonar, OP



● **“Easter grace and blessings to you all”: Updates from the Dominican Sisters in Erbil, Iraq**

The latest message from the Dominican Sisters in Iraq

Dear Sisters and Brothers

Since Christmas we have been living very stressful times not only because of the death of four of our elderly sisters in a very short period of time –due to stroke (brain attack) but also because of the hardship we are still living and experiencing with our people.

It is true that there has been progress in our condition in terms of housing for the Interior Displaced People (IDP); those who were in Ankawa Mall (unfinished building) are moving to the caravans in the coming days. Nonetheless, living in caravans is not without difficulties. Each caravan has two rooms (each 3x3 m²) joined by a common bathroom. There will be a family in each room and there are about 480 families. In a way, this might sound a better solution.

However, living in one room increases problems and tensions among the families. Most men are jobless which provokes conflict even within the same family and the victims of the conflict are usually the children. Therefore, we had decided to rent a house and convert it into a Kindergarten, which was inaugurated few days before Palm Sunday. This was possible because of your good-will and your efforts. We are working on opening another Kindergarten in Kaznazan, a suburb of Erbil, where there are 800 families; there, we have three sisters living and working with IDP. We have rented a house for that, and it will soon be furnished. The families are thankful and happy for this initiative.

As for the aids we provided to the IPD, we distributed winter indoor clothes for parents and adults in the family. Thanks to your efforts and donations, the project was successful and we were able to cover not only IDP in Erbil but also in Sulaymaniyah and Akra. The cost of the project was more than \$400,000. Another finished project, which was supported by the Pontifical Mission, was to provide people with milk, diapers for children and soap in order to treat scabies that have been spreading because of the unhealthy environment the IDP are living in (common toilets and lack of water). Besides that, we were also able to purchase towels and distribute them.

For the time being, we are working on a new project, which is to provide summer indoor clothes for teenagers – we are trying to find a seller that will supply us clothes with a descent price. We are hoping to start this project with the beginning of May.

Some of our sisters started preparing the children for their first communion. There are 400 children in five different camps in Erbil. We are hoping to make it a special occasion by providing them with what they need during their preparation period and their special day.

Having been effectively involved in these projects and accompanying the IDP in the camps, plus the inconvenience of living in caravans, sisters are truly exhausted. The convent also is very crowded (there are about 40 sisters in the convent). The sisters need some rest. Therefore, we decided to send sisters to Lebanon to rest for a short period of time in our convent over there. This will be a good time for the sisters to rest and come back refreshed to continue their work with IPD and to be ready for more projects that serve the IPD in terms of education for the coming school year.

We are grateful to all humanitarian organizations and people of good-will which are willing to help and are always ready to help.

Thank you for your prayers and support, may the risen Christ raise us from our humiliation, displacement and vagrancy. Easter grace and blessings be to you all.

Sr. Maria Hanna OP

(For the Dominican Sisters of Saint Catherine of Siena –Iraq.)



• Solidarity with our Brothers and Sisters in Central African Republic

Visitation of fr Bruno Cadoré to the Provincial Vicariate of Equatorial Africa.

It is in Bangui, Central African Republic (CAR) that the Master of the Order, brother Bruno Cadoré chose to celebrate Easter celebrations. Accompanied by his Socius for Africa, brother Gabriel Samba, they arrived in the Central African's capital on the 31st of March 2015, Holy Wednesday. This fraternal visit which ended on April 7th was intended to comfort our five brothers, the sisters and all the Dominican family living in difficult situations since the advent of SELEKA and Anti BALAKA. It was also an opportunity to show solidarity with the families of the brothers sorely afflicted by this crisis, with the Church and the Central African people.

Brother Bruno who went to Iraq in October 2014 and Ukraine in February 2015, could not ignore the CAR and could not remain indifferent to the suffering of our brothers and sisters who also go through very difficult times but perhaps not being reported enough by the media, and therefore unknown to people. Yet there were many atrocities, massacres, raids and fires of entire villages; and people's lives are full of misery and suffering. Camps for displaced people abound everywhere. Who will lend his voice to these voiceless to shout their unbearable distress?

At the heart of this battered population, our brothers and sisters want to be witnesses of hope, witnesses of the presence and closeness of God, witnesses of his mercy. At the height of the crisis, they chose to stay with the Central African people, despite the danger of death, looting, the unbearable rattle of weapons that tore the hearts. For those who were there, those who were suffering and dying were also human beings. The stories of the events that the brothers, sisters, and families told us are heart-breaking. Our brothers and sisters have been eloquent witnesses to an evangelical and missionary testimony.

On Holy Wednesday at 17:30, we attended the Chrism Mass presided over by His Grace Dieudonné NZAPALAINGA, Archbishop of Bangui, at the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception. The Apostolic Nuncio in CAR and Chad, His Grace Franco COPPOLA was also present, and about a hundred priests concelebrating. Many religious men and women, the faithful of Christ, had invaded the cathedral which was packed. All sang with a joy that is not found in peaceful and rich countries. There, with the Master of the Order and the entire presbyterium of Bangui, we renewed our priestly promises. A feast was offered at the end of the Mass to celebrate the feast of priesthood.

We visited our sisters of St. Thomas Aquinas in Begoua neighbourhood, Dominican Missionaries of Africa (DMA) in "Combatant" neighbourhood, where we met the Dominican youth, and children called Friends of St. Dominic. The DMA who are in Mbata, in the inland part of the country, took advantage of their stay in Bangui to greet the Master of the Order. The brothers took us to their places of ministry: St Mark the Major Seminary in Bimbo, Propédeutique, the headquarters of the Conference of Major Superiors of Central African where our brother Richard Appora, superior of the community of Bangui, is the president. We visited the Archbishop of Bangui and the Apostolic Nuncio. The two prelates expressed their joy and gratitude for the presence of the Dominicans and their work in formation, particularly at the Major Seminary. They expressed their wish, that the community be strengthened and involved in the education of young people.

We had beautiful Easter celebrations in the church of the community, filled with the faithful, with so much joy and hope. Brother Bruno presided the Easter Vigil and brother Gabriel the Mass of Resurrection Sunday. On Easter Monday we had a meeting with the Dominican Family, then Mass and lunch at the brethren's community. Finally, we visited the families of the brothers. Some brothers have lost parents, killed in the most cowardly and violently way at home, buried without dignity, we owe to the dead in Africa. We bowed to their graves. Brother Bruno only had words of comfort to the families. They were moved to see the Master of the Order visiting them in their neighbourhoods, in the camps of displaced ironically nicknamed "Ledger", the name of the largest luxury hotel in Bangui.

Despite these difficulties, people keep joy and hope in the return of peace, reconciliation and living together again with their neighbours of yesterday regardless of religious affiliation. It's hard for some people because



the wounds are still open and they have thoughts of revenge, but a new Central African is possible and many believe it. It is also our prayer and hope.

For more pictures of the visitation of fr Bruno to Bangui, [click here](#).

fr. Gabriel Samba, O.P.

• **The Irish Dominican in Iran**

Fr Michael Commane talks about fr Paul Lawlor and the Irish Dominican Mission in Iran.

Irish Dominican, fr Paul Lawlor joined the Dominican Order in 1968, the year after I did, so we have been in touch with one another over the years, even if our paths have gone in different directions.

When I went to work in The Kerryman Newspaper in the 1990s I got to know fr Paul's mother, and since then we have become great friends. Mrs Lawlor celebrated her 100th birthday on Saturday, March 28. There was a party for the centenarian. I was there as was fr Paul, who travelled from Tehran for the special day.

The Irish Dominicans went to Iran in 1962. And since then we have had a presence in Tehran, where we have a priory right in the heart of the capital city. In the 1970s an Irish Dominican and past pupil of CBS Synge Street, Fr William Barden was archbishop in Isfahan.

Twelve years ago I visited fr Paul in Iran. I was bowled over by the beauty of the place and its people. They could not have been kinder to me. On one occasion I lost my way in the middle of Tehran and a policeman came to my aid. He ended up stopping a car and asking the driver to bring me to my destination. I speak no Farsi, he no English and still it worked.

Last week I sat down with fr Paul and we chatted about what it's like for an Irish Dominican priest living in the capital city of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Fr Paul is the only Irish Dominican in Iran. Before we began our chat I pointed out that I had recently been in Synge Street Primary School in Dublin and the first book I saw when I passed the hall door was a copy of the Koran.

The Irish Dominicans since going to Iran have been working with the small Christian community in the capital but they have also been involved in building relations with Islamic leaders. Fr Paul, who speaks Farsi and with his experience of living among his Muslim neighbours for many years, has a practical knowledge of Islam.

Iranians are mostly Shia Muslims, which is the second largest denomination of Islam. They believe that Ali, the son-in-law of the Prophet Mohammad and his descendants were the rightful successors of the Prophet as leaders of the Muslim community. Ali and his successors are called Imams and there have been 12 of them. The last Imam went into hiding and they are awaiting his return. In the meantime Islamic leaders are the deputies of the 12th Imam who, though hidden, is the leader of Shia Muslims.

Ali is the great hero, the perfect man, who lived the Koran. He is a manifestation of God's self-revelation, who was created before the world. The word Ayatollah means "sign of God." Many Shia Muslims believe that the hidden meaning of the Koran is revealed through the Imams.

Talking to fr Paul it was clear that he believes in the importance of the work of understanding and relating to this religion, which has such a large following. In his own scholarly and methodical way he is constantly learning more about their world. He has been living in Iran some 18 years. In that time he has made many Muslim friends.

There's the old adage that if you want to know me then come to live with me. That's exactly what fr Paul is doing. And chatting with him I learned so much about the world of Islam. We all need to spend more time talking and listening to one another. It makes far more sense than making war.

Fr Michael Commane, OP



• PROVINCIALS FROM EUROPE MEET IN NAPLES

IEOP Assembly Naples 2015

The annual Assembly of IEOP (Inter Europae Ordinis Praedicatorum) was held at the Convent of Madonna dell'Arco in Naples (Italy) from April 7 to 11, 2015.

The Master of the Order, fr Bruno Cadore was at the Assembly in the Company of 24 Provincials from across Europe, 8 members of the Curia, 7 translators and a Secretary. The theme of the Assembly was “Government, Spirituality and Freedom”.

On Wednesday (April 8), after a brief presentation from each of the provincials, the first two presentations were delivered. Fr Vivian Boland spoke about the “Anthropological and Theological Foundations of our Constitutions” and fr Fausto Arici gave a presentation titled, “The efforts of democracy: What kind of democracy is practiced in the Order of Preachers”. One word kept coming up over and over again; koinocrazia, which is an indication that our democracy is not an imposition of the majority over the minority but a dialogue and communion which seeks unanimity. It is a communion of lives united in the Lord, having one heart and one soul. This democracy is not without its difficulties but it is the best response to evangelical ideals.

On Thursday (April 9), in the morning, three Provincials; fr Martin Gelabert (Aragon), fr Michel Lachenaud (France) and fr Francesco La Vecchia (St Thomas Aquinas, Italy) spoke about the “practical problems of obedience”. There were discussions about some entities under restructuring or presently having some difficulties. The Vicariate of Russia and Ukraine is facing some challenges due to the political tension between Russia and Ukraine. The atmosphere was filled with emotions during the report on the Central African Republic, a Vicariate of the Province of France. Also, in Iraq, the war and the destructions have continued. Our brothers are victims of this evil and they seem to have been forgotten by the rest of the world. The two Vicariates in Belgium are working towards merging into a Vice Province in 2016. The Provinces of Spain, Aragon and Betica also gave a report on their process of merging into one Province of Hispania.

On Friday (April 10), fr Bruno Cadore shared on the theme, “the community project as an instrument of governance”. According to him, governance in the Order is structured around the Chapter, where the apostolic projects of the community are developed and discussed. It is therefore the source from which the community thrives. Also on that day, the following made their presentations: fr Orlando Rueda Acevedo (Socius for Apostolic Life), fr Franklin Buitrago Rojas (Promoter for the Jubilee), fr Mike Deeb (Promoter for Justice and Peace) and fr Srecko Koralija (Regent of Studies of the Province of Croatia).

During those days, the provincials shared the Lauds, Vespers and the Eucharist with the community of Madonna dell'Arco. On Friday (April 10), fr Bruno celebrated the Eucharist and preached while fr Miguel de Burgos presided at the closing Mass on Saturday, April 11.

As usual, there was a day set out for excursions. On that day, the provincials visited Pompeii, celebrated Mass at the Shrine of Pompeii which was presided over by the Bishop of the diocese. They also visited and had dinner with the Dominican Sisters of the Holy Rosary of Pompeii.

• MEETING OF THE REGENTS OF STUDIES OF NORTH AMERICA

The Regents of Studies of North America and Mexico recently met in Amecameca, Mexico, the site of the novitiate for the Province of Mexico, to discuss different ways that their centers of study could better collaborate together. The meeting took place on 08 and 09 April during the meeting of the provincials of North America and was a direct response to the commission of the last general chapter (ACG Trogir 2013, 85), in which provincials and regents were asked to address the question of collaboration among their centers of studies.

The meeting was hosted by fr. Luis Javier Rubio Guerrero, the Regent of Studies for the Province of Mexico. fr. Bryan Kromholtz, the Regent of the Province of the Holy Name (Western Province, USA) served as the chair. The regents or delegates from the Provinces of Mexico, St. Joseph, Holy Name, St. Albert the Great, and St. Martin de Porres attended, as did the Socius for Studies, fr. Michael Mascari. The provincials from



the same provinces were also present at the meeting, as were the Provincial for the Province of Canada, the Vicar Provincial for the Vicariate of Vietnam in Calgary, and the Socius for the Provinces of the United States and the Vicariate of Vietnam, fr. Dominic Izzo.

One outcome of the meeting was the decision to develop a system of inter-provincial exchange among professors with expertise in various aspects of our Dominican intellectual tradition. It was agreed that a program in Dominican studies would be developed where week-long courses in the different centers would be offered by professors from outside the province. A second result was an invitation from the Province of Mexico to participate in a regularly offered summer workshop on the different facets of Mexican theology, culture, and popular religion, so that U.S. and Canadian brothers who work with people of Mexican origin might respond more effectively to their pastoral needs. The regents worked closely with the provincials on these proposals before they were ultimately approved.

Both provincials and regents alike were very grateful for the warm welcome that they received from the brothers of the Province of Mexico, especially fr. Luis Javier and his provincial, fr. Jorge Rafael Díaz Núñez. Michael Mascari, OP

• [The Dominican Habit, “a sign of purity and simplicity”](#)

On Saturday March 28, 2015, eve of Palm Sunday, six novices received the habit of the Order of Preachers at the priory of St. Dominic, Cotonou, Republic of Benin. The clothing ceremony took place at 7:30 pm, during Vespers. It was presided over by brother Joseph AMEKA, sub-prior of the priory.

Brothers Franck Martial AHOUDA and Damien Gbainakpon ASSOGBA, from Benin Republic, Théodore AZIABA, from Togo, Marius TANO and Marcelin ETTIEN, from Ivory Coast, are, all five, sons of the Vice Province of St. Augustine in West Africa. Brother Gilles Odilon TAYUE WABO from Cameroon, belongs to the Provincial Vicariate of Equatorial Africa.

After the reading of the Word of God, brother Joseph gave an exhortation, in simple but very profound words, on the spirituality of the Dominican habit. He reminded the novices that we do not wear the Dominican habit “for being seen”. The Dominican habit is a sign of purity and simplicity, he explained. Thus in receiving the habit, the novice brothers receive a rich and ancient tradition that they must assume with the grace of God.

After his exhortation, brother Joseph AMEKA gave the Dominican habit to the novices. Helped by the older brothers present, the novices put on the habit of the Order, a sign of their belonging to the Order of Preachers. At the end of Vespers, all the older brothers welcomed the novices fraternally with hugs and words of encouragement. The many faithful who came to attend the ceremony also congratulated them. All dressed in white like angels, the novices were brimming with joy and pride. With photographs they immortalized the event to which they had been looking forward for the past six months.

It should be noted that from 3 to 7 November 2014 the six novices had an inter-novitiate workshop together with the novices of the Roman Congregation of Saint Dominic (CRSD) of Parakou. This workshop which took place at St. Dominic Priory, Cotonou, was led by brother Gilles SOGLO, prior of the priory. It was focused on "The history of the Order of Preachers." Brother Gilles urged the novices to be true guardians of the Dominican tradition, and to make their communities places of communion among ourselves and with God. Because it is in the human being taken in his uniqueness and in his freedom that the search for God is possible, we must allow ourselves to be configured to his Son Jesus, brother Gilles said. The novices expressed their gratitude to brother Clement AHOUANDJINO, the novice master, and to sister Ysabel BARROSO, the novice mistress, for this initiative.

The novices

• [Welcome to Dominicana](#)

Introducing Our New Website

Dominicana is a journal about culture, theology, and virtue, written from a quintessentially Dominican perspective. The friars who contribute to it—student brothers of the Province of St. Joseph—are training to



become preachers of Jesus Christ, and this mission marks everything found here. The Dominican tradition of preaching and teaching is shaped significantly by the work of St. Thomas Aquinas. It is by drawing from this tradition, this way of understanding and spreading the Gospel, that *Dominicana* offers a distinctive voice to the modern conversation.

With the launch of this newly designed website, we take another step forward in a history that began with our first issue in 1916. Whether you are a new reader or a long-time friend of *Dominicana*, we hope you will find our new website usable and inviting. A good place to begin is the Our Vision section, which explains what this journal is all about, what informs our writing (the new essay *Why Thomism?*), and who we are, both collectively and individually.

The heart of our website, of course, is the content written by the brothers. We endeavor to provide something of lasting value to our readers, and so everything we publish is carefully reviewed by the student editors and by Dominican priests who serve as theological editors. In addition to finding essays under the broad categories of culture, theology, and virtue, you can also find related work at the bottom of each post, as well as work by the same author and recent posts.

Our new website brings together all our *Dominicana* content and offers many more ways to browse and explore the work of the brothers. Shorter essays published online every weekday, formerly published at *Dominicana Blog*, remain free. Print Journal content—longer essays, book reviews, and more—remains available to subscribers. Complete digital editions of recent issues are available in the Journal Archive. More back issues, including the first issue from 1916, will be released later this year to commemorate the 800th Jubilee of the Order of Preachers, and the 100th anniversary of *Dominicana*.

In the Marketplace section, you can purchase individual print and digital subscriptions, as well as access for libraries, religious institutions, or as a gift. Please consider subscribing, as your support sustains our writing and helps our growing studentate. Existing subscribers should be able to login with their existing account information—if you have difficulties doing so, please contact us.

Under *Opera Omnia*—the medieval Latin term for collected works—you will find a variety of ways to explore *Dominicana*. The first, *Browse*, showcases the featured artwork that is a *Dominicana* staple. Under the *Blog Archive*, you can browse by date and by category, or you can peruse the special featured series that offer a sustained treatment of a subject by one or several brothers over several essays. A variety of audio and video content—including recent talks and conferences, a video series on the Catechism for the Year of Faith, and the latest album from *Dominicana Records*—is also available.

We have also designed a new mobile version of the website, so you can read *Dominicana* easily on any device. We hope you'll like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter as well.

To mark this new chapter, we commissioned Matthew Alderman to draw our new logo, which depicts a familiar image from Dominican history: the dog with a flaming torch in his mouth. The dog is associated with St. Dominic and his Order, and the torch represents his burning zeal for preaching. The link dates back to a dream by our founder's mother, Blessed Jane of Aza, while she was expecting him, and has been strengthened over the years by a pun on our Latin name: *Domini-canes*: the hounds of the Lord. *Dominicana*'s hound holds in his paws the shield of our province.

As sons of St. Dominic, we pray that we may have his zeal and his wisdom in what we write here at *Dominicana*. Most of all, we hope that God uses our efforts here as a means to draw our readers—and us—closer to himself. So whether you have been a faithful reader for years, or just discovered us today, thank you for reading *Dominicana*.



Official News

• The Permanent Commission for the Promotion of Studies

The Commission met at Santa Sabina, Rome, April 22-24, 2015.

The commission which is led by the Socius for Intellectual Life, fr Michael Mascari meets annual to reflection on issues concerning the academic life of the Order and to advice the Master of the Order and the General Chapter accordingly.

The permanent Commission for the promotion of studies in the Order was created in the General Chapter of Quezon City in 1978. Its goal is to call the attention of the brothers to major doctrinal questions of the day and prepare them to dialogue with the modern world through research and study, but most especially research and study around questions proper to the intellectual world and culture.

These all require planning of the permanent formation of the brothers, the coordination of professors and specialized institutions either on the regional or international level (AGC 1998, Bologna, no. 198).

One must pay attention above all to the questions raised by the new generation. The promotion of studies in the Order necessarily implies attentiveness to the training of future professors and specialists (AGC 2001, Providence, no. 156).

The following brothers were present at the meeting: fr Michael MASCARI (Socius for Intellectual Life), fr Benoît DOMINIQUE DE LA SOUJEOLE (Switzerland), fr Romulo RODRIGUEZ (Philippines), fr Luis Javier Rubio GUERRERO (Mexico), fr Bryan Louis KROMHOLTZ (Most Holy Name, USA), fr Michal PALUCH (Poland), fr Jorge A. SCAMPINI (Argentina). fr Emmanuel DURAND (French) and fr Gilles SOGLO (West Africa) who are also members of the commission were absent.

Calendar of the Master of the Order for May 2015

30 April-4 May: Canonical Visitation to Chile
5-9: Conference at Toronto, Canada
13-26: Plenary Meetings of the General Council
23-24: Jubilee Celebrations at Toulouse, France

All articles are available on www.op.org