



FRATRES ORDINIS PRÆDICATORUM
CURIA GENERALITIA



Dominican Sisters International
Suore Domenicane Internazionali
Hermanas Dominicadas Internacionales
Soeurs Dominicaines Internationales

November 25th 2007
Feast of Christ the King

Dear Members of the Worldwide Dominican Family,

Dominicans live and minister in 101 of the world's countries. Many members of our Family are present in countries plagued by economic poverty and conflict. During recent weeks, we are especially aware of the people of Pakistan and our Dominican Family members among them. We stand in prayer and solidarity with them during this time of crisis.

The crisis in Pakistan exists because the President of Pakistan, General Pervez Musharraf, declared a State of Emergency on the 3rd of November. As a result, the Constitution of Pakistan is suspended, the citizens of Pakistan are deprived of their basic human rights, dozens of Supreme Court and High Courts Judges and Chief Justices are under house arrest, and people do not have access to local independent television channels or to international news channels. Hundreds of journalists, lawyers, and key political leaders are either under house arrest or in jail. The Christian community feels very insecure and threatened. The bishops and major superiors of religious in Pakistan are extremely alarmed about the deteriorating situation in the country.

We urge the government of Pakistan to lift the State of Emergency, restore the suspended Constitution, guarantee full civil rights for all, free from jails all political leaders, journalists, lawyers and also all judges and their families who are under house arrest. Give the people of Pakistan free access to the national and international media. A return to constitutional democracy will improve the image and position of Pakistan around the world.

We urge all Dominicans throughout the world, to continue to pray for the people of Pakistan. Dominicans, in countries whose governments may be able to influence the government of Pakistan, we ask you to urge your governments to directly contact General Pervez Musharraf, President of Pakistan, insisting on a return to constitutional democracy in Pakistan, that basic human rights are assured, that the judiciary is restored, and that people are not deprived of access to media whether local or international. As people of faith, we find the consequences of the current State of Emergency and the suspension of the Constitution unacceptable.

Mindful of our Father Dominic, who wept for the suffering, and our sister Catherine, who influenced the civil leaders of her day, we are your brother and sister:

Carlos Azpiroz Costa OP
Master of the Order
and
Marie Fabiola Velasquez Maya OP
International Coordinator of DSI