JUSTICE & PEACE
OUR PROJECT

Justice and Peace has been chosen as a priority, a way of living and being for the entire Dominican family: sisters, brothers and laity. Our Constitutions, along with the many actions that have been undertaken so far and continue to be carried out throughout the world today, are proof that these words have not remained unheeded. How could we possibly remain indifferent to the suffering endured by millions of our bothers and sisters living on our planet? Can we close our eyes and our ears to the plight of those subjected to a life of suffering because they are the victims of war, economic crises and injustices of all types?

In several of the provinces and congregations, the sisters, brothers and laity work together on projects for the advancement of Justice and Peace. By so doing they express the reality and the vitality behind the commitment for Justice and Peace. Work for Justice and Peace is not just something that is “added on” to our preaching; on the contrary, it is an inherent part of everything that we do, colors every one of our actions and is for all of us the particular manner in which we live Dominican compassion and mercy.

Unfortunately, there still exist too many situations of injustice and violence in the world where members of the Dominican family do not dare intervene, because they refuse to believe that they can be agents of change.

The specific purpose of these workbooks is to serve as a support mechanism for those who are out there on the front lines, and to re-ignite the passion in those who doubt they can live the Peace and Justice dimension of the Dominican vocation.

The workbooks were written to encourage those who are already committed to action and to help motivate those people who do not know where to begin, or how to go about entering into solidarity with those excluded by society. We all agree that issues of social justice should be a primary concern to every member of the Order, but even more so to those who have been entrusted with the direct responsibility of promoting Justice and Peace in their province, congregation, institution and fraternity, and to those working in initial and ongoing formation.
How to use the Workbooks.

The workbooks were designed to be a **practical methodology** and are meant to be used as a **tool**. They do not contain a reflection on the fundamentals of Justice and Peace, but they do give you the basic elements required for initiating a reflection process that hopefully will lead to action.

You are free to choose the order you wish in reading these texts. It is not necessary to follow their order of presentation, although they have been structured to follow a certain progression. There exist many possibilities for crossovers that could be useful in passing from the written word to specific actions.

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<th>Crossovers</th>
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The crossovers in the different sections are identified by various logos (indicated above), and other possibilities will be presented in keeping according to the needs of the user.

The workbooks present you with a series of tools that are meant to be taken on and **adapted** in particular circumstances to meet the needs: a) of the specific target group; b) the country where the work is being done; c) the type of meeting format being used: discussion group, spiritual retreat, workshop, evaluation seminar, community meeting, provincial council, chapters... Each one of you is responsible for designing your own tools; the workbooks are there to help you and to provide you with ideas.

Proof that we will have reached our goal, will come when the majority of the sisters and brothers tell us that these workbooks have become obsolete. This will be the sign that numerous actions will have been taken and many people will have been sensitized, thus making it necessary to find new means to meet the new challenges.

The practical living out of Justice and Peace in our daily lives as Preachers is far more important and far more meaningful than any speeches we might give on the subject.

ENJOY READING THESE PAGES
AND WE WISH YOU ALL THE BEST
IN CARRYING OUT THE TASK.
The work has been divided into five parts.


Part 1 contains a series of examples of actions set in place by the brothers and sisters for the purpose of promoting Justice and Peace.

Part 2 places the focus on the foundations of the work for Justice and Peace.

Part 3 describes the different methods for intervention in the area of Justice and Peace.

Part 4 gives some theological, economic and liturgical pointers based on issues highlighted in a commitment to Justice and Peace.

Part 5 proposes a method for the evaluation and celebration of all actions undertaken for the promotion of Justice and Peace.

Any experiences, or any new tools you might be able to share with us, as a result of this reading and use of the workbooks would be deeply appreciated. Please send them to us so we can include them in our documents. The workbooks were designed to be interactive, they are yours, they belong to you. We need your feedback and ask that you send us your ideas and experiences, so we can share them with the rest of the Dominican family.

Send your reactions and observations to the Promoter General for Justice and Peace:

Fr. Jean-Jacques Pérennès
Santa Sabina
Piazza P. D’Illiria, 1
00153 Roma.
The workbooks are the result of the work done by a group of brothers, under the direction of the Promoter General for Justice and Peace. The members of the group are: fr. Jean-Jacques Pérennès (Promoter General, Rome), brothers Michel Côté (Province of Canada), Jean Claude Lavigne (Province of Lyon) and Carlos Mendoza (Province of Mexico). Our thanks to fr. Edward Van Merrienboer (Province of Chicago) who made it possible for the group to accomplish the work.

The workbooks were studied and discussed by the International Commission for Justice and Peace. The names of the members of the committee can be found in the appendix to workbook n°1. The final version of the text was written by fr. Jean Claude Lavigne.

All translations are from the original French version. This translation was done by Patricia Leahy.

Our sincerest thanks to all of those who helped the team by sending in documents and drawings (Sr. Agnes Kim, Sr. Fides, Fr. Xavier, brothers of the Vicariate of Rwanda-Burundi). Special thanks to fr. Philippe Toxé (Philox) for the cartoon drawings and Sr. Madeleine Fredell who did the original proofreading.
LIFE STORIES
SUMMARY

You will find in this booklet:

1. FAMILY STORIES
2. INTRODUCTION TO JUSTICE AND PEACE
3. FOR DIFFERENT REASONS
4. LISTENING TO THE PROPHETS
5. THE VOW OF POVERTY

appendices:

Names of the members of the International Commission
Founding texts
Some of the brothers and sisters
The prophets
There are many things that could be said about Justice and Peace to the members of the Dominican family to make them more aware of this dimension of our life and ministry. We chose to begin with a very effective and simple method that is readily accessible to all - STORY-TELLING- whereby an individual or group relates the sequence of events in a specific journey. The purpose of workbook n°1 is to facilitate the story-telling process and the use of it as a teaching tool.

1. STORIES ABOUT OUR FAMILY

Many of the brothers, sisters and members of the laity have ministries that put them in direct contact with those excluded by society and with situations of violence and war. Their presence can take the form of an individual presence or of a communal presence.

Some members of the Dominican family work with people living with AIDS. Others choose to work with drug-addicts. Some are involved in the areas of economic and socio-cultural activities where the focus is placed on youth and minority groups. Some devote themselves to preaching to those living in the poor neighborhoods of our cities, where we find the most needy of our society. Others are teachers and are deeply concerned about raising our consciousness and getting us involved in the socio-political and ecological aspects of daily life. Others have set up social programs... We are everywhere being fashioned by the beggars who turn up at our doors for help, by the cultural differences that exist within our communities, by the suffering endured by our loved ones, and by the media who feed us an ongoing diet of catastrophic happenings. Each and everyone of us is called to live the vow of poverty in a way that will bring him/her closer to those who have nothing in life.

All these actions, from the most humble to the most sensational, are ways of living out Justice and Peace with what we are. We have acquired a great deal of experience, and we often accomplish more than we believe; but how much of this do we share with others? This is what this first booklet is about. In it we will in all simplicity share some of our family stories, how some of our brothers and sisters lived their lives and did things.

The novitiate community of the Dominican sisters of the Roman Congregation of St. Dominic in São Domingos do Prata in Brazil, decided to focus their ministry on development work...
and to do so together with the inhabitants of the region. The community of six sisters began by putting in place a development association to create housing for the people who had migrated to the city from the rural areas. This soon gave rise to the need for a literacy program, and then a program for health education.

A piece of land was purchased in 1984 to be used as a place to teach the boys the principles of farming and raising animals. The young men learn while working on the farm. They receive a small salary for their work, which helps to get them started on their own projects. The group working on the farm decided to begin a cheese factory using the milk produced by the animals. Everything produced on the farm is sold to the people living in the poor neighborhoods. Another school was built, this time for the girls, where they could be taught the basic skills of gardening, sewing, cooking and alternative medicine.

Two more businesses have since been created, the carpentry-shop and the bakery. The project has now expanded throughout the entire region of Sao Domingos do Prata. A traditional pharmacy where the people make their own medicine was opened. Health-care training remains high on the list of priorities.

The sisters and other members of the association try to get the municipal authorities to assume their responsibility in helping the poor. The sisters also reflects on the theme of human dignity, on the fact that all humans are created in the image of God. All of these activities are rooted within the parish, the prayer groups and the life of the community.

A religious community committed to actions of economic development with their neighbors is a prime example of what the work of Justice and Peace is all about.

**Story 1: Mexico City**

Twenty-thousand street kids (perhaps more) have nowhere to go, so they live on the streets of the giant megalopolis of Mexico City. They may find freedom on the streets, but they also find death, violence and terribly dramatic situations. Fr. J.P. is an emotional man, who learned to love life through his friendships with the great artists and intellectuals of Latin America and the street kids of Mexico City. He is a lover of beauty, the kind that demonstrates “the just proportion of things”, the beauty that goes beyond formalism and esthetics. He likes to tell the story of the young street kid
turned artist who said to him, “the face of Christ is always beautiful, even when it is suffering.”

With the help of a small group of collaborators, fr. J.P. was able to open a small house for the street kids. He doesn’t simply provide them with a roof and some food, but takes advantage of their stay in the house to rehabilitate them through the use of beauty. He began offering them workshops in painting, engraving and sculpting to expose them to the arts and develop their sense of wonder.

The kids call fr. J.P. “El padre”, the person who is respected by all. He accepts this title and the role that goes with it, not in order to frighten the children, but because he wants to teach them that they must treat others with the respect they deserve. If someone takes drugs while in the house, he/she is sent back out onto the streets to reflect on the issue of personal freedom and the choices one must make in life. Experiencing responsible freedom has become the goal of the house. Everyone has a place in the house if they are willing to take it. The fact of meeting well-known artists who are willing to share their know-how stimulates the children enormously.

When fr. J.P. is asked what motivates him in his ministry, he answers with metaphysical and Gospel quotes, for these are the two passions that nurture his artistic expression. Art is his greatest form of preaching and the expression of compassion and the promotion of the dignity of the street kids of Mexico City is one of its signs.

This second example is an illustration of an individual commitment that presents us with a new dimension of Justice and Peace; an action (that could have occurred in a classroom or a hospital...) undertaken for the good of those who would have otherwise been deprived of it.

The Dominican Sisters of the Holy Name, in California, have a long tradition of welcoming refugees. In 1984 they made a corporate commitment to provide a place of refuge for those fleeing repression from Central America. When the sisters took the decision to provide a place of refuge, they also took the decision to use part of their Motherhouse for this purpose. They offered the refugees a place to stay, gave them food, taught them the skills they required to adapt to their new country, and helped them to find a job... They participated in
information campaigns on the status of refugees in the U.S.A. and on the situation in Central America, (particularly in El Salvador and Guatemala).

Since 1992 the Sisters have played an active role in contesting the changes made to the law pertaining to migrant workers, changes that have penalized the workers and exacerbated the xenophobia that exists around this question, especially in California. Seminars were organized for the purpose of informing the other sisters and the American public about this situation. In November 1994, a new law was passed (which has not as yet become official because it is being contested and is in the courts) whereby unauthorized immigrants would be denied access to health-care and social services. Such laws have been promulgated in all of the states and at the federal level, in order to reduce the number of refugees admissible to the US. to 50,000, (at the present time the cutoff point is 110,000). The Sisters participate in all of the debates on this issue, where they act as strong advocates of the rights of the immigrant people. Some of the members of the community work more directly in the areas of education, health-care and social services for migrants and strangers. The immigrant issue is the focal point for the entire congregation. The sisters say they are all of immigrant origin, as are the great majority of the inhabitants of the U.S.A.

This action for Justice and Peace deliberately focuses on one specific dimension of poverty. In seeking to defend the rights of these people the sisters automatically became involved in other types of "socio-political" action.

Story 4: France

In a priory located in the center of a large city of France there live twenty brothers, the majority of whom are over 65 years of age. Although the community does not have a specific project, everyone is involved in some kind of active ministry despite their advanced age. They preach on the Rosary and are active with the seniors who have formed Christian reflection groups.

Every week Fr. T. visits the three neighborhood clinics. Fr. A. is a handyman and goes to the homes of the elderly to repair broken appliances. Fr. P. is in charge of hospitality and sees to it that the homeless who come to the door are well received and get something good to eat. When he meets them on the
streets he always stops to chat. Once a year Fr. L.M. spends three weeks in a Caritas shelter for the homeless, where he does hospitality ministry and helps to distribute food to those in need. Fr. M. takes care of Fr. C. who has Alzheimer's disease and does all he can to make him as comfortable and as peaceful as possible.

The majority of the brothers go on a pilgrimage to Lourdes, where they encounter the sick, the handicapped and their suffering family members. They take time to listen to them, to give the sacrament of reconciliation, to accompany the pilgrims to the various religious celebrations and to do night-duty at the pilgrim hospital. Every year the brothers set aside a certain amount of money in their annual budget for donations to solidarity groups and charitable organizations such as Amnesty International and Caritas.

For the brothers of this priory, Justice and Peace is an integral part of their daily apostolate taking into account those who are most in need.

The ministry of Justice and Peace does not require that we do all kinds of extraordinary things... it consists in doing everyday things but focusing on the neediest in our societies.

While we have presented you with four stories, there are hundreds more that could have been told. There are wonderful things happening all over the world as a result of our priority option for Justice and Peace, a « frontier » that has been at the core of many of our General Chapters.

If we wanted to talk about some of the more visible actions, we could tell you about Fr. Pedro and his work with the « homeless » in Paris, or the brothers in Africa who visit the prisoners and who speak out on their behalf, of the militant sisters who are against the arms industry in the U.S.A., the sisters who have spoken out against the murderers in Columbia, of all of those who have intervened in the name of the peasants who have had their land taken from them in Brazil, of those working with battered women and prostitutes... You will find these and many other similar stories woven throughout the workbooks.

There are all kinds of actions being carried out by the members of your community, your province, your congregation. Some we all know about, others remain hidden. Did you ever think of conducting a survey to see what people were doing ? Which of these actions are well known to all ? Do you think that circulating information about Justice and Peace in your community, in your province or congregation would help get others involved ?
Information can be a powerful tool to help motivate those who are hesitant. When people hear others tell about how they succeeded in getting something off the ground, when they learn about innovative ideas, it often helps them to get beyond their own hesitations or fears and their refusal to become involved.

The circulation of information also helps to get people with common interests in contact with one another. These contacts often lead to the setting up of networks that provide them with a space for dialogue, which provides for greater effectiveness and an increased capacity for theological and spiritual reflection. Are you aware of the emergence of any such networks? Could this become a goal for your province? Remember, the first network that must exist is the one in your own local community...

Wouldn't it be wonderful if we had a network for all of those working in the legal field? Another for those seeking solutions to the problems of unemployment and the lack of income? One for those helping prostitutes... and the list goes on and on. We can no longer afford to isolate ourselves and to ignore what others are doing. In the long term these networks would benefit all of the members of the Dominican family, for we would find renewed strength in this newly-found solidarity, our experiences and capacity for analysis would increase and we would become more relevant.

It would be good to get these networks in place at the regional level. The members of the region could be invited to circulate information, which would in turn help us get beyond the boundaries of our province, our congregation... The regional promoters are there to assist you.
There are actions in the area of Justice and Peace that have been a failure or have simply disappeared for different reasons, whereas new ones are in the process of being born or have reached the stage of maturity. Is there someone keeping track of what is happening, is there anyone being the memory of all this vitality?

These stories make up our common heritage, the place where our commitment to Dominican life is put to the test, the mission we are asking the younger generations to continue. It is absolutely fundamental that this heritage be transmitted to the younger members, not for the purpose of having them repeat what has already been done, but to allow for something new to emerge rooted in the rock of experience. Wouldn't it be a good idea to set up a mini data-bank at the provincial or congregational level, while waiting for a more extensive one to be set up for the whole Order?
Many of the brothers and sisters are very modest when it comes to talking about what they do and have accomplished. Their silence is often attributed to their sense of modesty, while the real reason is that they are afraid of not being understood, or that they find it difficult to find the words to express the depth and the intensity of their commitment. Would the common good of the Order and each branch of the Dominican family not be fostered by inviting the brothers and sisters who are committed to the promotion of Justice and Peace to share their stories and their experiences with the membership? Gatherings such as these would be a source of enrichment for us all, particularly the younger members.

We will now look at two new stories about life in the Dominican family and see how they can help us to:
- set the parameters for a mini data-base (which could be put onto computer with the help of a simple program).
- set in place an interview process to help foster the sharing of life experiences.

| Teschemakers, New Zealand, Oamaru tel/fax (03) 4395850 Teschemakers Center | Name of the program Organization
| Mary Horn with 8 others, Dominican sisters from New Zealand Ecumenical group, creation spirituality, ecology, spiritual research, technological alternatives, rediscovering our roots (Maori and Celts), artistic research. Innovations liturgical, prayer. Harmony with all of creation. Search for justice and truth. Cooperative model as an alternative to consumerism and individualism Center for training and research, large property. Cooperative lifestyle. Liturgy. Training sessions: Justice for the earth, the Earth and Scripture, O.P. mystics. Financial difficulties. Dominicans, Creation theologians | Area of intervention Objective
| | | Means
| | | Achievements
| | | Difficulties
| | | Networks

Fr. Nza and the Songhai Project in Benin.

Fr. Nza is of Nigerian origin. When the Biafran war began, his parents sent him to school in the US, where he studied electronics and became very interested in Biology and Economics.
Nza was concerned by the great gap that existed between the resources in Africa and the deplorable state of the African continent. His questions made him want to get at the cause of this situation and to find alternative solutions. Nza joined the Dominicans in 1972.

Nza is convinced of three things: 1) Africa must get itself out of the crisis of values thrust upon it, 2) prove that a solution does exist, 3) the Dominican Order has a major role to play by showing Africans a new road to follow. Nza does not believe that Africa is condemned to a life of poverty and perpetual assistance, because he believes in humanity, life, creation. Nza reads the works of Père Lebret where he finds support for his intuitions.

In 1985, Nza arrives in Benin and sets up his first agricultural center in Ouando, near Porto Novo, to which he gives the name “Songhai”, after the first name given to an old African empire. The country is in a sad state: the banks are bankrupt and the majority of the young people cannot find work when they finish school. From the atmosphere created by the economic crisis the people develop an attitude of dependency on aid and lose sight of their values.

A training center is set up in Ouando with the focus placed on the formation of values that must be restored (creativity, honesty, sense of responsibility, the importance of agricultural production), production (based on a system integrating agriculture, stock farming, fish breeding, biomass energy) and innovative technology (natural agriculture, genetic improvement, focus on local resources).

Nza wants to show that it is possible to fight against poverty, that every individual possesses the potential to be innovative. He also wants to contribute to the creation of new types of agricultural enterprises - that are economically and socially viable - thus ensuring a revenue for the unemployed youth.

The center in Ouando develops quickly: a restaurant is added followed by a store where the products are sold. A second center opens in Tchi, located in another region of the country. The number of participants continues to grow substantially. A model village using innovative rural technology is set up in Ouando. A credit system to help the youth and an association to provide follow-up to former trainees are set in place. The project has become a pilot project for the whole country and Nza was voted « African Man Of The Year » in 1994.
difficulties During its ten years of existence the project has had difficulty finding young people capable of taking charge of the project, either in whole or in part. Respect for discipline is never easy. Getting funding is another big hassle, it often means having to do a great deal of public relations and a whole lot of paperwork. One must be astute enough to do the work in a way that he does not allow the funder to dominate the process. Getting the collaboration of other Dominican brothers is not an easy task, it requires so much time and one has to explain over and over again the benefits of such an endeavor. The innovativeness of the project, the fact that it is very different from traditional ministries, is in itself a contentious issue.

strengths There are difficulties but there are also strengths: the strong team spirit of the participants and the directors; the technological competence for which the project is known; the capacity for innovation...

interpretation Songhai has organized a number of meetings to study the problems of development in Africa from the theological perspective. One of the scripture passages that Fr. Nza is particularly fond of is the “multiplication of the loaves”. As far as he is concerned, Songhai is the contemporary practice of the words of Jesus when he told the disciples “give them something to eat yourselves.” The directors of Songhai participate in many international N.G.O. networks and are often called upon to serve as consultants and guest speakers at international gatherings.

celebration Although Songhai is open to people of the Muslim faith, to those practicing the traditional religions of Africa as well as to all Christians, it is recognized as a Dominican project with a religious component. It is possible to celebrate the Eucharist and among the trainees we find many women and men religious (some of whom are young Dominicans who have been inspired by the project), and people doing pastoral ministry in the missions of West Africa.

evaluation Several evaluations have been done to study the impact Songhai has had on development in Benin. Several of them were done by the funders to validate the request for funding. One internal evaluation was carried out by the Order, a few years into the project.

information A newsletter is sent to all past trainees and a bulletin is sent to the friends of the project. There are several videos and articles are published on a regular basis to make sure the world knows that Africa has not resigned itself to a life of under-development. A ground-swell of creativity occurs
when men and women are given the chance to come to know and appreciate their values.

The twelve points that were followed to illustrate the history of the Songhai project are essential points to follow when wanting to relate the story of a Dominican experience in the area of Justice and Peace. The biblical, theological and spiritual dimensions of a commitment to Justice and Peace deserve to be discussed when Dominicans gather together.

Why not invite a brother or sister to share his/her experience within the context of a local or provincial gathering? Ask the person to follow the twelve points of the working grid to ensure that he/she touches upon all of the important aspects of the process. The twelve points could also be used as a guideline to help someone write an article for publication by the media, or in the newsletter of the province/congregation. They could also be used as questions when interviewing someone on a video or on radio. Getting young people involved in the process can be very formative for their future involvement in the area of Justice and Peace. It can also serve as a great learning opportunity for them in dealing with the media.

**2. INTRODUCTION TO JUSTICE AND PEACE**

Story-telling is a great method to get people to talk about issues of Justice and Peace. It is a helpful technique in that it makes it easy for people to convey their ideals and commitment to a specific project, in a way that is non-threatening to those who are listening. It is a method that can be used in many different settings, e.g., initial formation, ongoing education, retreats, workshops... To ask someone to give a testimony can be thought-provoking, particularly by the younger members who express a great deal of resistance to ready-made speeches.

The story technique can be used for a direct presentation, a video or an article. Using the newer forms of communication could certainly help foster a greater degree of interest in questions of Justice and Peace.

To ask a brother or sister to tell their story does not mean that the others have to do exactly the same or that it should be taken as a model. There are as many different ways to go about setting up a project and making it work as there are people. No one way is better than the all the rest! We believe that diversity must be preserved so as not to fall into the trap of making Justice and Peace a new area of normative sectarianism.
A life story relating the experience of an individual commitment creates a two-fold effect:
- It demonstrates the creativity of the brothers and sisters, which becomes a source of legitimate pride for the Order. It serves to counteract the inevitable discouragement and disappointments which often accompany a move to action.
- It is an indication that taking action is possible and that it brings happiness, by offering hope to people and places who thought there was nothing that could be done.

Story-telling is a dynamic way to introduce people to Justice and Peace, but we cannot stop there! We must analyze and contextualize the story. The stories cannot be limited to a simple account of a series of facts; they must clearly demonstrate how the action in favor of Justice and Peace, of human rights or of the integrity of creation has changed the way brothers or sisters pray, celebrate, read Scripture and do theology. These theological and spiritual components are important and must be highlighted, for they are often the starting point for what can be very fruitful and at times somewhat conflictual discussion with other members of the Dominican family engaged in other types of ministries. These dimensions structure actions so that they relate not only to social work but become the characteristics of Justice and Peace.

😊 The most effective stories for reflecting on Justice and Peace are not necessarily the most flamboyant. On the contrary, it is the ordinary stories, the ones where Justice and Peace flow from the life of the community, where each member is respected and where life together brings happiness to all concerned, these are the stories that have the greatest impact on the listener. The work of Justice and Peace must begin in the local community, where each person learns to respect the other and creates solidarities within the group. This is especially true in the communities where our elderly and our sick live.

Stories, whether they be about members of the Order at large (like the ones presented in this workbook), or about a member of your province or someone outside the community, can be the source of both positive and negative reactions. They are a pretext for dialogue and if this dialogue is to be constructive we must be very careful not to over-contextualize but rather highlight the relation with:
- the pressing call addressed to us in the Word of God,
- our Dominican tradition,
- the texts of the Order such as the Constitutions and those from the General Chapters.
Drawing a parallel between these experiences and the texts of the Order can be very helpful in understanding the importance of the move to action and the seriousness of these texts, for they are meant to be much more than simple literary recommendations.

Only then will we be able to give the importance that is due to the “frontiers” as defined by Avila and to the proposals and suggested actions contained in the Acts of the General Chapter of the brothers, held in Mexico City, on the theme of Preaching. The following is an excerpt from that Chapter:

«In the face of modern day challenges, our Order reaffirms its option for the poor, for justice and for peace (Rome 234, Avila 45 and 46). Every brother, every community and every province must take up the defense of the poor and the suffering... We do not do this because of any moral imperative but because of our faith in the God of Jesus Christ (Quezon City 19,6; Rome 234 B). For this reason we have been destined to preach justice with truth.
Our General Chapters have provided us with extremely enlightening reflections on the subject of Justice and Peace, (Quezon City 19-27; Walberberg 17B,3 and 23-25; Rome 234-254; Avila 45-66; Oakland 68, 89-99). »

In the appendix to this guide you will find texts from the Masters of the Order and General Chapters of the brothers and sisters.

Parallels can be drawn with the LCO 131-134 of the Constitutions of the brothers:
“Our apostolate in the area of social involvement must be and must be perceived as being an authentic service to men and women, demonstrated by the efforts we make and the goods that we commit to their service. It should be characterized by the fullness of gospel freedom, especially manifested by independence from any particular party.” (LCO 134).

The sisters have many elements in their Constitutions that indicate the manner in which their particular charism gives a central place to Justice and Peace and to solidarity with the less fortunate. The following is just one example from among many others.

Constitutions 93 to 99 of the Dominican Sisters of the Queen of the Holy Rosary (Mexico):
“Because the love we share is more than words, because it is something real and tangible, the needs of the young, the poor and those who suffer require that they be given precedence above all else. Their anguish makes it mandatory for us to do what Christ did to alleviate their suffering...
We give witness to our interest in the international community by working for justice. By our Christian example and teaching we hope to encourage the emergence of responsible leaders from among the people we serve....

And in their Apostolic Statutes 18 and 34 we read: "The goal of our educative mission is to bring the freedom of the gospel. Conscious of the presence of sin in the context in which we live, in our own individual life and in the social structures, we strive to bring about the personal and communal conversion asked of us in the gospel... By way of our religious consecration we make the commitment to live in a prophetic manner with the poorest of the poor and to fight for life, justice and peace."

Every Justice and Peace promoter has his/her own way of doing and organizing the reflection process, according to his/her personality and in keeping with the needs of those with whom he/she is working. It must be remembered that these practical, down to earth stories, can be a powerful means to get those brothers and sisters who have little or no experience in Dominican ministry and preaching.

3. FOR DIFFERENT REASONS

We all know brothers and sisters who not only work with the poor but actually live with them day in and day out. These men and women are a challenge to us, we admire them for the depth of their Dominican commitment in all its dimensions including Justice and Peace. Just the fact that we try to understand them and attempt to grasp the full meaning of their work, is in itself a way of living Dominican mercy.

Several of these members of the Dominican Family committed to the work of Justice and Peace told us honestly that they had been pushed into it by their superiors. Others said that they had always felt the need to live a life of compassion with those most in need, that it was part of their education. Some said they had been involved in situations where they had been touched by the poor in a way they would never have imagined - they did not reach out to the poor, the poor reached out to them! A certain number of those interviewed told us they were awakened in their ministry by the victims of violence and injustice and entered into solidarity with them, while others said it was the practical outcome of an exercise of social analysis... Commitment cannot happen, it seems, unless there is some kind of direct intervention and personal contact.

In summary, those who have taken sides with the poor and made a commitment to Justice and Peace, have done so reading the Word of
God in the light of a personal encounter with someone in need, that urged them to take sides with those rejected by society.

There are many different ways to work for the promotion of Justice and Peace. They are all to be respected... It is our duty to help those who are hesitant and skeptical, those who do not believe that they can make a meaningful contribution to building a better world. It is important that we reach out to those who have reduced Justice and Peace to an optional activity or to an ideological choice (in the pejorative sense).

An attitude of openness and attentive listening, to the stories of those who have accepted to respond to the call and to make an in-depth commitment to Justice and Peace, can be an excellent way to develop a sense of respect for the personality of each individual. Therein lies the foundation for the work of Justice and Peace, in the local community, there where the members have no choice but to live what they preach.

There are many reasons why certain people choose to live a life of active solidarity with the less fortunate and the victims of violence. Among the motives expressed we find the sense of adventure, similar to that experienced by our father St. Dominic in Palencia.

St. Dominic was a student at the University of Palencia when a great famine spread across Spain. Jordan of Saxony, in the Libellus, tells the story in this following manner:

> While he was studying in Palencia, a terrible famine fell over the land of Spain. Moved by the terrible situation of the poor and touched with the heart of compassion, Dominic resolved to obey the call of the Lord and decided to do all he could to alleviate the poverty of the poor who were dying for lack of food and all of the books which were necessary in order to teach and to help the poor. He left his studies and books and sought to comfort in the poor. The senior theologians and professors were not at all pleased with his action, and he was forced to leave the University. However, he continued to work for the poor and for the foundation of charity.

The word “foundation” here is translated from the Latin word “eleemosynam” meaning an institution responsible for works of charity.

Fr. Stephen in the deposition he gave in Bologna quoted directly from Dominic as he attempted to explain his action: “I cannot continue to study from books written on skins while others are dying of hunger.”
Beyond Palencia, the whole of Dominic's life, which was characterized by acts of compassion and mercy, invites us to seek the presence of Christ in acts of kindness towards the poor and the little ones.

As followers of Dominic, many of our brothers and sisters have lived a life of solidarity with the poor of their time, and worked to restore their dignity. The choice to make the Preachers a Mendicant Order went beyond the observance of the vow of poverty and the refusal to own property; it was chosen in solidarity with the poor of the urban areas and their problems.

Among the brothers and sisters who lived their Dominican life in proximity and solidarity with the poor we find:

- Catherine of Sienna, 1347 - 1380
- Antonin des Conseils 1389 - 1459
- Martin of Porres 1579 - 1639
- Marie Poussepin 1653 - 1744 to mention but a few.

To this very incomplete list we would have to add; Jeanne d'Orvieto, Catherine de Raconigi, Bartholomeo de Las Casas, Antonio de Montesinos, Pedro de Cordoba, Francisco de Vitoria, Pedro Lorenzo de la Nada, Domingo Salazar, Rose of Lima, Anne of Peru (Arequipa).

Closer to us we have; Praxedes Fernandez, Louis Joseph Lebret, Dominique Pire, Giorgio la Pira, Marie Jean Joseph Lataste, Alex Morelli, Tito de Alencar... and many more brothers and sisters from the various branches of the Dominican family.

You will find more about some of these brothers and sisters in the appendix to this Workbook. They could serve as reference points (for the list would have to be completed) for workshops and retreats and for helping to teach the history and traditions of the Order that are related to Justice and Peace. They could also be used during the period of initial formation or continuing education.

Many of the congregations of Dominican sisters are totally focused on the action of Justice and Peace. By their being and by their doing they give embodiment to the word “preaching.” It would be important that we add to our list of models the names of the founders and foundresses of these congregations, for they had the courage to bring a practical, concrete response to the problems of material and spiritual poverty, illiteracy, injustice towards women...

There are brothers and sisters in your province, congregation or country who have left their mark and determined the course of your history because of their commitment to Justice and Peace. Are you aware if there exist monographs about the life of these witnesses, these
people who succeeded in living Dominican life to the full? Are they known by all? and especially the young? It is important that we ask ourselves what we can do to help make their intuitions better known to the rest of the Order.

An important facet of the work of Justice and Peace consists in the gathering of information and the writing of biographies; by so doing, we help to “constitute the memory of the Order”. It is important that we get the younger members involved and interested in this type of research into our traditions, for it can become an excellent means to raise their level of awareness and to open them up to the global dimension of Dominican life. These would be great topics for papers or thesis presentations.

4. LISTENING TO THE PROPHETS

A prophet is not a model of holiness; he/she is someone who has taken the Word of God seriously, one who has the courage to stand up and confront the system, in response to a call received from God. As strange as it may seem, prophets come from among the ranks of very ordinary people who lead very ordinary lives! A prophet is someone who sounds the wake-up call, someone who constantly reminds us of the importance of the message of the Word of God, whose salvation is for all and wishes to be close to the marginalized and outcasts of society.

One helpful method to go about educating people in the area of Justice and Peace, is to compare one’s personal lived experience with the manner in which certain persons lived their prophetic witness.
The following is a “true or false” quiz that you could use to begin a discussion:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>True/False</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A prophet is someone who predicts the future.</td>
<td>False</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A true prophet is one who insists in getting across his/her own ideas.</td>
<td>True</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prophets are called by God.</td>
<td>True</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All prophets are revolutionaries.</td>
<td>False</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There are no women prophets.</td>
<td>False</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prophets are always well received by the people.</td>
<td>False</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There do exist prophets outside of Israel.</td>
<td>True</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The prophet is a saint.</td>
<td>False</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elijah was the first prophet.</td>
<td>False</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prophets are systematically against worship.</td>
<td>True</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The prophets were accountable for the way they lived their call from God</td>
<td>True</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The prophets knew they were inspired by God when they spoke.</td>
<td>True</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amos really wanted to be a prophet.</td>
<td>False</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prophets are always poor.</td>
<td>False</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every prophet left a written account of his/her actions.</td>
<td>True</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(The answers to the quiz can be found in the appendix to this workbook)

As an echo to the previous quiz, here are quotes taken from a text produced by the Religious Conference of Brazil:

"The prophets of the Bible and their challenge to the Christian life."

- The prophet is first and foremost a critic.
  1. A prophet announces and denounces situations of oppression in the hope of bringing about conversion.
  2. A prophet is filled with compassion and is convincing.
  3. A prophet is not afraid to stand up to the authorities and to speak out in the name of the defenseless. He/she takes sides with the poor, thus demonstrating God's preference for those in need.
  4. A prophet is often persecuted because he/she dares to ask the difficult questions.

- The prophet is a religious critic.
  5. The prophet represents God; he/she speaks in the name of God.
  6. The prophet is lead by the Spirit. He/she is inspired and moved by the Spirit and cannot resist the action of God.
  7. The prophet proclaims the Word of God and those who hear him/her can no longer remain indifferent, they are forced to make a choice.
  8. The prophet is free. For them it is a matter of only obeying the call of God.
The prophet criticizes reality.
9. The prophet is the child and the interpreter of the crisis. He/she appears in times of chaos, desolation and misery. A prophet awakens the conscience of the people.
10. The prophet is of the "here and now". "He/she does not make long theoretical speeches but speaks to the historical reality. He/she is radical but not idealist, utopic but not a head-in-the-clouds dreamer."

There exist numerous texts that speak of the different aspects of the life of the prophet. Perhaps the bishops of your country have published similar documents? Does the Order know about them? Have you done anything to make them known to the others? If you participated in writing one of these texts why don't you get copies and distribute them? Don't forget to send us a copy!

Modern day prophets constantly remind us of how important it is to take action:
- to speak out against exploitation, the corruption of justice and areas of hypocrisy within worship.
- to not give in to the seduction of the idols of power, prestige, and possessions as presented to us by the media and is based on the ideology of consumerism.
- to promote social justice in human relationships.
- to be aware of what is happening around us and to help move these situations forward.
- to bring these situations of injustice to our individual and communal prayer and to turn to our knowledge of scripture to help in bring resolution to them.
- to evaluate the manner we express our faith, so as to make it more relevant and meaningful for our contemporaries.
- to be bearers of hope, of a project of justice and of quality of life.

Prophets call us to organize our lives in a way that makes it possible for us to take up the challenge given to us by God, that of taking sides with the poor and those cast aside and forgotten by the powers that be.

Although it would be pretentious of us to think that we are all "universal" prophets, we must remember that by virtue of our mission we have the duty to proclaim the coming of the Kingdom through word and deed. We are constantly called to give witness in word and deed to the expression of Psalm 85: "righteousness and peace now embrace." At the General Chapter of Walberberg and Oakland the brothers spoke of the prophetic aspect of our life in the following manner.
"The best tradition of our Order indicates that our preaching has always been prophetic. Preaching that is purely theoretical and abstract, a simple intellectual exposé on a system, is not in keeping with the spirit of Saint Dominic and does not constitute a manner of proclaiming the gospel that is acceptable for today's world... Prophetic preaching must be founded on a serious analysis of the signs of the times, based on supernatural principles and supported by prayer... If we are to discern the signs of the times, we must listen to the cry of the poor, the oppressed, the excluded, the sick and those who suffer persecution because of their race, their religion, their stand against injustice. God speaks to us through their cry as well as through the silence of those who live in apathy, solitude and despair." (Walberberg, ch 2, A1)

«If they are to become prophetic signs for this world, the actions for justice and peace must be meet three strict criteria:
- they must be communal, that is to say, explicitly integrated into the local, provincial and regional projects.
- they must be well thought out, that is to say, they must be founded on a serious analysis of the social reality and be rooted in strong biblical and theological foundations.
- they must ensure support to the brothers and sisters who actively participate -- sometimes to the point of risking their life --, in associations and movements for the promotion of human dignity. » (Oakland, Our Priorities, ch. 3)

These statements from the General Chapters of the brothers flow directly from the fundamental constitution of the Order, the founding text of our common belonging to the Dominican family:
"... we have as our special function the prophetic office, by which the gospel of Jesus Christ is proclaimed everywhere by word and example, with due consideration for human circumstances, time and place, so that faith be given new life..." (LCO 1,5).

The sisters place a great deal of importance on the prophetic dimension of their commitment and they have numerous texts we could have quoted from. The goal of many of the institutions founded by congregations of Dominican sisters was to provide an alternative solution to the mechanisms of exclusion, that in most circumstances affect the lives of the poor, of women and minority groups. Such institutions "speak-for" (prophecy) God's love.
5. THE VOW OF POVERTY

Justice and Peace is directly related to the vow of poverty, which is one of the fundamental elements of our Dominican life and of religious life in general. It is always difficult to write about the vow of poverty and even more difficult to reflect on it in together in community... yet we need to re-examine our lives.

The poverty lived by the majority of the members of the Dominican family is very different from the poverty imposed upon millions of our brothers and sisters with whom we share this planet, (when compared to this type of poverty, the poverty lived by men and women religious seems artificial, and in some cases, a caricature). Poverty takes on different forms according to the different cultures. The fact that it does not always convey the same values can have the effect of diminishing the strength of the gospel witness. Despite its limitations the vow of poverty remains one of the characteristic traits of Dominican spirituality; for it not only has to do with the fact that we renounce to owning material things, but with the attitude we have towards personal security, our ministry and the other activities that make up our life.

★ In 1217, Honorius III wrote the following about Dominic and his brothers:

"filled with the fervor of the Spirit and free from the burden of the possessions of the rich, with firm resolve they devoted their life to preaching the Gospel. They went about their duties with great humility and lived a life of voluntary poverty, exposing themselves to innumerable dangers and sufferings, for the salvation of others."

The vow of poverty must be situated within the context of the other vows and of religious life in general (community life, prayer, sense of the mission...). Along with the other components of religious life, the vow of poverty is ordained to caritas, to that love which expresses God’s life. The call to live the vow of poverty is not a call to a life of austerity and sacrifice, but rather a call to friendship and sharing (of struggles and goods) with those excluded by society.

There is a twofold benefit to the vow of poverty: it allows for greater availability and freedom (for preaching, in respect to the idols of this world...) and brings us closer to the poorest. The observance of the vow of poverty creates a condition of openness and helps us to better grasp what the excluded are experiencing. It marks our being, by making a place in our hearts for the needy and the victims of violence, thus making it possible to enter into solidarity with them.
By coming closer to the poor, by allowing their plight to become part of us, our research and community life, we make ourselves vulnerable to the new challenges of religious life and of preaching the Good News.

Fr. Timothy Radcliffe says something similar in “Vowed to Mission” (1994): “You get a different view of the world depending if you’re looking at it from the seat of a Mercedes or the seat of a bicycle.”

The following statement comes to us from the General Chapter of the brothers held in Rome (Ch. 14):

«Poverty freely accepted in a spirit of true solidarity with the poor has far more meaning than the mere renunciation of goods... Our religious life is a way of ongoing conversion. One can never fully acquire the totality of the gospel of Jesus Christ. We must strive to maintain a balance between the critical analysis of our commitment and the critical evaluation of our personal and communal lifestyle».

Reflection on the question of the individual and communal practice of the vow of poverty is always a very sensitive issue. Whenever we do so we run the risk of creating feelings of guilt and imposing norms of conduct, that for the most part are extremely subjective and directly related to culture. However, some questions are possible to deal with even though the subject matter is very delicate:

at the group level:

- The location of the convent in which we live puts us in contact with people from which level of society? Who comes to our Eucharistic celebrations?
- The things we buy, our mode of transportation, our leisure activities are most in keeping with those used and practiced by which social category?
- Does our budget include an item for “donations, solidarity,” what percentage of our money is used for donations and gifts? Is it sufficient when compared to the other expenditures incurred?

as individuals:

- Who are our friends? To whom do we preach?
- What criteria guide us in our spending? Do these criteria include the fight against poverty?
- Are we well informed and do we seek information about the major issues modern society must face?
- Do we voluntarily participate in discussions about the economic problems of the community and other issues of concern? Do we participate by contributing resources?
- What does asceticism mean to me?
The Sisters of the Congregation of St. Dominique de Gramond (France) took an entire year to reflect on the vow of poverty, they used the following questionnaire as the basis for their reflection:

"When we say the word poor...

1. What meaning do we give to the word? What situations come to mind? What does the Bible say about the poor? In what areas have we seen our concept of poverty evolve? What type of person does God want us to be as revealed to us in Scripture?

2. In the footsteps of St. Dominic, what do our Constitutions say about the type of voluntary poverty our founders wanted us to live? What questions do these texts raise for us today?

Each of the sisters was asked to respond to the questionnaire, then two General Assemblies were held to provide an opportunity, for the sisters who so desired, to share their ideas with the others. Two brothers were invited to give input on theme of “the economic and spiritual challenges of our contemporary world”. By way of the questionnaire the participants were provided with a process that brought together the concepts of society, scripture and religious life.

So far we have presented you with some of the elements inherent to the vow of poverty... Others will be presented later in the subsequent workbooks.

The work of Justice and Peace is supported by the vow of poverty and our openness to those excluded by society. Our religious life finds meaning in the relationships of friendship and the degree of proximity we have with the poor, and what practical response we give to the causes of violence and exclusion.
As preliminary conclusions

We have come to the end of the first workbook. In the preceding pages we looked at the lives of those brothers and sisters for whom Justice and Peace has played and continues to play an important role in the way they live out their religious commitment to follow Christ. We have suggested various methodologies and provided you with pedagogical tools to facilitate your work... The time has come to move on and to raise questions pertaining to the foundations upon which these life stories are built. This is the theme that will be taken up in the next workbook.
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</table>
A FEW BROTHERS AND SISTERS...

In this appendix we will present the main elements of the experience of certain brothers and sisters whose religious life was structured by the Justice and Peace dimension. These are therefore not full biographies. More work might need to be done with the information contained here by taking into account the reason you may want to use this: a spiritual retreat, a sessions during initial formation, a group doing some research on the Order...

I. Catherine of Siena (1347-1380)

Catherine Benincasa was born into a middle-class family in Siena, Italy. She felt drawn to the Dominican Order in her childhood. She became a member of the Fraternity of the Mantellate (a Third-Order group) around 1363. She chose this rather than go to a monastery for she felt that she had the vocation of a "preacher". She worked tirelessly for the poor and visited and took care of the sick. After a period of three years of prayer and solitude she felt once more called to an intense life of charity, in service to the poorest.

Catherine had a great influence on the youth of her town. She gathered around her a group of important men and women, some of whom were already involved in religious life or the priesthood. This group, which called itself her "family", gathered around Catherine and became involved in doing major charitable works. Catherine would always keep these two dimensions linked: a strong spiritual life (of great mystic intensity) and service to the sick and the poor. She wrote texts of a profound spiritual nature (The Dialogue around 1377 and her Prayers) and yet will not hesitate to simultaneously care for lepers (for example, the old woman Tecca who was mean to her) or to accompany to their deaths men who were so condemned (Niccolo di Toldo).

God would have told Catherine: "I will not separate you from me, but rather I want to bring you closer to me through your love of neighbor. Remember that I gave you two commandments of love: love of God and love of neighbor. It is the righteousness of both commandments that I want to fulfill. You will walk on the path that I will show you with both feet..." (Raymond of Capua)

Around 1372, Catherine was asked to mediate a conflict between some Italian cities. Her commitment brought her to the frontiers of political life and she would always attempt to influence the mighty of this world so that they might establish peace and take their responsibilities seriously in respect to the little ones. Catherine was a woman of peace, who knew when to take risks (she met mercenaries, military commanders; she wrote petitions and denounced false and violent behavior...) and she invited people to make peace. Such a political role was rare for a woman of that time.

In 1374, she had to submit to a full interrogation by the brothers who were meeting in a General Chapter, since some of them were afraid of her and doubted her...
orthodoxy. She finally convinced them but they required that she take a confessor and a guide (a controller?), named Raymond of Capua.

Catherine was highly sensitive to the question of unity within the Church and accepted to go to Avignon in France to bring back Pope Gregory XI who had taken refuge in that city. She would also support Pope Urban VI and offer up her constant prayer as well as all her energy to unite a broken Church. Her love for the Church led her to criticize the faults that were evident among the clergy and the papacy.

Catherine died in a state of exhaustion on the 29th of April, 1380. She was canonized in 1461. Paul VI granted her the title of Doctor of the Church in 1970 (she is the only woman along with Theresa of Avila to hold such a title).

Catherine was present on all the frontiers of her time: that of the Church, that of misery and death but also on the frontier of political life and violence. She experienced a passionate love for God and for humanity; in the name of that love she would go to the limit.

"You cannot give me the kind of love that I am asking for. That is why I placed you in the midst of your brothers: thus you will be able to do for them that which you could not do for me, that is to love them without expecting any thanks and without seeking any benefits. And all that you do for them, I will consider done for me."

(Dialogue #64)

Beyond the works of Catherine herself, you may want to read the little book written by Mary O'Driscoll, o.p., on Catherine of Siena (Signe Pub.).

2. Antoninus of Florence (1389-1459)

Having entered the Order in 1405, Antoninus participated in the Dominican reform spear-heading the return of the observances. He rapidly assumed responsibilities in the Order and in particular was Prior of the Fra Angelico Convent in Florence. His activities as a Dominican consisted in being a confessor and a director of conscience, but his fame was especially due to his concern for the extreme poverty of the most deprived. He was a generous minister of charity in many ways, but especially through a brotherhood that he set up, called the Buonomini di San Martino. This brotherhood gathered donations and redistributed them to those in need and to the young women who had no dowry.

He became Archbishop of Florence against his will but was a different kind of archbishop due to his life of charity to the point of dispossession (he gave away two thirds of his resources) and due to his refusal to accept any form of ecclesiastical pomp. According to his biographer (F. Castiglione) he would have said: "It is not proper for a prelate to spend the goods of the poor to feed animals or to maintain extraordinary levels of luxury." Antoninus was constantly concerned by the poor of Florence and committed himself personally to help them, to care for them. He was very popular among the ordinary people.

His constant concern for the poor led him not only to do works of charity but it also became the basis for his theological activities. Antoninus was a judge and an
apostolic commissioner mandated by the Holy See to examine cases of usury -- cases involving interest rates that were so high that they ruined the poor. In his treatises on Confession and Moral Theology he fought against interest on loans and against fraudulent exchange rates.

To his sense of charity -- active and reflective--, Antoninus also added his concern for justice. He was a well-known lawyer and administered justice impartially, to the point of scandalizing the wealthy of Florence. He knew how to make himself available to all, to listen to them and to establish the truth in the "affairs" of the time. All the regions of Italy asked for his advice; thus his nickname of "Antoninus the advisor".

In his quest for equity and truth, Antoninus opposed the politicians of his city who had cheated during the elections. They tried to intimidate him through violence but did not succeed. Antoninus' life was woven into a commitment to truth that went hand in hand with a concern for justice and charity. Beyond his numerous activities as pastor (and administrator of his Archdiocese), Antoninus maintained a fervent life of prayer and found time to write manuals for confessors, manuals on practical ethics, a series of historical chronicles and a "Summa moralis", i.e. a treatise of practical and moral theology dealing with all the questions of the society of his time (the Renaissance).

Antoninus can therefore be a model for all the Dominican men and women who seek to integrate the different dimensions of Dominican life in promoting the salvation -- material and spiritual -- of their brothers and sisters.

3. Martin de Porres (1579-1639)

The product of a Guatemalan mother and a Spanish father, Martin had to bear very early on the humiliation of being both a bastard and a half-breed. He entered the Order in Lima (Peru) after becoming a male nurse. He asked to be received as a "resident oblate" for he considered being a lay brother too honorable a state for him. After nine years he finally accepted the status of lay brother.

In the convent of Lima, Martin did the humblest tasks. He lived a life of deep prayer, austerity and charity. He took care of the sick brothers with great affection and efficiency, all while remaining very humble. Martin is a great example of humility and a sign of hope for all those who are humiliated because of ethnic or racial discrimination.

His kindness knew no bounds; he distributed alms to the poor and took care of them. The demands on him were so great that he had to open up a clinic in his sister's house. He also took care of animals. He talked to them and asked them not to harm humans. He had an enormous love for all of creation. Martin is an inspiration for all those who commit themselves to protect creation and promote life in all its forms.

Martin created an institution for needy children so that they could get a complete education and learn a trade. He also established an open garden with fig trees in it that was accessible to all the needy. His charity was therefore both imaginative
and boundless and he remains a model of proximity to the poor and of advocacy on their behalf.

Martin did not hesitate to share his small cell with those who were unhappy, nor to involve his convent in his struggle against misery... This caused difficulties between himself and his superiors who saw their house flooded with destitute people, who were often living very dramatic situations. For Martin, charity was more important than any other value in religious life and one was never to refuse to help another. He is reported to have said concerning a very dirty poor man to whom he had given his bed to lie on: "Compassion is preferable to cleanliness; with a little bit of soap I can clean my bed, but think of the flood of tears I would require to clean from my soul the stain that harshness against this unfortunate would leave."

Martin's extraordinary kindness and his love of prayer and humility brought him many friends from all social classes making it possible for him to alleviate the misery of many. His popularity gave rise to many legends concerning the particular charisms that Christ seemed to have bestowed upon him... All of these charisms were at the service of the poor and he worked tirelessly to promote their cause.

Martin was canonized in 1962. He is a very popular saint for those who feel despised or who experience deep suffering.

4. Marie Poussepin (1653-1744)

Marie was born at Dourdan, near Paris (France). There was a great deal of misery at that time due to poor harvests, sickness and multiple wars that left the population in a sad state. Marie Poussepin belonged to a relatively well-off family but her father ended up bankrupt. Marie, who was still young at the time had to take charge of her father's business (manufacturing stockings) to meet the needs of her family and to help keep up the financial situation of her village.

As director of the business she introduced new machinery (she was willing to use the new technology of the time); she hired young people without having them pay their apprenticeship training which they needed to become master tradesmen. This was very a very innovative approach that allowed young persons to acquire a trade (and therefore some income) even though they may have been poor and/or orphaned... She created jobs so that these young people could overcome their difficult situation on their own.

While assuming her responsibility as business manager, Marie Poussepin was also involved in a Fraternity of Charity in her village, followed by her membership in a Dominican Third Order Fraternity in 1693. As a member of these groups, Marie found herself taking on leadership roles in visiting the sick, the widows, the beggars... She was therefore present to both facets of charity, through her business activities and through her compassion.

Touched by the misery she encountered in the countryside and particularly by the status of the orphans, the widows, the sick women and generally by the condition of the poor women of her time, Marie Poussepin set up a Dominican Fraternity in 1695 to whom she bequeathed all of her personal belongings. Set up in a small
village (Sainville), this Fraternity was very different from any other because the members lived together according to Dominican tradition in order to radiate their charity, but without the cloister. She thus responded to the double challenge of combating misery and living religious life to its fullness.

In Sainville she organized a small school for girls and she visited the sick... Her community grew and other communities were soon established to serve the poor, the sick, the orphans... Before her death, there would be twenty such communities, in the Parisian area alone. The bishop of Chartres caused her many problems, for he did not want to recognize the congregation that Marie had established. He demanded that the sisters renounce all ties with the Dominicans. Marie had no choice but to accept. Links with the Dominicans would not be renewed until the end of the nineteenth century, and institutionally not until the middle of the twentieth century.

Marie Poussepin began a unique congregation (Dominican Sisters of Charity of the Presentation of Tours) where the sisters were free to serve the poor yet earn their own living by doing weaving. She placed charity (one would call this solidarity today) at the heart of religious life. Work became a way of living religious poverty. Work was a major consideration for Marie; it was seen as a true discipline and a communal commitment to achieve the goals of the Congregation.

Marie Poussepin's successors number some 4,000 sisters today spread throughout the world in Columbia, India, France, Spain, Burkina Faso, Iraq. She was beatified in 1994.

To find out more: Contact the "Soeurs dominicaines de la Présentation de Tours", (Motherhouse), 15 quai Portillon, 37100, TOURS (France).

5. Francisco de Vitoria (1485-1546)

As a brother from Spain (he entered the Order in 1502), Francisco was in contact with all the European intellectuals of the time. As a Doctor in Theology, he was well acquainted with Thomism and taught and published Saint Thomas' works. It was in this intellectual environment that he began listening to what was happening in the Americas and started fine-tuning his theological and legal teaching. Vitoria was the first person to establish the idea of human rights, the limits of colonization and public international law. His work, entitled Lessons about the Indians and the Rights of War (1539) helped Las Casas in his struggle to obtain respect for the Indian cultures and the abolition of slavery.

To find out more: Ciencia tomista, v. 72, 1947.

6. Marie Jean Joseph Lazarte (1852-1869)

In 1866 he founded the Dominican Congregation of Bethany. They received women who were ex-prisoners with the same consideration as those who never were. This Dominican understanding of mercy allows all members to enjoy a common life that
goes beyond distinctions experienced in society and gives each sister a chance to start anew. Marie Jean Lataste was himself a great preacher.

To find out more: see J.M. Gueulette, "Le Père Lataste, prêcheur de la miséricorde", Cerf, France.

7. Louis Joseph Lebret (1897-1966)

As a French Dominican, he created "Économie et Humanisme" -- a center for research and intervention in economic theory -- as well as a great number of associations for social and economic development throughout the world. He was one of those who introduced the concern for global development within the Church, at the personal and social level.

He is the one who made it possible for both the Western world and the Church to become more aware of the consequences of under-development and the need to be in solidarity with the poorest countries. He was also a great spiritual man. He showed how the spirituality of mercy implied becoming involved in the transformation of socio-economic structures.

He published many spiritual works on the influence of spirituality as a result of the struggle for justice and solidarity with others. He participated in the drafting of some of the documents of Vatican II (Gaudium et Spes) and was the main inspiration for the encyclical, Populorum Progressio.

To find out more: "Father Lebret: L'économie au service des hommes" by F. Malley, Cerf; and "Les écrits spirituels du Père Lebret" (The spiritual writings of Fr. Lebret) by J. C. Lavigne, Foi Vivante, 1996.

8. Giorgio La Pira (1904-1977)

Giorgio was an Italian lay Dominican, who shared the contemplative and apostolic life of the brothers in Florence. He taught Law at the University of Florence, then entered political life by becoming a member of Parliament, a minister and finally the mayor of Florence (from 1951 to 1965). He was the source of inspiration for many charitable and spiritual initiatives undertaken in favor of the marginalized. He became National President of the Italian Saint Vincent de Paul Conferences. He intervened in favor of the most needy at the level of housing and employment.

G. La Pira organized several peace conferences in order to bring together various ideological blocs and promote dialogue between peoples on the theme of disarmament (especially nuclear disarmament). He was the mediator for certain international conflicts, among which were the Viet Nam and Algerian wars. He was the president of the World Federation of United Cities, an international organization promoting cooperation and understanding between the urban dwellers of the world.

Despite his very active life he found time to publish many works on the relationship between the Gospel and socio-economic and political life. He wrote: "Beyond the ever-narrowing distances, and unless humanity destroys itself one day in a monstrous cataclysm, the fact that will dominate the future is the unity of our universe. One cause only, that of humans. One necessity only, that of world
progress and therefore of help for all those countries that need it for their
development. One duty only, that of peace. All of these make up the conditions of
survival for our species."

To find out more: "Giorgio La Pira: espérer contre toute espérance" (Hoping Beyond All Hope) by E. de Miribel, DDB and "Giorgio La Pira, sindaco" (3 volumes of letters and speeches), ed. Cultura nuova.

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**B. Tito de Alencar Lima (1946-1974)**

Tito was Brazilian. He made profession in the Order of Preachers in 1967. He worked as a militant within the Popular Action Movement. The overthrow of the government in 1968 gave more power to the elite and a brutal repression was organized against all those who resisted. Some Dominican brothers were arrested for supporting a banned movement and for being communists, which of course they always denied. They acknowledged only having helped certain persons flee the police, both in the name of human rights -- which were completely stamped out in Brazil -- and in the name of the Gospel.

Tito, one of the more vulnerable brothers, was subjected to severe physical and psychological torture. After an attack by a commando group, he was exiled to Europe and ended up in France. He constantly remained in a state of psychological persecution because of his past tortures. After a long period of suffering, he put an end to his life.

Tito is a recent example of those who placed their hope in the liberating power of the Gospel and of the Church, yet ended up a victim of violence, dictatorship and police repression. On his tomb are written the words of Luke 19:40: "I tell you, even if the disciples remain silent these stones will cry out."

Tito's body was repatriated to Brazil and people who seek justice gather around his tomb to reflect and pray. The Tito de Alencar Lima Center in Praça da Se continues to pursue the objectives and example left by Tito.

To find out more: Tito de Alencar, "Alors les pierres crieront", Cana, 1980.
Although the major text for the brothers is Chapter 3 of the General Chapter of Avila, we do believe that the content is applicable to all branches of the Dominican family.

The following is an excerpt concerning the fundamental questions we can ask ourselves as members of the Dominican Order.

« 1. The Poor:
This topic invites us to take a good look at our personal and community lifestyle and begs the following question: what are the signs that prove that my (our) lifestyle is different from that of the lifestyle upheld by the ideals of our consumer-oriented society? With regards to our apostolic commitments and ministry: who benefits from my (our) work and with what categories of the population do we choose to work with most often? With regards to our solidarities: exactly how much do we really share with the poor? what type of support do we give them when they organize themselves in order to live more decently or decide to stand up for their rights? Concerning our corporate stances whether they be implicit or explicit: in what types of circumstances do we stand up and publicly defend the rights of the poor (political prisoners, exploitation of peasants, immigrants, unemployed etc.) before governments, laws, social groups, institutions... that continue to oppress them?

2. Justice:
This brings us to another series of questions: what is our degree of concern for justice in our own communities and provinces, with one another, in our relationships with other members of the Dominican family, with our collaborators, our employees? Do we really want to do something to change the economic and social structures in place, to change laws by looking at things from the perspective of the poor and the marginalized with their needs? Do we have the courage to speak out against those situations that are unacceptable and against the people that maintain them? Can we say that we honestly support the social groups and organizations that have accepted to take up the fight for social, economic and political justice in favor of the underprivileged? »

Avila also made us more aware of issues of peace, war, nuclear threat and violence.

Justice and Peace is one of the ways to live compassion and the vow of poverty. At their Chapter in Walberberg, chapter 2 (17 A 2 and 3) the brothers wrote the following:

"Predication and poverty:
In our Order as in the life of Saint Dominic, preaching and poverty are intimately linked. Poverty means more than self-abnegation. It needs to be witnessed. It brings credibility to our preaching for it is a sign of its authenticity and sincerity... In today's world, if we are perceived as being more on the side of the rich than on the side of the poor our preaching is not deemed worthy of belief. How can we expect to free the rich from being dominated by money and other material things if we ourselves do not live a life that is based on moderation and simplicity (LCO 31.1)? How can we expect the
poor to take our preaching seriously if we do not live in a manner that resembles their own lifestyle (LCO 31.2)? It is very important for the Order that poverty be perceived and lived as a major specific sign of the preaching of the brothers."

Preaching and Compassion:
"In conformity with the spirit of Saint Dominic, our preaching must be founded on compassion, a deep compassion with those who suffer, particularly as a result of the selfishness and injustices of others. Compassion alone can bring us goodness and the capacity to read the signs of the times. Compassion is the only way, in our preaching, to acquire the humility for we must learn to listen and to speak, to receive and to give, to be vulnerable and have influence, to be evangelized and to evangelize. This kind of compassion and humility can only come from a deep union with God in Jesus Christ. We are truly one with God when we imitate the compassion of Christ and his humble service."

At Oakland, the brothers emphasized the link between Justice and Peace and studies in the Order:
"Our study proceeds from our life together in the Order but it also is meant to manifest the unity of all humankind in Christ. Consequently, there is an essential link between successful study and the search for a world characterized by justice and peace, a world where men and women enjoy the fullness of the human condition in their dignity as children of God. When we speak the truth we are doing an act of justice."

In Mexico City, Justice and Peace was clearly inscribed within the program of initial formation for all Dominican life:
"1. Justice and Peace is one of the fundamental elements of the formation of every preacher.
2. Every Dominican should recognize the face of God in the poor and the suffering, and feel the same compassion learned by our father Saint Dominic as he followed in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. In this way theological reflection will be nurtured by mercy and will avoid making the conventual life a place of refuge from the challenges and demands of reality.
3. Like every other Dominican, the brothers in formation must be made aware and allow themselves to be challenged by the social conflicts that exist, the misery and marginalization that is the lot of so many men and women today and the unjust structures of society imposed on so many of our brothers and sisters. In this way, they will become authentic preachers and true artisans of justice and peace. Those responsible for formation must provide those in formation with adequate human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral training so they can meet the needs and challenges of our times.
4. Dominican theological reflection finds its nourishment in the Word of God lived through our commitment to the poor. Our option in favor of the poor is not limited to moral behavior. We must see the poor as the image of God revealing itself to us, for this is one of the fundamental elements of our faith.
5. The brothers in formation must remain in personal contact with the realities of poverty, suffering and injustice. We also ask that they be present in the working class neighborhoods and among the marginalized, and that they collaborate with those working there.
6. We ask our brothers, both the formators and those in formation, that they be especially attentive to the situation of the marginalized and to the question around the discrimination of women in the church and in society. We should be careful not to lose
sight of the realities lived by the various ethnic, cultural, religious and immigrant groups, as well as the realities of our Black, Native and Mestizo brothers and sisters within our societies."

**The status of Justice and Peace promoter** was instituted for the first time by the General Chapter of Rome #236 (1983):

"We recommend that in all of the Provinces, the Provincial Chapter or the Provincial Prior with his council put in place either a Justice and Peace promoter or commission, and that they determine their functions."
THE PROPHETS

ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE: "WHO ARE THE PROPHETS?"

1- False. The prophet is one who in fact speaks mostly about the past and the present. If the prophet speaks about the future it is to show that it is in the hands of God. The prophet's accuracy was only found out many years later and was certainly not always clear to the people of the prophet's time.

2-False. The true prophet is usually counter-cultural. He proclaims doom when the people are living in a false bliss, forgetting God and counting only on themselves or political arrangements. On the other hand when life is difficult because of wrong options and the people repent, then the prophet presents things in a positive light and proclaims hope to the people.

3- True. Because only God chooses the one who will speak in God's name.

4- False. If the prophets criticized the leaders and the princes of their time it is because they were not following the Law of God, and were bad 'shepherds'. They attack the persons but do not challenge the system itself (monarchy or the temple). They are defenders of the poor and downtrodden but never organize them politically. Rather they remind the powerful of their responsibility toward the little ones.

5- True. See the example of Hulda (II K. 22:4)

6- False. On the contrary the prophet is threatened, challenged and even killed because he disturbs the status quo.

7- True. The prophetic phenomenon is not unique to Israel and appears among other people. But is has distinct qualities in Israel because of the history of the Covenant.

8- False. The prophet often speaks of his unworthiness, his impurity, his sinfulness.

9-False. Moses was considered as the first prophet for he was a 'visionary' and the 'spokesperson' for God.

10- False. They actually do not denounce worship, they denounce empty worship or false worship, superficial worship. People had made worship some form of magic and had shamelessly, incorporated pagan rituals in the worship. The prophets are in fact quite traditional wanting integrity of worship.

11- True. Some of them actually tell how God chose them as spokespersons although we do not know all of their stories or how they were chosen.

12-True. Their proclamations/writings always start or end with: "Thus speaks Yahweh, your God..."

13- False. He did not want to be a prophet. He would have preferred being a shepherd and take care of his sycamore trees. But God did not leave him alone.

14- False. One of the greatest prophets, Isaiah, was probably an aristocrat. The early prophets (Nathan, Elijah) seemed to have direct access to the king.

15- False. We do not have any writings of Elijah, Nathan, Elisha. Rather we simply have the writings of their disciples about them. The words of the masters have often been amended and changed to adapt to new circumstances.
A FEW COMPLEMENTARY NOTES ON THE PROPHETS OF THE 8th CENTURY (by M. Côté)

The problem facing the prophets of the time was: false adoration of the true God vs. true adoration of a false God.

The radical new message of the 8th century prophets is that divine election does not exclude divine rejection. Priests and people thought that God's power was on "their side" and that God supported "their" values, interests and life-styles. To live with God means to search one's heart and to live God's righteousness in relationships with others (humans, earth). Thus the invisible God becomes visible through creation and creatures.

The times are serious. God's judgment is impending. In politics, finances nor religion it can no more be "business as usual".

People may feel that they have a certain control over God (i.e. "God is with us" Am 5:14/Mi 3:11/Is 7:14). But God's way of seeing the future is not our way of seeing the future. God calls into question our present, and there is no hiding from God. The shock of a possible catastrophe is God's way of administering some form of divine therapy for humans. The problem is presented as humans suffering some form of "amnesia" (forgetting God or turning away from God) and "schizophrenia" (dividing one's life apart from one's form of religion). The only way of curing these illnesses is radical surgery, i.e., "threatening people with the verdict of death".

As messengers of God, the prophet's task was to make the eschatological shock of God's future effective in the present, so that Israel may recover her identity and vocation, and thus pass from death back to life again.

For the prophet, the prevailing poverty and injustice that existed in their time was not normal; it was seen as the result of the hoarding and selfishness of some at the expense (and misery) of a vast majority of others. But God had created the world for all and had wanted all to share. Something had to be said and done. There had to be conversion, a turning away from the prosperous life-styles of the urban dwellers to that of the precarious living of the nomad in the desert, the place where God had first established the Covenant.

The prophets message is that there has to be a "seeking of God" (to counteract the 'amnesia') and a "doing justice" (to counteract "schizophrenia") as well as greater "spiritual perception" (awareness, discernment and responsiveness to God) and moral sensitivity (sensitivity to injustice and iniquity contradicting God's will; solidarity with the total people of God, not just the elite).

The "turning to God" which may almost seem impossible (how does one break away from a comfortable life-style?) requires openness to the gifts of God, for God is a God who cares, a God of pathos (compassion). This is why the prophets are not doomsday persons but people of hope.

Justice to the poor (the whole people) is the condition to receive (secure) justice from God. The prophets were social revolutionaries because they were foremost and essentially religious conservatives.
We want to be prophets in this largely Muslim country: to be a community of brothers and sisters whose different way of thinking disturbs and questions our society, our culture and our Church. We believe that being a minority is the gift we bring to Pakistan and the universal Church. If the future of the universal Church is that of being a minority, then being a minority and the living out as a minority can be useful. Our "being" and our work are our gift to the Church. We want to be powerless, vulnerable and compassionate: a community that incarnates the wounds of those who have suffered because they are poor, the wounds of the sweepers, of women, of exploited workers. We want to be there where we are useful: in the "desert" where no one wants to go, on the "periphery" with the marginalized and the powerless, on the "borders" welcoming that which is new, different, other.” (IDI, June, 1993)