

Monialibus

*Nuns of the Order of Preachers
International Bulletin*



N° 24 January 2011

General Chapter Order of Preachers -- Rome 2010



fr. Bruno Cadoré, op -- 86 th successor of St. Dominic



SUMMARY:

Letter of fr. Brian, op	5
Farewell letter to the nuns by fr. Carlos Azpiroz Costa, op	7
Some news from Lunden Kloster, Oslo, Norway	10
USA Novice Mistresses' Meeting	11
The General Chapter	12
Interview: Sr. Breda Carroll,op	13
„Enclosure and Visitationas Sources of Renewal of the contemplative Form of Life“	15
Triple joy in Vietnam.....	16
Homily of fr. Brian Pierce, op	18
Solemn Profession of two sisters in India.....	19
“Lovers of spiritual beauty”.....	21
Loving God with all one's capacity for understanding	22
My reflections on the Ongoing Formation in a Monastery	26
To enter your monastery's data in the Order's online Catalogus	27
Sister Rose Wehrlé. To the glory of Mary.....	29

The **Monialibus** is the official International Bulletin of the Nuns of the Order of Preachers published by the International Commission of Nuns (ICNOP) twice a year in January and July. It is available at the website of the Order – www.op.org

The following sisters have collaborated as translators for this issue of Monialibus:

Sr Jean Thérèse, OP (Orbey – France); Sr M^a Sofia, OP (Mendoza – Argentina); Sr Cristina, OP (Valladolid – Spain); Sr M^a del Salvador, OP (USA) , Sr Alejandra, Op (Lima – Peru), Sr M^a Jesús, OP (Palencia – Spain) y Sr M^a Belén de la Inmaculada, OP (Murcia – Spain).

Letter of fr. Brian, op

My dear Sisters in St. Dominic,

A couple of months ago I found myself preparing to preach on the Gospel parable in which Jesus compares the Kingdom of God with a mustard seed:

“With what can we compare the kingdom of God?... It is like a mustard seed which, when sown in the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth. But once it is sown, it grows and becomes the greatest of all the plants in the garden. It puts forth such large branches that the birds of heaven find refuge and nest in its shade” (Mark 4:30-32).

Frequently, when I'm working on a homily, I will get a new insight into some dimension of your vocation as Dominican nuns, or some new idea as to how I can accompany you, my contemplative sisters, in our common contemplative journey. This happened once again with the parable of the mustard seed. I suddenly saw in this image – which Jesus uses to speak of the kingdom of God – a beautiful image of a contemplative Dominican monastery! Let me try to explain.

As many of you have heard me say, I find great wisdom in the title that fr Timothy gave to his final letter on contemplation: “A City Set on a Hilltop Cannot be Hidden: a Contemplative Life.” We all know that there is a dimension of your life that is hidden. At the same time, though, a Dominican contemplative nun's vocation is always lived in a very intimate relationship with the world. This comes principally from the very fact that we all belong to a missionary Order of Preachers.

The Fundamental Constitution of the nuns reminds us that Dominic associated the first nuns to the “holy preaching”, while also making it possible for them to be “free for God alone” (1, I-II). This makes for a very interesting and creative tension in your lives. You are free to live for God alone, while spending your entire life for the world! After all, our Dominican Order was founded for two reasons: (a) to preach, (b) for the salvation of the world. Sisters, you live recollected in prayer in a city set on a mountaintop, but your very existence is to be a visible preaching of the Gospel of Christ. You live separated from the world, so that the whole world can see your light and see God's light, and discover through you the God who has come to live in our midst as the Word made flesh. You are hidden and yet visible. You are separated from the world, while being right in the *heart* of the world.¹ You live in silence so that you can *be* a living preaching! Oh, blessed paradox!

Our brother, fr Timothy, said it this way in his letter:

You do not escape from the dramas and the crises of ordinary human life. You live them more nakedly, intensely, knowing the joy and despair of every human life...The monastery is the place where there is nowhere to hide from the ultimate question of every human life. One nun wrote, “I entered the monastery not to flee from the world, to forget it or ignore its existence even, but in order to be present to it in some more profound way, to live at the heart of the world, in a hidden way... to share, to take on board the suffering, the pain, the hopes of all mankind.”²

Now back to the mustard seed. Jesus reminds us that the mustard seed is thrown into the ground, where it lives a hidden, silent and very “unnoticed” life. But then something happens! That which is his hidden sprouts and suddenly becomes visible to the world. In fact it becomes so visible (like a city set on a hill-top) that many birds find in it a home. The mustard seed is small, but the fruit of the seed is abundant and open to welcoming all into its branches. Does this not sound like a Dominican monastery? Your communities are tiny seeds which sprout branches that reach out and offer a place of prayerful hospitality for the whole world. I experienced this very palpably in my recent visits to the

¹ See Ch. 5 of the Acts of the General Chapter of Providence (2001), where it states that the life of the nuns is located “at the heart of the holy preaching.”

² Radcliffe, Timothy: “A City Set on a Hilltop Cannot be Hidden: a Contemplative Life,” (29 April 2001), 1.

International Bulletin Nuns of the Order of Preacher

new foundations in Vietnam and India – small seeds that are giving birth to a great tree with very large branches, so that all of God's creatures will have a home (see the articles in this issue of *Monialibus*)!

This image sounds very much like the early community of disciples gathered in the upper room after the ascension of Jesus. It doesn't seem, when we read Acts 1, that it was a very large group. Present were a number of disciples, along with Mary and some other women – a small group dedicated to contemplative prayer, waiting for the fulfillment of God's promise. But when we read Acts 2 we see the full blossoming of this small community – opening its branches to the whole world. As Luke says, "There were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem... Each one heard the disciples speaking in his or her native language" (Acts 2, 5-6).

As we begin a new year, how can you, Sisters, renew this creative tension? How can you find an ever-deeper meaning in being small, and apparently "insignificant", while touching the whole world through your prayerful compassion and intercession? Hiding from the world so as not to be bothered by its many problems is *not* an option for Dominicans! You are called to be a *holy preaching*! When you look at a magazine or newspaper and see the face of the poor, the suffering, those who do not know God's love, does your heart ache? Do you reach out and hold them in the universal embrace of God? Is this not one of the ways that you share in the mission of the Order? Was Jesus not the mustard seed that the Father sowed into the fertile earth of our world? He was a seed so small and fragile, yet his heart was wide enough to embrace the whole world.

Some News

As you know, there is much exciting news in the Order these days! We have a new Master of the Order!! It has been a great blessing to live with fr Bruno here in Santa Sabina for some weeks after his election. He is a brother who is on fire with the mission of the Order (and he believes very strongly that the nuns are right in the heart of that mission!). I know that all of you will be praying for him as he begins this new phase of his ministry as a friar preacher.

We also have five new sister-members on the International Commission of Nuns! We want to say a very big *Thank you – Gracias – Merci* to the five sisters who have just finished their time of service on the Commission: Sr. Breda (Europe), Sr. Isabel María (Spain), Sr. Rosa María (Mexico), Sr. Jean-Thérèse (France), Sr. M. Lucy (N. America). And we welcome with open arms our new sisters, who will serve for six years on the Commission: Sr. Josefa (Czech Republic – Europe), Sr. Inmaculada (Spain), Sr. Margarita (Mexico), Sr. Isabelle (Switzerland – France), Sr. Anna Marie (N. America). Please pray for them!

In the coming months I will be visiting nuns in Ecuador (a retreat with nuns from all four monasteries), Argentina, Philippines, France, Spain, Japan, USA and Canada. As always, I thank you for letting me rest in the branches of your beautiful monasteries throughout the world!

Sisters, please see the page in this issue about providing the data for the online *Catalogus* that the Order has begun. It is *very necessary* that each monastery provide at least the basic information for the monastery and each sister. This will greatly facilitate the work of the Master and the Procurator General.

I also want to draw your attention to a new section on the Order's webpage (<http://www.op.org/>): Once you have entered the page (according to your language), click on the category called "Library", then click on "Documents Library", and finally "Dominican Nuns – Documents". You will find an ever-growing treasure chest of very helpful and formative documents there! Little by little we hope to create a virtual Dominican monastic library.

And finally, all monasteries are invited to join in the "Salve Project." This is part of the ongoing Jubilee Pilgrimage that the Order is making in preparation for the 2016 celebration of the Confirmation of the Order by Pope Honorius III. You can find more information on the "Salve Project" by looking at the webpage of the Order.

Sisters, may this new year, 2011, be filled with many blessing for all of you!

Your brother in Jesus and Dominic,
fr Brian J. Pierce, OP

Original: English

Farewell letter to the nuns by fr. Carlos Azpiroz Costa, op

Friars of the Order of Preachers
General Curia

Rome, August 28, 2010
Feast of Saint Augustine

Prot.50/10/785 Lettere Varie M.O.

*“Intent upon God in oneness of mind and heart”
Letter to the Nuns of the Order*

Very dear sisters,

On this feast of St. Augustine, a few days before completing my mandate as Master of the Order, and wishing to follow in some way in the steps of fr. Damian Byrne and fr. Timothy Radcliffe, I want to write a letter dedicated especially to you.

I speak of a desire which goes back even before the Jubilee Year which celebrated the eight hundred years since the foundation of the first contemplative Dominican community (Prouille). In fact, in October of 2004 at Santa Sabina, I met with the members of the International Commission of the nuns and asked their help. After thinking and talking about it, Fr. Manuel Merten – at that time promoter of the nuns-- together with the members of that Commission, decided to invite all the nuns and monasteries to reflect on their vocation.³ The response of the monasteries world-wide was positive, enthusiastic, profound. The International Commission offered me in good time all the contributions, collected and put in order, and included an interesting synthesis.

I would have wished at last to weave together the richness of such reflections and, like John the Baptist, make of myself a “voice” for the “Word”⁴ dwelling in you. But I must confess to you that I did not feel capable of writing a letter like that.

After a time, there was a second Retreat preached to the nuns in Caleruega (in June of this year). At meals, various texts were read: the Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete in Domino* of Paul VI, on Christian joy,⁵ his “Meditation on Death or Spiritual Testament,”⁶ the catecheses of the Holy Father on St. Dominic, St. Albert, and St. Thomas Aquinas, and the letters directed to the nuns by my two immediate predecessors at the end of their respective mandates, in 1992 and 2001. Many of the nuns have asked me about those letters. (Eighteen years after the first and more than nine years after the second, some did not know about them or perhaps did not remember them!) Today, before writing you about other things, I adopt those pages as though they were my own, inviting you to turn to them again, and to meditate on them in your hearts.⁷

³ Do you remember the questions sent to all the monasteries? How do I contemplate? What do I contemplate? How has my contemplative life changed? What can I say to the Dominican Family about contemplation?

⁴ Cf. St. Augustine, Sermon 293, 3 (see Third Sunday of Advent, Office of Readings).

⁵ Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete in Domino* (March 9, 1975).

⁶ Paul VI, *Pensiero alla morte* (Ed. Vaticana, 1979). [Thoughts on Death]

⁷ Fr. Damian Byrne, Letter to the Nuns of the Order (May 1992), *Analecta* 100 (1992) 20-42; fr. Timothy Radcliffe, Letter, *A contemplative life* (29.04.2001) *Analecta* 109 (2001) 63-87; *IDI* 393 (May 2001) 123-142. Both letters have been published also in several editions of the book *Laudare, Benedicere, Praedicare: Palabras de Gracia y verdad [Words of Grace and Truth]* (Salamanca: Editorial San Esteban, 2004; Les Editions du cerf (Paris, 2004); Dominican Publications (Dublin, 2004); Edizioni Studio Domenicano (Bologna, 2004).

International Bulletin Nuns of the Order of Preacher

Also in these years, I have been able to meet many of you in your communities. Unfortunately I could not reach all the monasteries. But surely there has been a special page in our meetings: the retreats (“spiritual exercises”) I have been able to preach in different regions or federations. I assure you that for me those days are unforgettable. They have been some of the most beautiful experiences the Lord has given me in the nine years of my ministry as Master! I regret very much that I was not able to preach to the nuns of other regions (Asia, Africa, the East European region)!

I can say also that I have written various letters to Federations and monasteries on the occasion of the Nuns’ Jubilee, a year which did much good to the whole Order. I mention especially the letters “*That they may have life*”⁸ and also “*Do you need anything?*”⁹

As an echo of the celebration of the eight hundred years since the founding of Prouille, and within the nine-year preparation for commemorating also the eighth centenary of the Confirmation of the Order, what could be better than to recall something which goes back to the origins of the nuns, to those who were in immediate relationship with St. Dominic. Blessed Cecilia says clearly that the sisters brought together at San Sisto were taken care of with great solicitude by the Father of the Preachers, and, using words which indicate great satisfaction, she assures us that he instructed them in matters pertaining to this new way of religious life, “*for they had no other teacher forming them in the life of the Order.*”¹⁰ This generous service that he offered to the first communities was matched by the religious sisters’ full confidence, not letting themselves be dissuaded or discouraged by those who, to deflect them from their purpose, were trying to discredit St. Dominic – as happened in Rome.

Dominican life made a step forward in relation to medieval monasticism. The founder of the Preachers asked for “readiness [la disponibilidad para la itinerancia] for itinerancy, and for solidarity among the communities” when that would be needed. In this matter he asked the Pope to direct one same Bull to both the sisters and the brothers. Honorius III responded with his *Civita Castellana*, Dec. 17, 1219.¹¹ He made clear in this document that he wanted “*to plant fruit-bearing trees*” in the paradise of the Church and “*take care of those already planted.*” He wanted both the one and the other (to continue the same image) to grow in a new foundation in Rome, near the venerable basilica dedicated to the martyred Pope St. Sixtus. For this he *commanded with apostolic authority* that the sisters at Prouille, if St. Dominic judged they were needed for this foundation, should be prompt in going to the new convent in accordance with his command, in order to consecrate themselves totally to the Lord in the Order.

Two years later, in the Spring of 1221, when St. Dominic showed once more his conviction that “*stored-up grain rots, but grain sown, fructifies*” and called at the door of the Prouille community, eight sisters took the road to Rome. One of them, Sister Blanca, was the first prioress of the Roman community. As St. Dominic wished, the sisters from the south of France “**taught the Order**” to the sisters gathered at San Sisto.¹² The Pope wanted a renewed religious life in his diocese of Rome which would spread from there to the whole Church. St. Dominic wanted nothing but to collaborate in a broad ecclesial project which was being called to produce important fruit, far distant in time and in geographical limits from those familiar in his day.

With the reception into the Order of Blessed Diana d’Andalo, the bases were laid for a foundation in Bologna. That foundation, the Convent of St. Agnes, was brought into being in 1223 by Blessed Jordan, just a few months after his election as Master of the Order. Following in the footsteps of St. Dominic, Jordan saw to it that four nuns of San Sisto in Rome moved to Bologna. There they found

⁸ This was sent to nearly all the monasteries, on several dates and in various languages.

⁹ A letter written on 25/02/2009 as a call for solidarity among the monasteries of the Order.

¹⁰ Blessed Cecilia of Rome, *Account of the miracles worked by St. Dominic in Rome*, n. 6; in L. Galmes and V.T. Gomez, eds., *Santo Domingo de Guzman, Fuentes para su conocimiento* [St. Dominic de Guzman, sources for getting to know him] (Madrid, BAC, 1987), 671.

¹¹ Cf. Vladimir Koudelka, *Monumenta diplomatica Sancti Dominici* [St. Dominic’s Documents of diplomacy] (Rome, 1966), 117.

¹² Cf. Marie-Hubert Vicaire, *Historia de Santo Domingo* [History of St. Dominic] (Madrid, EDIBESA, 2003), 796-797.

the very young nun Cecilia as prioress of the community.¹³ (She was prioress in 1237 also.) Soon they attracted young Bolognese women to enter Dominican monastic life.

Not much later – still in Blessed Jordan’s day – the monastery of Alba (Cuneo) was founded. Nuns from St. Agnes’ in Bologna went to the Alba foundation also.¹⁴ These experiences of giving life have been repeated throughout the nuns’ eight hundred years, in many monasteries and in various countries. Knowing the history of some communities we are surprised by their generosity, even in their poverty. Does not the Lord ask us today for a similar generosity? Was that not the desire of the Council when it invited contemplative communities to renew their “founding” spirit, and in joyful hope to extend into other corners of the world their first love?¹⁵

Is it not the moment to stir up collaboration among communities by foundation projects which give new life? These are not just unreal dreams; I speak of realistic projects, faithful to history and at the same time full of hope. We cannot limit ourselves to the goal of “having more people in the house” when we pray for, stir up, seek and attract more vocations. To celebrate the five hundred years since the first community of friars in the Americas, the whole Order must rediscover its call to their missionary spirit. In summary: Be faithful to Life!

As contemplatives of the Order of Preachers, you have kept in your hearts all that St. Dominic taught you. In this sense the contemplatives have to be like the reservoir [la reserva] of the patrimony that our Father wanted as the impulse for the preaching mission. Now I have the courage to ask that you “remind” us of that patrimony.¹⁶ Impel the friars to be truly men of the Gospel, Preachers of the Word studied, prayed over, contemplated. Offer your witness to the religious women of many Congregations, so that they may discover always and everywhere the contemplative and communitarian roots of their apostolic and missionary fervor, the ultimate meaning of their commitment to the poor and marginalized, and the anticipation of future realities. Invite our lay fraternities to be leaven in the world and the circles which they must evangelize: the family, the school and the university, the world of work and of workers’ associations, the world of factories and offices, of politics, of the economy, and so on.

Taking account of the dialogue which I have tried to maintain with you from the beginning of my mandate, I conclude this letter by an insistence, opportune or not: I urge you one more time to do as St. Dominic did, as the nuns of Prouille did for their sisters at San Sisto in Rome. Complete the task the brothers gave me nine years ago: **Form us in the life of the Order! Teach us the Order!**

I appeal to you to continue talking among yourselves about these matters in each monastery, in the different regions and in the federations. Dialogue helps us to share our joys and sorrows and also our sadness and distress. Dialogue widens our hearts. Dialogue increases our desire to keep growing, like Jesus, “**in age, wisdom and grace before God and man**” (Lk 2:52).

At the same time we entrust to God all our preoccupations, for he takes care of us (cf. 1 Peter 5:7). We pray for the light of the Holy Spirit to help us to know “**what is the will of the Father, what is good, pleasing and perfect**” (cf. Romans 12:1).

In view of the decisions of Lateran Council IV (canon XIII), Pope Innocent III invited Dominic, with his brethren, to choose an already-existing Rule of Life. The friars opted unanimously for the Rule of St. Augustine. What seemed at first an obstacle to the newness of St. Dominic’s project, developed into being the institutional way for them to insert themselves canonically into the universal Church; that is to say: living an original charism which was at the same time dynamic and - from the heart of the Church - Gospel leaven in the world.

¹³ This was learned from the Chronicles of San Sisto in Rome, the content of which was edited by fr Raimondo Spiazzi in *Chronache e fioretti del monasterio de San Sisto all’Appia* (Bologna 1993). On page 55 there is an allusion to nuns from Rome going to Bologna.

¹⁴This date also comes from the Chronicle of San Sisto (ed. R. Spiazzi), 83

¹⁵*Ad gentes* n. 40.

¹⁶ Cf. Code of Canon Law, c. 578

International Bulletin Nuns of the Order of Preacher

The Rule of St. Augustine precedes the Constitutions of the nuns as it does those of the friars. I invite you on this day when we celebrate the holy Bishop of Hippo to read them together as expression of a desire which has become a plea: *"The main purpose for your having come together is to live harmoniously in your house, intent upon God in oneness of mind and heart"* (Rule, 3).

Dear sisters in Saint Dominic, always be conscious of your contemplative life and mission, sensitive to the real and deep needs of all the men and women for whom you pray and sacrifice yourselves. Walk on – poor, free, strong, and loving - toward Christ, living your vocation faithfully, joyfully, simply, humbly, with courage and as the will of God, and doing the duty which comes from the circumstances in which you find yourselves. Do promptly, well and joyfully what the Church, the Order, and the world now expect of you, even when that immeasurably surpasses your strength and asks from you your life.

Grateful for your witness and prayers, which have so heartened me in these recent years, I say in St. Dominic a brotherly farewell. Until we meet again, at every Eucharist!



Original: Spanish

Some news from Lunden Kloster, Oslo, Norway.

As many of you already know we spent most of 2009 celebrating our 50th jubilee as well as Sr. Agnes Porrets 25th anniversary of profession and Sr. Maria-Elisabeths solemn profession. On the 2nd of October friends within the Norwegian Lutheran Church and the city of Oslo, as well as famous artists, organised for us a "Galla" where the Queen of Norway was present. It was a generous contribution towards the renovation of our buildings.

This was really the expression of our ecumenical situation in Norway and more specifically of Lunden Kloster as a spiritual centre in the city of Oslo. Many people (Catholics and Protestants) come to our guesthouse and participate in our liturgy.

We have had the joy of receiving Sisters and Brethren from other countries on different occasions. Our present chaplain is from the Philippines!

Providence allowed me to visit the monastery of Manresa in Spain last October. It was a great experience to meet the sisters there and to discover their engagement in the local situation of the region. 2010 has so far been quite a busy year as well: Sr. Anne-Lise was reelected prioress on the 9th of March, Sr. Maria-Thomas is sub-prioress and Sr. Agnes is novice-mistress. We are lucky to have a young postulant, 23 years old, getting ready to receive the habit on the 28th of July, vigil of the feast of St. Olav. Ingeborg-Marie is Norwegian and she comes from Trondheim, city of pilgrimage. Sr. Immaculata from Vilnius is here at the moment to help prepare the new habits.

At present we are ten sisters from five different countries and we are a happy community with an average age of 58 years. We also have a French Cistercian nun living with us. Our common language is of course Norwegian.

Sr. Anne-Lise and Sr. Marie-Francoise attended the federal meeting in La Sainte Baume, Provence, France this May. Sr. Jean-Thérèse from Orbe (member of the international commission) gave an excellent report of the work of the commission. Our promotor Fr. Brian Pierce was of course present as well as Sr. Micheline, prioress in Berthierville, Canada.

The main topic of the meeting was "The common good" and Fr. Brian gave a very interesting input: Common good is not what we do but it is born from what we do. A powerful Dominican picture is the pascal community which was united in prayer, chapter and preaching. World-wide collaboration is sign of hope.

In August we are expecting the visit of the superiors of four monasteries in Eastern-Europe: Vilnius, Swa. Anna, Radonie and Prague. The topic will be "Reconciliation and forgiving". We will have among us a Polish psychologist working in the diocese of Oslo, as well as Fr. Brian of course and Fr. Andrew Ponikowski. We will also have a meditation-day with Fr. Brian on Mindfulness. We are united in the Dominican joy all over the world!

Sr. Anne-Lise, O.P.

Original: English

USA Novice Mistresses' Meeting



The nuns of the North American Region held their annual Novice Mistress Meeting at the Monastery of the Immaculate Heart of Mary in Lancaster, PA from August 10-19, 2010. The two topics chosen for the meeting were: **Inculturation** and **Counseling in the Dominican Novitiate**.

Fr. Chrisitan Leisy, OSB, a monk of Christ in the Desert Abbey in Abiquiu, NM addressed the issue of inculturation, having had extensive experience with vocations of different cultures. From Aug 11-13, he gave two lectures each day; and offered the Conventual Mass. Fr. Christian explored with us the various manifestations of cultural differences: the problems that can arise in community living and how to deal with them. Fundamentally, it is our common humanity and the Gospel values that unite us all. We also discussed the many fine gifts that other cultures bring to our own. Most of the Novice Mistresses easily related to the issues, and the sharing was very helpful.

From Aug 16-18 the topic of Counseling was treated by Jocelyn Sherman, Ph D, T.O.P. Dr. Sherman, a core member of the School of Human Services and on-line teacher for Cappella University, conducted three days of workshop sessions on counseling skills. In small groups we practiced the various techniques of SFBT (Solution Focused Brief Therapy) such as the LUV triangle (listening, understanding, validating) and we learned to use tools such as deconstructing, scaling, reconstructing, finding exceptions and the miracle question. All found it to be very helpful. Dr. Sherman is the current formator of the Dominican Lay Fraternity Chapter of St Thomas Aquinas, attached to the Lancaster Monastery.

Fr Brian Pierce, OP, Promoter General of the Nuns, attended the meeting from Aug 11-15. He visited with the Lancaster Community and gave them a lecture on the document, "*The Final Message from the Synod on the Word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church*", which was quite profound. Father met with the Novice Mistresses during the afternoon sessions, responding to questions and concerns. On Saturday, the eve of the Assumption, Father Brian conducted a retreat for us based on the Gospel for the feast of the Assumption, Luke 1:39-47 – the Visitation account. Gathered under a large bronze beech tree, we read and reread the passage. Each in turn chose a phrase or word that spoke to her and later we prayed it as we were walking.

International Bulletin Nuns of the Order of Preacher

On August 16th, Sr. Mary Magdalen, OP of Squamish, BC gave a lecture on “Art in Monastic Life” via Skype; a new experience for most of us. Sister stressed the point that we are all called to be artists by the very fact of being created by God, the Uncreated Artist. Due to technical difficulties, questions and discussions were not possible. The talk and experience were interesting, all the same.

As our Master, Father Carlos Azpiroz -Costa’s term is coming to a close, it was decided to send him a letter of appreciation for his guidance and care of the Nuns signed by each of the Novice Mistresses along with a group photo to be hand delivered to him by Father Brian. The ten days quickly came to an end and we are all left with good memories of a time well spent and sisterly bonds strengthened.

Original: English

The General Chapter

When, in the month of January 2010, I received an invitation from the Master of the Order, Fr Carlos, to attend the General Chapter, together with Sr Breda of the Monastery in Drogheda, Ireland, as a representative of the Italian contemplative nuns, I was joyfully surprised but at the same time greatly moved. I realised what a responsibility hat I would be sharing with the other members of the Dominican Family, friars, Sisters and lay people.

I greatly appreciated the work of the commissions, which helped me to rediscover a much clearer idea of the identity of the Order, our Tradition, the priority and the challenges that the Order must face in today’s world.

It was very enriching for me to meet Brothers and Sisters from all five continents, but we all felt part of the family of Preachers with one and the same mission, that of «preaching the word».

I got to know, and to listen to, Brothers from Vietnam, Pakistan, India, Cairo, Africa, Australia, America, Canada and Europe; by sharing with them their way of life I discovered the extent to which the charism of St Dominic is continually being renewed.

There can be no doubt that the democratic elements of our form of government both promote and encourage us to be open to the newness of the Spirit.

I still carry in my heart the beauty of the Liturgy celebrated with great solemnity and dignity.

I now wish to thank Fr Carlos for this great gift which enabled me to live such an enriching experience by taking an active part in a great event in the life of the Order.

A special word of thanks to the new Master of the Order, Fr Bruno Cadoré, assuring him of our community’s daily prayer for him.

Sr Sarina OP



To be present at a General Chapter of the Order was a privilege of which I had never dreamt! It was indeed a great joy to be present at the elective chapter at which fr Bruno was chosen as our new Master. Shortly after his election as provincial of France fr Bruno spent some time in our monastery guest room and has remained in contact with our community since then. However I missed the installation ceremony as I had gone to the lower chapel to pray during the election and did not hear the bell! I just arrived in time to join the end of the queue to greet him! I saw it later on the Internet – like all of you!

Many of you will already have read the two letters which Sr Sarina and I sent you from the chapter and no doubt you have followed the chapter on the Internet. Here I will just focus on a few highlights. Personally I learned a lot about the Order – in particular the Order’s universality and the its

manner of government. The plenary sessions were most interesting and while the discussions could become tedious at times I was never bored. Meal times were occasions to meet with friars from all over the world from the five continents.

Each morning before the day's work began we gathered in the chapel for Lauds and Eucharist and again in the evening we celebrated Vespers. These liturgies were very well prepared and celebrated in a dignified manner – it was wonderful to participate in these celebrations with friars coming from all parts of the world, praising God with one voice.

On the day before the election of the new Master when the relic of St Dominic's skull was brought from the monastery of Monte Mario there was a sense of St Dominic himself being present with us. The relic was returned to the monastery the day after the election.

Towards the end of the Chapter there was a most interesting discussion on the Prologue to the Acts of the Chapter, which highlights the preaching mission of the Order but Sr Sarina and I noticed that there was no mention of the nuns! So we were very happy that our brothers accepted our suggestion to include a sentence which refers to our participation in the preaching mission through listening, pondering and celebrating the Word.

On the last morning the six invited guests -1 co-operator brother, 2 nuns, 2 sisters, 1 lay Dominican – (the other lay Dominican had returned home earlier) - were invited to address the Chapter. Each of us was allowed about three minutes to speak. In addition to thanking the friars for their warm welcome, Sr Sarina and I decided that we would use this time to suggest three ways in which our brothers can help us the nuns:

1. Formation – initial and ongoing.
2. Information – we need them to keep us informed regarding the needs and challenges of the Order so that we can more effectively fulfil our vocation of prayer and intercession in the Order.
3. Vocation promotion.

Through the pages of *Monialibus* I would like to express my thanks to fr Carlos for inviting me. Sr Sarina and I appreciated and were touched by his warm welcome and brotherly attention throughout the Chapter. We assure fr Bruno of the support of our prayer during the coming years.

Thanks to all of you dear sisters for the support of your prayer.

Sr M Breda Carroll OP

Original: English

Interview: Sr. Breda Carroll,op

Is this your first General Chapter?

Yes. It's a privilege to be here. In recent years it has become customary for the Master to invite some nuns to be at the General Chapter. I'm here with Sr Sarina, who is the prioress of Matris Domini monastery in Bergamo, Italy. We represent the Dominican nuns throughout the world.

Unlike other orders of nuns we do not have a mother foundress but look to St Dominic himself as our sole Master. He was teacher of the first Dominican nuns, who were founded in Prouille ten years before the confirmation of the Order [in 1206]. He founded other communities in Madrid, and Rome. He later entrusted these nuns to the care of the friars, and for the past 800 years there has always been this close bond between the friars and the nuns.

The brothers provide us with spiritual and intellectual formation, and many of them who work with the poor and broken people of the world keep us in touch with the needs of the world, and this helps us to pray more deeply.

International Bulletin Nuns of the Order of Preacher

What are your impressions so far?

To be honest I was very nervous at the thought of coming, but once I arrived and met some of the brothers I felt very welcome and my fears were laid to rest. Meeting people from different parts of the world opens me up to the wider vision of the Order. It's also very interesting to participate in Commission work and in the plenary sessions.

I've been very impressed with the liturgy. Each liturgy is so well prepared, and celebrated in such a dignified manner. It has been a special joy to be here at the election of fr Bruno because some years ago he spent three weeks in our monastery.

Who do you represent, and what perspective do you bring to the General Chapter?

I represent the enclosed nuns, of which there are about 3000. For the past 6 years I have been a member of the International Commission for Dominican Nuns; my term of office is about to end. The International Commission is composed of 11 nuns who meet once a year with the Promoter for the Nuns, who is presently fr Brian Pierce. The monasteries are divided into 11 regions, and each sister is responsible for creating a network of communication between the monasteries, and the Promoter for the Nuns, who is our link with the Master.

Like the friars, we nuns make profession to the Master. Like the friars our lives are centred on the Word of God, but while the friars fulfill their vocation through preaching, we the nuns live our lives for the most part within the confines of our monasteries, devoting ourselves entirely to the praise and worship of God. Our lives are centred on the Word of God, listening to the Word in lectio divina and silent prayer, celebrating the Word in the liturgy, and putting the word into practice in our daily community life. The aim of all our observances is that the Word of God may dwell abundantly in the monastery. Our whole way of life is ordered to preserving the continual remembrance of God. Our life is also one of intercession remembering Dominic's compassion. We too carry in our hearts the pain and brokenness of our human family, so that our coming apart from the world does not cut us off but rather opens our minds to the greatness of God's love who sent his Son so that the whole world might be saved through him.

In my own monastery of Drogheda [in Ireland], we've have always had very close bonds with our Dominican friars. Our way of life, although hidden, is a form of preaching. By the very fact that a monastery exists, it is a sign of the reality of God. Our chapel door is always open to people who wish to come and join us for the liturgy and Eucharistic adoration throughout the day. People also continually come to ask for our prayers, and tell us their needs.

What challenges do you think the Dominican nuns face today?

What strikes me is that the challenge for us as Dominican nuns in a secularized society is to live more deeply our contemplative life so as to become a beacon of hope, and a sign of the reality of the living God. We must continually remind ourselves that we fulfill our vocation to be missionary by going deeper into our hearts, and there, in our own brokenness and poverty we encounter the brokenness of our own world, and implore God's mercy upon us.

We must be careful not to be active apostles in the enclosure. The needs are so great around us that there is the temptation of becoming over involved. There is such a lack of faith around us that we too will be called to experience some of that darkness of our world, and the struggle to stay constant in faith is our greatest contribution for it allows us to share in the Passion of Christ, who for our sakes emptied himself in order to bring us into his own relationship with the Father. God is so great that he deserves to be praised and worshipped for his own sake, which is at the heart of our vocation.

Original: English

***„Enclosure and Visitation as Sources
of Renewal of the contemplative Form of Life“***

*Annual Meeting of the German-speaking contemplative Dominican Nuns
from September 5th – 9th, 2010 in the Dominican Nuns' Monastery of Lage-Rieste*

The Prioresses of the German-speaking monasteries of Moniales met this year for the first time in one of their own monasteries rather than in a retreat house. The prioresses and novice mistresses came together from the monasteries Altstadt/Austria, Bamberg and Regensburg/Germany and Wil/Switzerland to the monastery at Lage-Rieste in Germany. Joining them were the promoters for the sisters and nuns of the South German and North German provinces: Fr. Wolfgang Spindler, OP and Fr. Gerfried Bramlage, OP. Along with them, the current Promoter General of the Nuns, Fr. Brian Pierce, OP and his predecessor Fr. Manuel Merten, OP also took part. This time the novice mistresses were invited to the meeting as well, since the annual gatherings that had previously been organized for those in initial and continuing formation had discontinued to meet. The important contacts and exchange between the novice mistresses among each other was meant to be re-enchanted.

The theme of these days was „Enclosure and Visitation as Sources of Renewal of the contemplative Form of Life“.

In order to gather new suggestions and impulses for the practise of observing enclosure in our own monasteries, we consciously invited a nun from another order to speak to us. The Benedictine Sister Johanna Domek, OSB, Cologne, spoke in detail and very animatedly about how they observe enclosure in her monastery. It should be noted here that she draws on her experience as a prioress of many years. Using the heading “Does the world break into the monastery?”, she gave insights into the Benedictine imprint of dealing with the enclosure. As the result of many discussions in chapter, during study days and after many conversations, her community has formulated their own “Orientation Guide” for observing enclosure, which she used as a central departure point for her observations. Beginning with the “spiritual foundations” for the enclosure in this paper, there follow a series of “concretions” when it comes to everyday decisions with regard to enclosure, which the sisters decided upon mutually.

Sr. Johanna emphasized repeatedly in her talk, how important it is for a community not to be lamed by the Roman norms for enclosure as a “book of law”. The goal has to be to understand and take possession of the real significance of enclosure and its impact for the spirituality of one's own order. It is only when the norms for enclosure really become a means and aid for a vital and well-balanced religious life, that they have fulfilled their purpose. And it is only then that the enclosure can have a positive impact on the human milieu and well-being of the community, so that the sisters are convinced and happy to live in the monastery.

Sr. Johanna spoke as well about the significance of the media and their use in the monastery (telephone, TV, computer, internet). These media have an eroding effect on the positive forms of silencing and enclosure, so that it is now necessary to develop a new behaviour and practise in the use of these media so that they can be in accord with the goals of contemplative life. Because the use of these media is very individual, a good utilization or an abuse of these media has to be decided on the basis of the maturity or immaturity of the individual sister. The new media are a great chance as well as a challenge for the contemplative monastery.

On the second day of the meeting Fr. Manuel Merten, OP, spoke on the topic of “visitation”. In his long experience as Promoter General of the nuns, he offered his insights as to the significance of a visitation and the possibilities of their execution to the prioresses. In order to mobilize the chances of the visitation to the full, the communities have to be well acquainted with their own constitutions and learn how to apply them.

Often enough visitations are conducted in a few hours in order to merely fulfil the letter of the law. That is disappointing, even frustrating for the community and creates the impression, that visitations are of “no use” and “make no difference”. It is up to the sisters themselves to clearly

International Bulletin Nuns of the Order of Preacher

formulate the concrete agenda of areas in which the community expects help and clarification as a result of the visitation and to present these to the bishop or his delegate. It is wise to plan the visitation to extend over a period of days.

A process-oriented visitation is especially recommended: After the visitor has taken enough time to converse with each sister individually and has spoken with the council and the prioress, he presents his recommendations or perhaps even precepts in specific regards in a final conference with the entire community. He might for example reach an agreement with the community that these recommendations or precepts be put into practise for a three month experimental period. After these three months, the visitor returns to the monastery and evaluates the experience with the community. In such a way, the community can be guided continually over a longer period of time until a final discernment and agreement about necessary changes toward renewal can take place.

Although the last three Masters of the Order and the Promotors General of the nuns have continually recommended that the visitation be made by our own order as well (cf. LCM 228,III), there are only very few monasteries that make use of this important help. This is viable at any time by having the monastery apply in written form with the Master of the Order.

In regard to both of these topics – enclosure and visitation - lively discussions took place among sisters and brothers after both of the lectures. Many concrete, practical questions were raised and could be clarified.

On the third day of the meetings the prioresses and the novice mistresses met in separate groups. The novice mistresses conferred about the possibility of cooperation and exchange of ideas and decided to meet together every year from now on.

The prioresses exchanged notions as to questions of leadership. They studied in detail a paper that Sr. Susanna (Lage-Rieste) had written: "Guidelines for the preparation and procedure for the election of a new prioress." In these guidelines, all of the individual steps that are necessary for the preparation and procedure of a prioral election according to our constitutions, are described in precise detail. These guidelines have proven valuable in the last two elections in Lage-Rieste not only for the sisters, but especially for the bishop or his delegate, who chaired the election. These guidelines made such an impression on both the prioresses and the brethren, that they will be translated into the official languages of the order and presented to the other monasteries.

The theme of the meeting of the prioresses in 2011 will be "They live in peace – they are one heart and mind in God." The monastery in Regensburg spontaneously offered their hospitality for this meeting.

The novice mistresses plan to come together at the same time as the prioresses in Regensburg, but as a group for themselves so as to conduct a continuing education and exchange ideas and experiences.

Original: English

Triple joy in Vietnam

On September 25, 2010 our Monastery of Our Lady of the Holy Spirit had the great joy of witnessing the Solemn Professions of Sr. Jeanne Hao Nguyen of the Eucharist and Sr. Mary Paul Pham Thi Nhien, as well as the Golden Jubilee of Sr. Maria Rose Dinh thi Ngoc Huong.

fr. Brian Pierce, Promotor General for the Nuns of the Order, officiated at the Eucharist and Sr. Mary Thomas Michalek, Prioress of our sponsoring Monastery of the Blessed Sacrament in Farmington Hills, Michigan, USA, received the vows of our sisters. fr. Joseph Dinh, Prior Provincial and Vicar of the Vietnamese Monastery, along with fr. Joseph Luat, former Provincial were also there along with two other concelebrants. It was a special time of joy for us all.

We, the 5 Solemnly Professed Nuns in our community, were formerly apostolic Dominican Sisters, as was our Sr. Teresa Tran Nga, who is in transition waiting to make her Solemn Vows. We also

have a Canonical Novice, two Postulants and three Aspirants – a total of 12 of us singing God's praises and interceding for his people in our beloved country of Vietnam.

Our beginnings go back as far as August of 1999 when Sr. Maria Rose Huong arrived in Farmington Hills to begin her two year novitiate for the contemplative life. Shortly after that, in May 2000, Sr. Theresa Bui Tam, the current Vicar of the community, also came to the USA to begin her time of novitiate formation for Dominican monastic contemplative life.



After these two sisters returned to Vietnam, the prioress of Farmington Hills, Sr. Mary Rose Figura, along with the novice mistress, Sr. Mary of the Trinity, went to Vietnam in October 2002. There they met with fr. Manuel Merten, OP, Promotor General of the Nuns worldwide, who was the representative of the Master of the Order, fr. Carlos Aspiroz. Together they met with the Provincial of Vietnam and the Superiors of the Five Vietnamese Dominican Congregations of Sisters, who promised to support the foundation in whatever ways were helpful. They also met with Archbishop Pham Minh Man of Ho Chi Minh City who gave his formal approval for the foundation, although not in writing.

October 23, 2002 is considered by the nuns as the official beginning of the Monastery of Our Lady of the Holy Spirit in Vietnam. In the presence of the Superiors of the five Vietnamese Dominican Congregations of Sisters, Sister Theresa Bui Tam was appointed the first Vicar and the Provincial, fr. Joseph Cao Luat, the first Vicar of the monastery on that date.

In April 2003 the sisters purchased a house in the Diocese of Xuan Loc. In October of that same year three more Vietnamese Sisters went to Farmington Hills in the United States to the Monastery of the Blessed Sacrament to begin their two year novitiate. Altogether four of us received formation in our Mother Monastery in Farmington Hills. One of our number decided to remain there as a permanent member, and so we now have a special bond with Farmington Hills.

On January 9, 2004, the Bishop of the Xuan Loc Diocese gave his written, formal approval of the monastery's presence in his Diocese. After many other happenings we continue to grow spiritually due to the goodness of our Dominican Brothers who come daily to offer Mass and to provide the Sacrament of Reconciliation and monthly Retreat Days and Conferences for us. We await the building of a permanent larger monastery building, but have to wait for the approval of the government. In the meantime we are working to add another building and a second floor to our existing small house. We are thankful to the Order for its support in this project.

As you see, our Monastery is still just as a little child. We must practice step by step to learn more fully how to live the contemplative life. We thank God for giving us the precious time to live in the Mother Monastery of the Blessed Sacrament, USA, where we learned many good things through the example of our dear sisters there.

During the recent visit of Fr. Brian and Sr. Mary Thomas, we rejoice in some of the phrases that we heard and remember from our time together:

- "Remain in me as I remain in you" (Jn 15 : 4).
- "Practice doing 'nothing' – to be empty for God" ...

International Bulletin Nuns of the Order of Preacher

- "Enjoy living in the presence of God ... If we are aware that we live deep in God's heart, we have no anxiety, nothing to worry about, because nothing can touch us apart from God."

We are happy to be Dominican Nuns and are grateful for all that the Order has given us in the way of support and guidance, trusting that we shall continue to grow in numbers and in grace. Thank you, Father Brian and Sr. Mary Thomas for coming to visit us! With God's mercy and the Dominican Family's prayers and love through all the world the world, we feel happiness, peace and joy in God's faithful love and yours.

Original: English

Homily of fr. Brian Pierce, OP

25 September 2010

Solemn Profession Sr. Mary Paul Nhien, OP and Sr. M. Jeanne Eucharist Hao, OP

Golden Jubilee: Sr. Maria Rose, OP

In our Church of Santa Sabina in Rome there is a beautiful icon that was written by a Dominican nun from Italy. The icon is of St Dominic, and it shows the vision which he had in Rome, before the Order was confirmed by the pope. In this vision, Peter and Paul appeared to Dominic. Peter gave Dominic a walking stick and Paul gave him the the Holy Scriptures. And they said to him, "Go and Preach." That is all. I think that our whole Order can be summed up with those three symbols: a walking stick, the Holy Scriptures and the words, "Go and preach." This is the essence of what it means to be a Dominican.

In today's gospel from John, Jesus says, "Remain in me...If you remain in me and my words remain in you...then you will bear much fruit and become my disciples." This verb "remain" means to "live in, to dwell in." Jesus lives in us and he invites us to live in him, to make our home in Him. Even when we Dominicans set off on a journey, with walking stick in hand, we must learn to remain in Jesus and His Word along the way.

I almost always carry a small New Testament with me when I travel, and sometimes when I am in an airport or on the airplane or walking along a street, I take my little New Testament out and I read a phrase or two. Then I try to walk with that phrase in my heart. I taste the Bible text in my mouth, I try to hear it with my ears and see it with my eyes. I let it sink down deep in my heart and I feel it in my feet and in my whole body. I try to let the Word remain in me, to go deep inside of me and rest there.

This is how I reflect on the Scripture text that I am going preach on. I just keep repeating the text – over and over – until it begins to sink into my mind and deep down into my heart – like a seed falling to the ground and beginning to send forth its roots. I try to let the Word become flesh in me, like it did in Mary! And then I wait for the preaching to begin to grow, like a small plant! I hope – after many years of being a Dominican – that someday I will become like that Word that dwells inside of me. In 2008 Pope Benedict and the bishops shared these words during the Synod on the Word of God in Rome:

"Let us now remain silent, to hear the word of God...Let us maintain this silence after hearing, so that it may continue to dwell in us, to live in us, and to speak to us. Let it resonate at the beginning of our day so that God has the first word and let it echo in us in the evening so that God has the last word."

So whether we are contemplative nuns who live our whole life in a monastery or a Dominican friar or sister or lay person who announces the Good News out in the world, we are all called to remain in Jesus and to let his Word remain in us. Even when you walk through the Monastery, you must have your walking stick with you and the Word of God with you – just like St Dominic!

A few years ago I visited India. When I was there I met an old man who is a Tibetan Buddhist. He lives on a mountain and spends his whole life chiseling into stones – with a hammer and a chisel – sacred scriptures and sayings of the Buddha. He does this day after day. His whole life is dedicated to this. He works in silence, like a contemplative Buddhist preacher!

We Dominicans are members of the Order of Preachers that St. Dominic founded 800 years ago.

Dominic called the first community of nuns – in Prouilhe – “the Holy Preaching”, because he wanted the monastery to be like a Word that tells people about God. That monastery is still there today, in the very same place where Dominic founded it, next to the Church dedicated to Saint Mary of Prouilhe. It is at a place where two roads cross, and every day many cars and people pass by that monastery. I think that Dominic wanted people to look at our monasteries and our communities and see the Word of God – not only chiseled in the stones, but in our faces, in our liturgy, and in the lives of the sisters and brothers! This is what it means to be called “a Holy Preaching”! It is to be living stones, with the Word of God visible on our faces.

My dear sisters, Sr. Mary Paul Nhien and Sr. M. Jeanne Eucharist Hao today you are saying to God, to your community and to the whole world that you want to nuns of the Order of Preachers until your death! You are saying that you want to remain in Jesus and you want His Word to remain in you until death. Is this not what the martyrs of Vietnam did many years ago? They remained in Jesus and let His Word remain in them until death. Like the old Tibetan Buddhist who spends his whole life chiseling the scriptures into stone, you are saying today that you want to spend your entire life being a Holy Preaching for the world, like Sr. Maria Rose who has spent her long Dominican life being a Holy Preaching!!

So, today I give you Dominic’s walking stick and the Holy Scriptures that he carried on his many journeys. But most of all, I give you the words that Peter and Paul spoke to him: “Go and preach!” Open your hearts, Sisters, so that His words and His Body and Blood will remain in you, and then continue walking, so that each step, each breath, each moment of your life will be a Holy Preaching!

fr Brian J. Pierce, OP
Original: English

Solemn Profession of two sisters in India

We would like to tell you briefly what has been happening during the last few years in our Foundation in India and especially to share with you our great joy of fully belonging to the Order of Preacher through our Solemn Profession. In 2002 the community of Dominican nuns of Cangas de Narcea (Spain) decided to open a house (monastery) in India - to be exact in Kerala, in the south of the country, with some members of the community as they realised that this was God’s will. During the last eight years the dream of founding a monastery of contemplative life in India has been coming true.

We made the first years of aspirancy, postulancy and the first year of novitiate (with white veil) in India. Then we went - three novices - to Spain to make the canonical year of Novitiate and the three years of temporary vows. When we had returned to India another three novices made the same process and so on.

Time was passing and it was time (in 2009) for the first professed sisters in temporary vows to go back to India to be integrated into the community of solemnly professed nuns in the place where we were going to live our religious life. And now, finally, last ninth of October 2010 – an unforgettable day - we made our Solemn Profession in the presence of our family, many people who wanted to be with us, some Dominican friars, Dominican sisters of apostolic life and other consecrated souls.

Fr. Brian, the General Promoter of the Nuns, whom nearly all the nuns know, spent eight wonderful days with us. We had already begun our retreat but during the last three days he gave us some talks. We all together participated in moments of great joy and Dominican fraternity. We will always be grateful to him for travelling so far - he came from Vietnam to be with us.

Next we transcribe some of the feelings which arose in our hearts on the day of our Profession.

My name is Sr Mercedes, one of the nuns who made Solemn Profession last 9th of October. To join my Spouse for ever was a beautiful experience. I felt that Jesus was receiving with great joy my “poor yes” which I said from the bottom of my heart when I entered the monastery. Now my “yes” has been a reaffirmation before the people of God that represents my “mother”, the Church. He will always be my

International Bulletin Nuns of the Order of Preacher

faithful Spouse although sometimes I will fail in my love as I am a weak person. This fidelity gives me a great joy and trust in Him. I was deeply moved during the ceremony and when it was time to give thanks to the Community of Cangas for all that they had done for me I couldn't keep back the tears which began to flow from my eyes. As I said above, I cannot express with words the great joy I felt on the day of my Profession. I also experienced the presence of the saints when the choir sang the litany as we were prostrated with our arms in the form of a cross and two girls in white dresses were covering us with flowers.

Pray for us... your least sister, Sr Mercedes.

=====

From Sr Mary Jincy:

Dear sisters in Our Father St. Dominic, I would like to share with you the great love God has demonstrated to me by choosing me to be the spouse of Christ in the Dominican Contemplative life. I would also like you to join me in thanking God for His great mercy and fidelity. On the day of my Solemn Profession I felt a great joy inside me. Jesus, in His goodness, let me say loudly what I said softly in my Temporary Profession, that is, I would belong to Him forever through the three vows.

This moment was the most beautiful although the whole ceremony was full of emotions: songs prepared by my sisters and some sisters of apostolic life, a beautiful homily by the Vicar of the Diocese who presided at the Ceremony, the presence of my family and a lot of friends, the company of the sisters of my community and, of course, despite the distance the presence of my dearest sisters of the community of Cangas with their prayers and love. From here I send them my thanks, with love and my gratitude for all that they have done for me, especially the Prioress and my dear Mistress, Sr María Luz. May God bless all their sacrifices and generosity. Now it is time to fetch the first fruits of the sowing...

I beg your prayers, my dear sisters in Our Father St. Dominic and I urge you to praise God with us. Eight years ago in the place where we now live there was just grass, trees and snakes... Now there is an intense and grateful praise of God. We sing the Divine Office in Gregorian music adapted to English, which Sr Mary of the Saviour, a nun from USA who was with us three years, taught us. I would like to say thanks to her and her community.

Much love, Sr. Mary Jincy.

To finish we would like to tell you that the community of Kerala is formed by: Sr Rani, who used to be a sister of apostolic life, and made her Solemn Profession in 2008 in Cangas. At the moment she is the superior of the community in India. Although there isn't any nun from Spain in India we are closely united.

After the two nuns who have made Solemn Profession there are three nuns in temporary vows who returned from Spain in August (2010). Their names are: Sr Presitha, Sr Cristina and Sr Teresa who will make their Solemn Profession in 2011. We have five aspirants with us. They will be aspirants for at least three years before reception of the habit. Many young girls came to our monastery but as the Gospel says: *"Many are called, but few are chosen"* In Cangas there is a nun in temporary vows and soon she will begin her second year as a junior Professed, and a novice who will make her Temporary Profession in January 2011, DV. Once they complete their formation in Cangas they will return to India.

Pray for us. We are still fresh plants and we need your prayers.

A big hug from your sisters of the monastery Blessed Mary of Keralapuram, India.

Original: Spanish

“Lovers of spiritual beauty”

My dear Sisters of Prouilhe,

May the grace, peace and joy of Jesus be with you all!

I arrived in Prouilhe after midnight of October 22, 2007. It was a lovely journey speeding along the road with Sr. Loiba driving! Oh, if this is the road to heaven how fast I can get there! How fast indeed was the time of my 3 years of temporary transfer to Prouilhe. I came to Prouilhe for two reasons: my desire to be part of the International community project inviting nuns from other monastery to come for a period of time; and the desire to enter more deeply into the commitment of my calling to contemplative and monastic life.

Truly I am so grateful to each one of you and to your community for giving me the opportunity to share in your life. My experiences of how Dominican monastic life is lived here in Prouilhe have been extremely marvelous. It is, for me, the reality of what the rule of St. Augustine tells us: **“The Lord grant that you may observe all these precepts in a spirit of charity as lovers of spiritual beauty, giving forth the good odor of Christ in the holiness of your lives; not as slaves living under the law but as women living in freedom under grace.”** I value Prouilhe as the cradle of the Order of Preachers founded by our Father St. Dominic, with its historical connection to our Dominican monastic tradition.

The diversity of life we live as an International Community gives testimony to the richness of our charism as it is incarnated in multiple cultures and communities. Each sister adds something special and essential to our being Dominican nuns, through her own particular culture, values, mentality, belief, tradition and unique personality. Our diversity contributes to the richness of the daily living as an International community of nuns; the need to adapt and be open to live and welcome the **way of life** in Prouilhe is a source of growth for us individually.

The particular mission entrusted to our community of Prouilhe is very clear to me – the Mission of **“accueillir”** or **“accompagner”**. To **welcome** and **accompany** people from different groups and country with their particular needs. They come as pilgrims, others for retreats, recollections, conferences, study sessions, and for a day’s spiritual journey. Recently a group from the Philippines came to shoot a film of the life of St. Dominic. Various groups also come to offer their help for work around the monastery. I have met a great number of Dominican brothers, sisters and laity from different provinces and congregations. It demands a great sacrifice on the part of the community to fulfill this mission. It is a service to the whole Order to be this welcoming presence at the heart of the **“preaching mission”**.

Being a nature lover I admire the beauty and serenity of this place. I believe that St. Dominic himself enjoyed and contemplated the loveliness of the countryside each time he walked down from Fanjeaux. And surely God’s presence perceived in creation, was reflected in the beauty of each soul he longed to bring God’s salvation.

The splendor of the seasons of spring, summer, autumn and winter sum up the vibrant spirit of fraternal life and communion present among us. I can never forget my first winter snow! It signified for me the joy - **as white as snow** - we share as a community. The changing color of the leaves during autumn is like the changing beauty of the liturgical seasons at the center of our life. What an experience to celebrate the Vigils of Christmas and Easter until 2 a.m. of the following morning! Oh, if this is the hour to get to heaven how early I can get there! Everyone loves the heat of summer, reflective of each one’s passion for study, nourishing our faith and thirst for truth. And the new life and growth through our love for one another is like the Spring with its flower beds, green grass and sweet scent.

It has been a great gift for me to serve the community as sacristan, a first experience for me. I value and love this community ministry that you entrusted to me. One day, to my great joy I served at the Mass 3 times with the pilgrims, a great blessing indeed! The sacristy which has become our chapel since the renovation of the basilica is truly our **“Cenacle”** where we celebrate the Eucharist each day with all simplicity, like the first Supper of the Lord.

My dear sisters, thank you for accompanying me on my day to day journey as we walked together during my stay in Prouilhe. I share with you the words of our Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI during his recent visit with our Nuns at Monte Mario in Rome: **“The community you form is a place in which it is possible to dwell in the Lord; for you it is the new Jerusalem to which the tribes of the Lord go up to praise the name of the Lord (cf. Ps 122[121]:4). Be grateful to divine Providence for the sublime and free gift of the monastic vocation, to which the Lord has called you through no merit of your own. The form of contemplative life, which you received from the hands of St Dominic in the manner of the cloister, place you as living, vital members in the heart of the Mystical Body of the Lord, which is the Church; and just as the heart makes the blood circulate and keeps the whole body alive, so your hidden existence with Christ, where work and prayer alternate, helps to sustain the Church, the instrument of salvation for every person whom the Lord has redeemed with his Blood.”**

Pray that I may share and continue to live the treasure of my experience of our contemplative life here in Prouilhe as I return to my own community. It is my prayer that other monasteries may be encouraged to send their sisters to Prouilhe and that there will continue to be sisters who volunteer for a period of time so that the Dominican Family Tree that our Father Dominic had planted in this place may constantly grow by the presence of the laborers – **the Preachers!**

On the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary, which is my feast day, I made a little pilgrimage before vespers to the “Colline de la Sainte Vierge” where I love to go to pray and be in solitude. Before I leave I promised her I would plant some flowers as a souvenir of my stay in Prouilhe. And as I made this act of thanksgiving I prayed this beautiful prayer of St. Catherine of Siena to Our Lady: **“O Marie, terre fructifère. Toi, Marie, tu es cette plante nouvelle de laquelle nous vient cette fleur odoriférante, le Verbe Fils unique de Dieu parce qu’en toi, terre fructifère, fut semé ce Verbe. Tu es la terre et tu es la plante.”**

Each one of you will be like this plant I carry in my heart as a constant reminder that the Word, the Emmanuel, the only Son of God is always with us. Merci à vous tous! Que Dieu vous bénisse et vous garde.

Sr. Mary Emmanuelle Cruz, OP
Queen of Angels Monastery (Philippines)
Original: English

Loving God with all one's capacity for understanding

Study in Dominican monastic life (second part)

Part II: Loving God with all one's capacity for understanding

“As a spiritual oasis, a monastery shows the world of today what is most important, even decisive, namely, that there exists an ultimate reason why it is worthwhile to live: God and his mysterious love.”¹⁷ After our trip through history, I want to pause briefly on that quotation from Benedict XVI. Brother Carlos speaks of monasteries and their mission as schools of spirituality, but the Pope goes further, to the root and ultimate reason for our vocation: God and his impenetrable love. That concerns us as we reflect upon study. Study is an authentic element of our life as Dominican nuns, in spite of the vagaries of history. But even if it were not such an element, we still should study in response to the commandment of God himself.

“One of the Scribes, when he came forward and heard them disputing and saw how well he [Jesus] had answered them, asked him, <<Which is the first of all the commandments? >>Jesus replied:

¹⁷ **Error! Main Document Only.** Benedict XVI, *Heiligenkreuz*, Sept. 9, 2007 and *Angelus* (Nov. 18, 2007).

<<The first is this: **Hear, O Israel! The Lord our God is Lord alone! You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul,** with all your mind, **and with all your strength**>> (Mk 12:23-30)".

Jesus is citing Deuteronomy 6:4-5: "Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord alone! Therefore, you shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength." But the Evangelist has added the phrase "with all your mind." The Greek word translated by mind is *διανοια* which designates the ability to reflect, and, therefore, intelligence, thought with the idea of activity rather than *νοϋς* which indicates intelligence itself; *διανοια*, again, is the exercise of reflection.

Why does the evangelist have four phrases? Fr. Lagrange explains in his commentary on St. Mark: "Following Hebrew psychology, heart means intelligence, soul the sense powers, and meod, energy. These three words were therefore well translated by the Septuagint, text B, as: *διανοια, ψυχη* et *δυναμις*. The Greek *καρδια* was not as good a translation as *διανοια* because it less often indicates intelligence than does *cor* (heart) in Latin. However, without doubt it prevailed in the Septuagint texts A and F, and Mark has used it here; but happily he supplied the missing nuance by adding *διανοια* which relates directly to the order of thought."¹⁸

I was glad to find the phrase "all one's capacity for understanding" used by Fr. Chevignard¹⁹ because it effectively expresses an activity, a concrete way of acting. Without studying, how can one love with all one's capacity for understanding? Fr. Gillet used to say that contemplation is our one and only work of charity toward God. Study is among the acts that lead to contemplation. In our life, study has its place under that heading; we do not have to "legitimize" it by other reasons; it shares in the gratuitousness of love.

Part III. How to live our study.

Time! Twice Brother Carlos speaks of time: "The young search for more and more time for study"; "How can you have more time to simply be, and to get to know better your own libraries?"

It is true; study demands time, and the Constitutions say "Suitable time for personal study should be provided throughout the week" (LCM 102, II). Often study seems to compete with work. Normally there is a hierarchy: "The work schedule of the nuns must always give priority to the Divine Office and prayer, as well as to the necessity for *lectio divina* and for study". There can be real tension there. We have to earn our living, and also provide for social insurance and pay for the heating. If our time must be completely given to work in order to meet our needs, there is a real problem for which solutions must be sought. If we work in order not to remain lazy in the cloister, perhaps we need to look more closely, for it is not by working that we come to the end of work; work we can always find. The contemplative life requires that we have time; it is a life where there is a place for the leisure of study which is not a lazy leisure. It can seem like a luxury, but it characterizes contemplative life. Work comes to balance and regulate study. And it is not always easy to manage that. Study can seem like something for oneself, a personal pleasure, while work is for the common good. Even those who love to study sometimes choose to do it only when their study will serve for something, a talk to be given to guests, an article in a Review of the brethren. We hesitate to study "gratuitously". It seems to me that we are still ill at ease in considering study as part of our observance. And we should not forget that in the 50s it was the spirituality of work that was dominant. That has certainly marked the sisters.

Not everyone's needs are necessarily the same. The Constitutions say that study should be adapted to the aptitudes of each sister; perhaps we could say "to the natural dispositions of each one." Study is not optional, but here more than elsewhere we need to watch that we do not act on a principle of equality, but rather according to the needs of each one. This has to do not only with time but also with

¹⁸ **Error! Main Document Only.**M.-J. Lagrange, *L'Évangile selon S. Marc* [The Gospel according to St. Mark] (Gabalda, 1942) 321s.

¹⁹ B- M . Chevignard, *The Spiritual doctrine of the Gospel*, CERF 1960, p.85

International Bulletin Nuns of the Order of Preacher

the form of the studies. For fear of the knowledge that puffs up, or of jealousies, we risk leveling everything. But instead of yielding to fear, we could promote magnanimity in the community. The good of someone else is certainly different from mine, but hers is mine too because all is put in common. This could also free those who may not have much attraction for the studies that others are pursuing. Everyone has intelligence, everyone has faith, and everyone has the duty to love God with all her capacity for understanding. Besides, her intelligence is pushing her, for our intelligence tends naturally toward its own good, which is the Truth.

This clarifies also the nature and forms of our study. The Constitutions foresee a vast program and a vast choice. The time we have at our disposal for study is limited, for study is not the goal of our life; it is not the reason we entered the monastery. We will never be able to study everything. What I see is that when sisters choose one or two areas that attract them, and persevere in these, then they profit from their study. The risk of being a butterfly is a real risk and damaging to the seriousness of our study, for a spirit that never really applies itself to anything never advances in depth. During initial formation it is indispensable for candidates to be introduced to the different areas of theological and biblical learning, as well as to methods of work. "Specialization" too soon is no better than never beginning anything. Not all need to do university studies; there are many other study opportunities. Sister Marie of the Holy Spirit, with all her notebooks, studied, I am sure, for she had assimilated the content of her readings. Studying is not accumulating quantities of knowledge; studying is understanding what one studies and interiorizing it. But neither are university studies to be forbidden. We must realize that doing them by correspondence takes much motivation, for they are very austere and lengthy. The student's work would probably be helped if she had a tutor with whom she could speak about her work. University studies also have to cover areas that touch upon theology and the Bible from near and from afar off. This is an important consideration because often what does not spontaneously interest us turns out to be very useful. When we are self-taught, we are satisfied with what pleases us, and we know our subjects very well but there remain lacunae in other areas. To allow sisters to follow university studies asks for generosity on the part of the community, but also needs coherence, so we need to know how to give these sisters time to do them effectively.

Community study takes a risk, it too!, of entering into competition with personal study, always because our study time is limited. These two forms of study cannot be exclusive of each other; they must be complementary. There will always be the difficulty, in community study, of adaptation to the tastes and the educational level of each one. But community study builds community. A monastery in which the sisters achieve sharing in all simplicity and confidence something from their personal study or from their readings is a very fortunate house. Among the conditions for that achievement is respect, but also a real interest in whatever it is that attracts my sister so strongly. Still, I think sisters need not feel obliged to speak of their work, considering the measure in which our study bears upon our intimate life with the Lord.

Among the brethren, study is ordered to their ministry of salvation; with the nuns, it is ordered to *lectio divina*, that form of reading which is ordered to a real interchange with God. Besides, LCO as well as LCM say that "study nourishes contemplation." I would like to clarify these two statements, for there is a certain tautology in them.

Lectio divina, a term not used in earlier Constitutions, is translated as *Adivine reading* or "holy reading or sacred reading". The expression can designate the object of the reading, that is, the biblical text read; it can also be taken in a subjective sense, and then it designates the fact of reading Sacred Scripture. During the Middle Ages, this second meaning prevailed and became like a technical term for speaking of a certain kind of reading: the monastic practice of a meditative or prayerful reading of the Bible.

LCM 98, 1, cites St. Dominic's "eighth way of prayer" which describes his habit of passing "from reading to prayer, from prayer to meditation, and from meditation to contemplation." These four stages

are found in Guigo the Carthusian²⁰ to describe the spiritual activity of a monk, the contemplative life, not *lectio divina* -- a practice not mentioned in Guigo's little work. It was only later that this stage became the model for a reading prayed from the Word. Here is how Guigo presents it: "Reading is the attentive study of the Scriptures, done with an attentive spirit. Meditation is a work of intelligence which proceeds to a studious investigation of some hidden truth, with the aid of reason itself. Prayer is a religious attachment of the heart to God, to drive away evil and to obtain good things. Contemplation is a certain lifting up into God of the soul, drawn above itself and tasting the joys of eternal sweetness " (n° 2)

What is it that is being described? The terms used for the first two rungs of the ladder to Paradise could describe study just as well as prayer. Vatican Council II restored awareness of the value of *lectio divina* and urged us to pray the Scriptures. On this topic Br. Vincent de Couesnongle wrote: "To pray from the bible: nothing better. But, caution. The discovery of texts which say more to us, of biblical phrases which are cries to God and which correspond with what we are ourselves living through - praise, hope, joy - can cause us to take these texts too literally, without sufficient discernment. We load them with our own feelings, whatever these may be. It can happen that we are not so much praying from the Bible, with all its riches and nuances <harmoniques>, as we are from our own sentiments. In this case the risk of falling into a certain <fundamentalism> is not just a wild fear. Equilibrium has to be found between scientific knowledge about the Bible - knowledge which is absolutely indispensable - and a literal reading which lacks perspective and depth. Equilibrium means a reading which <savors> the text, based on exegesis and lived in prayer. In such conditions as these, who can doubt the contemplative dimension of the study of Scripture?"²¹

According to Guigo, human effort prepares a person to receive the gift of contemplation, which surpasses all sense-knowledge. To use lofty words: it is a matter of infused contemplation, that goal to which contemplative life is tending and which will be perfect only in the Beyond. Is *lectio* a form of reading? Does it presuppose study, or is study one of its components? Is it also prayer? This contemplative activity, more intellectual than affective, is used throughout the monk's day, especially during manual work. Here prayer and study are closely linked; ancient monasticism did not know about a specific time of prayer; reading, meditation, liturgy, led to prayer. The monks had come to seek God, to do that seeking in every way possible, in everything. Monastic life tends toward unification of the heart. But with us, things are separated, compartmentalized: spiritual life and intellectual life, the Office and the time for prayer, study and *lectio divina*. But what is study, concretely, in our lives? I stay at my desk, bent over my books, I take notes. My mind applies itself to study in order to understand what I read. Then I leave my cell, I work with my hands, at peeling, in the kitchen, for example - and my mind continues to reflect; or I go for a walk, and suddenly lights come to me. Something happens in community and it makes me link it with what I have been studying. And during all this time I can remain in the presence of God. He does not leave me; but neither do I leave Him. At every moment I can make this presence actual, become aware of it, by a thought, by a prayer, by a glance, by whatever. All the more my mind is busy with the things of God and all the more I remain in the state of prayer.

Br. Timothy Radcliffe says that the search for Truth is a way of-being-in-the-world which shows itself in our manner of speaking and of listening, in our way of seeing. He writes: "Each one of us is called to this search, whether we are gifted for intellectual studies or not. Truth is the call to be men and women who live in the truth (...). This is not a matter of erudition. It is the attempt to live with the clarity of Dominic. <Whoever lives the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be clearly seen as done in God= (Jn 3:21).> Clearly seen means that one sees clearly what is fundamental and essential."²²

²⁰ Guigo the Carthusian, *Letter to Brother Gervase on the contemplative life* Sources chrétiennes, lettre no. 163.

²¹ Vincent de Couesnongle, "Letter on the contemplative dimension of our Dominican life", in *To praise, to bless, to preach*(Cerf, 2004):127.

²² Br. Timothy Radcliffe, See above, note 2, p. 499

International Bulletin Nuns of the Order of Preacher

In the Order, the contemplative life is the search for Truth. To contemplate is to look, to consider attentively, to see. "Do let me see your glory!" (Exod 33:18) . "Master, show us the Father and that will be enough for us" (Jn 14:8). Believers carry within themselves this desire to see God: "At present we see indistinctly, as in a mirror, but then face to face. At present, I know partially; then I shall know fully, as I am fully known" (1Cor.13: 12). What a strange cry at the center of a hymn to love! Why does not St. Paul say: "I shall love as I am loved?." Perhaps because, in the strong biblical sense, to know is to become one with the one loved.

Contemplation, as St. Thomas explains it, is an activity of intelligence. But the intelligence is moved by love: "The one whose will is prompt to believe, loves the truth in which he believes and reflects on it, embraces and penetrates into it" (II-II, q. 2, a. 10). "It is not the love of knowledge which urges on the theologian to scrutinize the object of his love" (cf. II-II, q. 180, a. 1). *To love God with all one's capacity for understanding*. Yes, but it is not less true that love, thanks to the action of the Holy Spirit and of his gifts, can itself be the means of a more immediate grasp of God present in oneself, of a silent and inexpressible contemplation going farther than theological contemplation, not in clarity but in union.²³ "So faith, hope, and love remain, these three, but the greatest of these is love" (1Cor. 13:13)

Sr Jean Thérèse, op
Orbey (France)
Original: french

My reflections on the Ongoing Formation in a Monastery

In reality, ongoing formation is a requirement of the religious vocation itself - we need to constantly revitalize the gift we have received, always keeping the enduring novelty of God's gift burning and alive.

Let me tell you exactly what we do in my community:

- At the beginning of each course we develop the community project, which is much more than mere scheduling and tasks, but a medium which promotes our own religious vocation allowing us to look together for what can help us most to grow as nuns. In short, the community project aimed at finding the actual will of God in our community, what He expects of us, the answer He is expecting to receive from His daughters. But he also identifies the classes, workshops, etc we should do, and those who should teach them. These include Retreats, Tridua, E.Spiritual etc.
- Every afternoon is dedicated to training, from the teaching of Liturgical singing to the teaching of the *Lectio*, and studying the classes we are advised or other subjects chosen by the nuns themselves. Some sisters are also signed up to distance learning courses, via the internet and other means.
- Every once in a while we have community meetings to discuss items prepared by the Prioress or by a group of sisters appointed by her. Some sisters also prepare certain topics of interest to share with the community.
- Every Saturday, we get together in groups to prepare for the Sunday readings and discuss them in a sincere manner, as well as reading a spiritual commentary about the readings to the community.
- Another opportunity to develop is through listening to the readings we choose to have read in the workroom and in the refectory. These readings can be from magazines we get in the monastery, or press articles selected by the sister in charge of this task.

²³ Cf. M.-J. Nicolas, "Introduction to the *Summa of Theology*", in *Somme théologique*, t. I (Cerf, 2004) p. 35.

- We have a very comprehensive and informative library from which we benefit.
- Prioresses and nuns from all communities participate in short courses organised regularly by the Federation. Recordings of these talks are made so we all get to participate in some manner. Also, at the “Order” level, we have occasionally been summoned there.

I was talking about what we call the “project of the community” through which we are trying to review and inject new life into our life as contemplative nuns. Formation is a reality and a daily task which continues throughout our lives.

The community is a privileged place, the fraternal life in community; it’s the liturgical life where the Word of God surrounds us from dawn until dusk. We relive the different stages of the Mystery of Christ in the different liturgical seasons. I think we have all asked ourselves more than once *what do I do with such richness in the Word of God given to me daily in order to keep it alive?* Personally, I often reflect on what St Augustine used to explain to his Christians when commenting on the 1st letter of St. John:

“You do not need anyone to teach you, the anointing teaches you everything. Be aware brethren, here beats a great mystery: the sound of our words beat in your ears, the Inner Master is inside. Don’t believe that you can learn something from someone else. We can attract attention with the noise of our own voice; if it’s not inside he who can teach, our noise is useless.”

“Nobody should be in your heart except Christ; May his anointing be in your heart so that your heart may not be thirsty in solitude and with no sources to drink from. He who teaches is therefore the Interior Master: Christ; your inspiration is what instructs you”.

Nevertheless, the Holy Spirit won’t replace what we can and must contribute. It is clear the example of Virgin Mary, she treasured and pondered all these things in her heart, she fluttered, she thought, she took part actively to penetrate in the mystery of Jesus, the Word made flesh and looking at it whom we call “seat of wisdom”, we could mention many people that are clear examples of this divine wisdom in spite of the fact that they didn’t go to the University. St. Catherine of Siena, Saint Teresa of Avila and St. Therese of Lisieux are doctors declared by the Church. They are very close to us for their condition of women. They didn’t have the means of formation we have nowadays but they knew how to live the theology to encourage their intense and profound experience of God because the theology, says Benedict XVI commenting St. Bernard, takes you to grow in holiness. It is true, continues the Pope, we have to take into account the intellectual aspect but with a spirit of faith. (Audiencia, 4 November 2009)

Sr M^a Pilar Marco,op
 Monastery of the Immaculate
 Torrent (Valencia)
 Original: Spanish

To enter your monastery's data in the Order's online Catalogus

1. Go to: <http://catalogus.op.org>
2. *Enter Username:* Each monastery has a temporary username. For example: **extern 1234** (the word ‘extern’ followed by a single space, followed by a 4 number code). The sister who represents your region or federation will provide each monastery with their 4 number code.
3. *Enter password:* Until each monastery creates its own, it is the same for all: **moniales-info** The Password can be changed once the monastery logs in.
4. *Choose Language:* In upper, right-hand corner, you can change your language.
5. *Choose: VIEW or EDIT.* In upper, right-hand corner you can either just **view** the page for information – or – provided you have the username and password, you can **edit** the information. Remember, you can **view** information from other monasteries, but you will only be able to **edit** information for your own monastery.

Searching for Information

1. Categories found in the **BLACK BAR** at the top of the page

- **Home:** takes you back to the home page
- **People:** lets you *search* for a person by first or last name (You do NOT need to enter the full name; any part of the name is sufficient).
- **Entities:** By typing “nuns”, you will come to a list of all the monasteries. You can enter “curia” to get the General Curia info. If you enter “Porres” you will get the convents and the Province named in honour of St. Martin de Porres.
- **Addresses:** Type in any word from an address (city, country, street), and it will appear in the list.
- **Lists:** Allows you to search by choosing from a list of possibilities.
- **Manage:** This is only necessary for those who do correcting and editing.

Providing / Adding Information to the Data Base

1. Choose the **EDIT** option in the upper, right-hand corner (editing can only be done by a person who has the username and password).

2. There are different *icons* that allow for editing:

- The *pencil* allows you to **EDIT** information. Each *pencil* will allow you to edit *only* the information next to that pencil (info on the monastery, info on a sister, info on duties, etc).
- The **green arrow** ⇒ will probably not be necessary to use.
- The **blue question mark ?** will take you to that person’s information.
- The **red X** will delete whatever is written on that line (Before anything is deleted, you will be asked if you want to delete this particular item).
- The **green +** permits you to **add** a new piece of information (a new person, a new duty, a new address, a new electronic contact, a photo, etc).

3. In the upper left-hand corner (visible only when you are editing information) you will see the word (**Return**). That takes you back to the previous/main page that you were on.

Sisters, the most *urgent* information that each monastery needs to provide is the following:

- **The Monastery’s data:** (address, phone, fax and electronic address: e-mail), statistics, list of sisters, and assigned duties.
- **Each Sister’s data:** (found in the Members – List of People). It is *very important* that each sister’s *dates* are entered onto her personal page, especially these dates: birth, entry into the novitiate, simple/first profession, solemn profession. After adding new data, click: “**Submit**” at bottom of page.

To **Edit** each sister’s information (or any other information), it is necessary to be in the **Edit** mode (upper, right-hand corner). After adding new data, click: **Submit**

ONLY the first page, that shows the name, address, phone number and electronic contact information (telephone, fax, e-mail, monastery’s webpage, etc) is visible to the general public.

All other information (names of sisters, dates, duties, etc) is accessible **ONLY** by the sister who edits the monastery’s information, the Master of the Order, the Procurator General of the Order and the Promoter General of the Nuns. No other person has access to this more personal information. Visit the webpage of another monastery, and you will discover that you can *only* access the main page of the monastery, with its general, public information.

So, how do you get started?

1. Enter username (to begin it is **extern XXXX**) – see instructions above.
2. Choose **EDIT** mode – see above
3. Begin entering data for monastery and for personal sisters
4. After you add **new information**, you must click on “**Submit**” at the bottom of the page.
5. Any questions? Ask the sister from your region who is on the International Commission of Nuns or write to the Web-master of the Order: fr Scott Steinkerchner, OP: steinkerchner@op.org

Original: English

Sister Rose Wehrlé. To the glory of Mary.

by Sr Mary Ancilla



The restoration of the Dominican Order in France is not only because of father Lacordaire’s initiative, but also because of the rebirth or the foundation of monasteries formed by groups of nuns who had remained in contact secretly during the years.

The fervour of the nuns of the century XXI and their zeal for the observances constitute a beautiful page of the history of the Dominican holiness. Sr Rose Wehrlé (1846-1909) is one of these nuns. Originating from Alsacia, she entered in Mauleón in 1865 where she spent five years, but in 1870 obedience called her to the monastery of Krakow for two years. Then, she returned to Mauleón. In 1878 she begins a long itinerary: Arlés, the foundations of the perpetual Rosary in Belgium, Rouen and United States. She died in Baltimore in 1909. Sr Marie Ancilla here presents us Sr Rose’s biography, followed by her spiritual autobiography.