

ACTS
of the
GENERAL CHAPTER OF DIFFINITORS
of the
Friars of the
ORDER OF PREACHERS

Kraków
2004

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LETTER OF PROMULGATION

During the final Mass of the General Chapter of Diffinitors in Kraków, on the Solemnity of St Hyacinth of Poland who is buried in the church of the Convent of the Holy Trinity (Kraków), twenty-two young men made their first religious profession as friars preachers.

In making their profession they repeated an ancient gesture that expresses loyalty, fidelity, trust, availability and obedience. It was also an act of faith, hope and love. These young men placed their hands into my hands as I received their profession. In the name of the Order I offered my opened hands to the gift of their profession. Together, we held the *Liber Constitutionum et Ordinationum Fratrum Ordinis Praedicatorum*.

When they pronounced the formula of profession, the friars promised obedience to the Master of the Order '*secundum regulam b. Augustini et institutiones fratrum Praedicatorum*.'

Every chapter proclaims and renews these '*institutiones*.' In doing so once more in Kraków, we wanted to read the signs of the times and to offer a renewed response as preachers of the Good News. These Acts amend our Constitutions and Ordinations. They offer texts for meditation and study. To paraphrase 2 Timothy 4:2, they exhort with an untiring patience and desire to teach. Finally, they express in different ways what the Order expects of itself and of its mission for the next three years. In this way the capitulars sought to confirm all Dominican men and women in our common vocation and mission.

The Acts express our fidelity to the Word, a Word which is celebrated, contemplated, prayed and sung, studied, shared and professed. We wanted to offer words of grace and truth to the entire

Order about our preaching, study, common life, vocations and formation, our government and administration.

As I write this letter, the memory of the warmth and colour of the days spent in Kraków is rekindled in my heart. We shared in the Eucharist and in the chanting of the liturgy. Polish voices and accents offered themselves generously and joyfully (like the open hands of those who make profession in the hands of the one who receives their vows) to all present (capitulars, guests, translators, interpreters, etc.) in order to sustain the chant in Latin, Spanish, French and English (and several other languages). Each day different brothers offered their preaching, and sisters preached to us in the plenary sessions and in the commissions. We sought to listen to each another in an act of docile obedience, making our own the words of the psalmist: *'Sacrificium et oblationem noluisti, aures autem fodisti mihi [...] tunc dixi: "ecce venio. [...] Facere voluntatem tuam [...] volui"'* (Psalm 39:7-9). Welcomed with joy and generosity by the Province of Poland and the Convent of the Holy Trinity, we experienced the richness of our common life. For three weeks we studied different aspects of our life, discussing, determining and defining these aspects in groups and as a chapter. Now I present the Acts of this Chapter, one of the fruits of the Chapter itself.

Two events merit special consideration. On 1 August we visited the concentration camps of Auschwitz and Birkenau. This spiritual experience of torment, terror, desolation and death compels us also to purify the memory of our passage through the centuries. At the end of our visit, we recited the *Our Father* on the esplanade, beside the ruins of the gas chambers and crematoria where the railway ends. This wrenched from the very depth of our hearts 'a commitment of fidelity to the perennial message of the Gospel: no more denials of charity in the service of truth, no more acts against the communion of the Church, no more attacks on any nation, no more recourse to the logic of violence, no more discrimination, exclusion, oppression, or disdain of the poor and lowly. May the

Lord in his mercy guide our purpose to its fulfillment and bring us all to eternal life' (John Paul II, Final Exhortation during the Mass of the First Sunday of Lent, Day of Pardon, 12 March 2000).

On the Solemnity of St Dominic we went on pilgrimage to the Shrine of Jasna Góra (*Clarus Mons*). We came from many parts of the world, joining many other pilgrims, to consecrate the Order to the Black Madonna of Częstochowa, Queen of Poland.

In this way we contemplated the pain caused by death and together with our Mother who stood at the foot of the Cross, we celebrated the life which rises from the depths of the earth where love has been sown.

In promulgating these Acts, other seeds of hope invite us to look to the future in spite of war, violence and poverty. Yesterday, 27 August, we inaugurated the novitiate in our convent in Mosul (Iraq). Today, we celebrate St Augustine who exhorts us in his Rule: *ut unanimes habite[mus] in domo; et sit [n]obis anima una et cor unum in Deo*. We also celebrate the recently established community of friars in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) which has St Augustine as its patron.

Once again we must express our gratitude to fr Maciej Zięba, the Provincial of the Province of Poland, and all the other friars of the province for having invited the Order to celebrate the Chapter in Kraków. Our thanks are also due to fr Jakub Kruczek, Prior of the Convent of the Holy Trinity, and his community. We are also grateful to fr Gregorz Chrzanowski, Secretary General of the Chapter, and his assistants. They ensured the normal conduct of the sessions up to their successful conclusion. Our gratitude is also due to all those who helped in such varied services as translators and interpreters, student friars, etc. Like the continuous cello in a symphony, they have sustained the 'polychrome symphony' of the Chapter. We are also mindful of the young people who during the twenty-one days of the Chapter generously invited us to sing the

mercies of the Lord in the splendid conventual church. Last but not least, our thanks to all those who took care of our food and clothing!

Given at Rome on the Feast of St Augustine, 28 August 2004.

fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa
Master of the Order

fr Rinaldo Giuliani
Secretary

Prot 50/04/1000 Kraków 2004

DIFFINITORS

UNDER

FR CARLOS ALFONSO AZPIROZ COSTA
MASTER OF THE ORDER OF PREACHERS

Ex Master of the Order

fr RADCLIFFE Timothy

Diffinitors

fr MATEOS GOMARA Salustiano, Province of Spain
fr DONNEAUD Henry, Province of Toulouse
fr COURAU Thierry-Marie, Province of France
fr RIZZELLO Raffaele, Province of St Dominic in Italy
fr STEINER Christian M., Province of St Catherine of Siena in Rome
fr PICCINNO Giuseppe, Province of St Thomas Aquinas in Italy
fr BARNA Ferenc Maté, General Vicariate of Hungary
fr BUNNENBERG Johannes, Province of Germany
fr MARSHALL Gordian, Province of England
fr PRUS Wojciech, Province of Poland
fr PEREZ DELGADO Esteban, Province of Aragon
fr MOHELNIK Tomás Benedikt, Province of Bohemia
fr RAIC Kristijan D., Province of the Annunciation of the BVM in Croatia
fr VALENTE DA SILVA Jose Manuel, Province of Portugal
fr DE PAZ CASTAÑO Herminio, Province of Betica
fr OOSTERVEEN Leonard, Province of the Netherlands

- fr CARROLL Gregory, Province of Ireland
fr CHICO SANCHEZ Luis Gabriel, Province of St James in Mexico
fr ANGUERRY PRECIADO Juan Castulo, Province of St John the Baptist in Peru
fr CORTES GALLEGO Mauricio Antonio, Province of St Louis Bertrand in Colombia
fr CAZORLA Jorge Oswaldo, Province of St Catherine of Siena in Ecuador
fr DE MIGUEL FERNÁNDEZ José Luis, General Vicariate of St Laurence the Martyr in Chile
fr MAÑERO ESPINOSA Fernando, Province of Our Lady of the Rosary
fr BRAEKERS Marcel, Province of St Rose in Flanders
fr SICOULY Pablo Carlos, Province of St Augustine in Argentina
fr QUIGLEY James Ferrer, Province of St Joseph in the USA
fr GATT Raymond, Province of St Pius V in Malta
fr DION Denis, Province of St Dominic, Canada
fr PADREZ Mark C., Province of the Holy Name of Jesus in the USA
fr HOLZER Christopher, Province of Upper Germany and Austria
fr WOODS Richard J., Province of St Albert the Great in the USA
fr McCORMICK Gregory, Province of the Assumption of the BVM in Australia and New Zealand
fr BELEI Marcos Antonio, Province of fr Bartholomé de las Casas in Brazil
fr DE ROTEN Philippe, Province of the Annunciation of the BVM in Switzerland
fr ARNOULD Alain, General Vicariate of St Thomas in Belgium
fr DAO TRUNG HIEU Francis Xavier, Province of the Queen of Martyrs in Vietnam
fr CASTIGADOR Honorato, Province of the Philippines
fr WEDIG Mark, Province of St Martin de Porres in the USA

- fr NUTTALL James, Vice-Province of the Son of Mary in Pakistan
fr PAEZ OVARES Alexis, Vice-Province of St Vincent Ferrer in
Central America
fr OKURE Aniedi Peter, Province of St Joseph the Worker in Nigeria
fr PRASAD George, Province of India
fr KISYABA LAWARIDI Marie-Victor, General Vicariate of the
Democratic Republic of Congo
fr DEEB Michael Christopher, General Vicariate of South Africa
fr PAN PEI-CHI Paul, General Vicariate of the Queen of China
fr GAVRILTCHIK Igor, General Vicariate of the Guardian Angels
(Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania)
fr DELIK Wojciech Zbigniew, General Vicariate of Russia and the Ukraine
fr STRUIK Félix, General Vicariate of the Holy Cross in Puerto Rico
fr HAJAS Benedikt Robert, Province of Our Lady of the Rosary in
Slovakia

Delegates of Vicariates

- fr LAZCANO OSA Francisco V., Provincial Vicariate in Peru and of
the Dominican Republic of the Province of Spain
fr KOSHABA Philippe, Provincial Vicariate in Iraq of the Province
of France
fr du GRANDLAUNAY René-Vincent, Provincial Vicariate (Algiers,
Cairo) of the Province of France
fr HOLDER Ronald Igor, Provincial Vicariate of St Louis Bertrand
in Barbados (West Indies) of the Province of England
fr CHACACHAMA Miguel Gabriel, Provincial Vicariate of Angola
of the Province of Portugal
fr FORTUNE Carlyle, Provincial Vicariate of Trinidad and Tobago
of the Province of Ireland

- fr PROL CIRUJEDA, Jesús, Provincial Vicariate of the Philippines
of the Province of Our Lady of the Rosary
- fr FUERTES AGUNDEZ Jerónimo, Provincial Vicariate of Japan of
the Province of Our Lady of the Rosary
- fr ARROYO PINO Martín, Provincial Vicariate of the Province of
Our Lady of the Rosary in Venezuela
- fr NDEGWA Martin, Provincial Vicariate of East Africa of the
Province of St Joseph in the USA
- fr NTIBAGIRIRWA Symphorien, Provincial Vicariate in Rwanda
and Burundi of the Province of St Dominic, Canada

*Delegates of Convents under the Immediate Jurisdiction of the
Master of the Order*

- fr GARUTI Paolo, Convent of SS Dominic and Xystus, Rome
- fr SHERWIN Michael S., Convents of St Stephen in Jerusalem and
of St Albert in Friburg (CH)

*Also present at the Chapter
Socii of the Master of the Order and the Syndic of the Order*

- fr McVEY Chrys, Socius for the Apostolic Life
- fr GIERTYCH Wojciech, Socius for the Intellectual Life
- fr NANTES Edmund, Syndic of the Order

Others Invited by the Master of the Order

- fr OMBRES Robert, Province of England, Canonist
- fr LAPITAN Ernesto Jr, Province of the Philippines, Official
Chronicler of the Chapter
- fr MONTERO José, Province of Our Lady of the Rosary, Editor of
the Acts of the Chapter

Members of the Dominican Family Invited by the Master of the Order

Sr ROLF Claire, Nun

Sr DORTELMANN María Magdalena, Nun

Sr NILSEN Else-Britt, 'Notre Dame de Grâce' Dominican Congregation

Sr MERINO Mayte, Congregation of Missionary Sisters of St Dominic

Mr TORRES CASTELLANOS Pedro, Lay Fraternity

Mr OLEJNIK Remigiusz, Lay Fraternity

Moderators

fr LÓPEZ LEGIDO José Ángel, Moderator

fr LEBLANC Philippe, Moderator

fr PHILIBERT Paul, Moderator

Secretariat

fr CHRZANOWSKI Grzegorz, Secretary General

fr OSTROWSKI Mirosław, Vice-Secretary General

fr TRZOPEK Paweł, Vice-Secretary General

fr GONCIARZ Jacob, Syndic of the General Chapter

Those who Assisted at this Chapter

Translators

fr ALMAZÁN Leo
 fr ARIÑO DURAND Louis Marie
 fr GARCIA BAUTISTA Emilio
 fr BAUZÁ SALINAS, Jean Ariel
 fr CROSTHWAITE Alejandro
 fr IZAGUIRRE Carlos M.
 fr MAESTRO MARTIN Manuel Angel
 fr MASICLAT Paul-Dominique
 fr MCSHANE Philip
 fr QUIJANO Carlos
 Sr YOUCHTCHENKO Maria Laetitia
 Sr BOBILIER Marie Maximilien
 fr CASTRO Sixto J.
 fr CLAVIN Oscar E.
 Sr DE LA VALLETTE Marie Ferréol
 Sr FECTEAU Jeanne
 fr JABARES Mario
 fr RODRÍGUEZ Ángel
 fr TORRES Juan
 fr VEILLER Pierre Étienne

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fr BISZEWSKI Pawel
 fr CHABEREK Michal
 fr CIUBA Piotr
 fr DEJNAKA Marcin
 fr DOBRZYNSKI Adam
 fr DUDZIK Wojciech
 fr GALUSZKA Tomasz
 fr GOLUBIEWSKI Michal
 fr GOLUBIEWSKI Wojciech
 fr GRABOWSKI Tomasz
 fr GRONKIEWICZ Kacper
 fr JELÉN Marcin
 fr JURCZAK Dominik
 fr KACZMAREK Janusz
 fr KANIEWSKI Jacek
 fr KARBOWNIK Karol
 fr KOPERA Jacek
 fr LUBINSKI Krzysztof
 fr MACZKA Pawel
 fr MARZEK Andrzej
 fr MROZEK Michal
 fr MRUGALSKI Damian
 fr NAPIWODZKI Piotr
 fr NOWAK Stanislaw
 fr PILSNIAK Miroslaw (Liturgy)
 fr PIOTRKOWSKI Igor
 fr PRZANOWSKI Mateusz
 fr ROJEK Tomasz
 fr SZUSTAK Adam
 fr WOLSZLEGER Bartłomiej
 fr ZAKRZEWSKI Patryk

ABBREVIATIONS

ACG	<i>Acta Capituli Generalis</i>
CDTD	Dominican Centre for Theology and Development (Ivory Coast)
CIDALC	Inter-Provincial Conference of Dominicans in Latin America & the Caribbean
CODALC	Confederation of Dominican Sisters in Latin America & the Caribbean
DOMUNI	University of Human and Religious Sciences on the Internet (Toulouse)
DSI	Dominican Sisters International
DVI	Dominican Volunteers International
ESPACES	Dominican Centre(s) for Spiritual, Cultural & Social Realities (Europe)
IAOP	Inter-African Conference of the Order of Preachers
ICLDF	International Council of the Lay Dominican Fraternities
IDEO	Dominican Institute of Eastern Studies (Cairo)
IDF	International Dominican Foundation
IDI	International Dominican Information
IDYM	International Dominican Youth Movement
IEOP	Inter-European Conference of the Order of Preachers
LCO	<i>Liber Constitutionum et Ordinationum</i>
PUST	Pontifical University of St Thomas Aquinas (Rome)

CHAPTER I
ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. The Master of the Order, fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, in a circular letter of 15 November 2003, Rome, according to the norm of LCO 413 § II, convoked the General Chapter of Diffinitors, to be celebrated in the Convent of the Holy Trinity (Kraków) of the Province of Poland, from 28 July until 17 August 2004.
2. The Master of the Order, fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, according to the norm of LCO 414, appointed fr Grzegorz Chrzanowski Secretary General of the Chapter, and fr Mirosław Ostrowski and fr Paweł Trzopek Vice-Secretaries, all three being members of the Province of Poland.
3. The Master of the Order, fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, invited the following members of the Dominican Family to assist at the General Chapter of Diffinitors in Kraków: Sr Claire Rolf and Sr M. Magdalena Dortelmann, contemplative sisters; Sr Else-Britt Nilsen and Sr Mayte Merino, active sisters; Mr Pedro Torres Castellanos and Mr Remigiusz Olejnik, members of Dominican Lay Fraternities.
4. Fr Denis Dion, fr Gregory Carroll and fr Jesús Prol Cirujeda examined the testimonial letters of the vocals during the evening of 27 July and the morning of 28 July.
5. On 4 June 2004, the Master of the Order, fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, sent a letter to the Holy Father, John Paul II, informing him of the celebration of the General Chapter in Kraków.

*His Holiness, John Paul II
Vatican City*

*Prot. 50/04/670 Kraków
Rome*

*4 June 2004
Memory of St Peter of Verona, Martyr*

Your Holiness,

Once again I write to you in the name of the Order of Preachers and, as a sign of our commitment and fidelity to the Church, I humbly ask for your prayers and blessing.

This year, from 28 July until 17 August (the Feast of St Hyacinth of Poland), we celebrate our General Chapter of Diffinitors in your native land, in the Convent of the Holy Trinity in your beloved city of Kraków.

It is through the General Chapter, the supreme authority of the Order, that the brethren representing the Provinces meet every three years to examine, define, evaluate and plan our fraternal life as preachers 'useful for the salvation of souls,' as your predecessor, Pope Honorius III, wrote on 2 December 1216 in the Bull Religiosam vitam.

It is the first time in almost 800 years of history that a General Chapter will be celebrated in Kraków. As you know, our Convent of the Holy Trinity was founded in 1223 by St Hyacinth whose tomb is found in the conventual church, and it is one of the few convents which has neither been closed nor suppressed since its foundation.

I have also given this good news to the Prefect of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, His Excellency, Archbishop Franc Rodé, C.M., to inform him of this important occasion in the life of the Order in medio Ecclesiae.

Profoundly grateful for your Petrine Ministry, with the whole Order I humbly beg your Apostolic Blessing, imploring the Holy Spirit to enlighten you in your task so that you may always discern 'what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect' (Rom 12:2).

In Our Lady of the Rosary and Saint Dominic.

*With filial devotion,
fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, O.P.
Master of the Order*

6. On 16 August the Substitute of the Secretariat of State of the Holy See sent the following telegram in Polish from the Pope to the Master of the Order and to the capitulars:

Secretariat of State
First Section – General Affairs
The Vatican
16th August, 2004

Reverend Father,

I enclose the telegram of the Holy Father on the occasion of the conclusion of the General Chapter of the Dominicans.

*Most Reverend Father
Carlos Alfonso Azpiroz Costa
Master of the Order of Preachers
Kraków*

Through you, Reverend Brother, I send heartfelt greetings and expressions of spiritual union to the representatives of the Dominican communities from the whole world, who in recent weeks have gathered in Kraków for common prayer and reflection on the present reality of the Order and on the tasks that the charism of the Founder urges in face of contemporary challenges. I believe that this effort has been accompanied by the breath of the Holy Spirit, who for centuries has led the spiritual sons of St Dominic, endowing them with wisdom for the preaching of the Gospel and with a willingness to serve Christ in His Church. May you always be accompanied by this Spirit so that your ministry will bear blessed fruit.

I am glad that on this occasion, for the first time in history, the General

Chapter was held in Kraków, and that it had as its patron St Hyacinth who was so associated with this beloved city. I trust that in your debates you did not fail to refer to the apostolic fervour of this Apostle of the Slavonic countries who wandered from Gdańsk to Kiev, not only preaching the Gospel but also giving a witness to Christ's love by his personal sanctity. Tomorrow, when we commemorate this saint in the liturgy, I shall pray in a special way so that his spirit will accompany and strengthen the Dominican friars who today undertake that same mission on all continents.

Dominican apostolic activity has always been tied to 'the ministry of thought,' which expressed itself in the profound study of various branches of knowledge and in the undertaking of dialogue with them in the field of philosophy and theology. Kraków, with its university, was for centuries a special witness to this ministry. I entrust its continuation to you today so that the generations of our own time may draw from true wisdom to the fullest possible extent, and that they may grow ever more in spiritual liberty, so as to be responsible for the dignity of the human person in all aspects of private and social life.

To the Mother of God, Our Lady of the Rosary, I commend the Master of the Order, the members of the Chapter and all Dominicans. May her intercession implore for your Order all divine gifts, so that it may develop in peace and fruitfully serve the Church. I bless you all from my heart in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Castel Gandolfo,

16 August 2004

Pope John Paul II

Availing of this occasion I send to the Master of the Order my profound respect.

Archbishop Leonardo Sandri

Substitute

7. His Excellency, Archbishop Franc Rodé, C.M., Prefect of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, sent a letter to the Master of the Order, fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, on 9 July 2004 expressing his contentment at the celebration of the General Chapter in Kraków.
8. The Master of the Order, fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, having consulted the capitulars and observing LCO417§I, 3° appointed the diffinitors fr René-Vincent du Grandlaunay of the Province of France, fr Richard J. Woods of the Province of Saint Albert the Great (USA) and fr Pablo Carlos Sicouly of the Province of Saint Augustine (Argentina) revisers of the texts of the Acts of the Chapter.
9. On 28 July 2004, the General Chapter began with the Solemn Mass of the Holy Spirit in the Church of the Holy Trinity of Kraków, concelebrated by all the capitulars and presided over by the Provincial of the Province of Poland, fr Maciej Zięba, who in his homily invited the capitulars to find the hidden treasure and the pearl of great value.
10. On 28 July 2004, the Archbishop of Kraków, His Eminence, Franciszek Cardinal Macharski, paid a courtesy visit to the capitulars.
11. The Master of the Order, fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, having consulted the capitulars, according to LCO417§I, 4°, confirmed the arrangement of the members and presidents of the eight commissions as previously prepared:

Commission I A: Preaching

fr ARROYO PINO Martín
fr BELEI Marcos Antonio
fr CAZORLA Jorge Oswaldo
fr DE MIGUEL FERNÁNDEZ José Luis (President)
fr ANGUERRY PRECIADO Juan
fr FUERTES Jerónimo
Sr MERINO Mayte
Mr TORRES CASTELLANOS Pedro

Commission I B: Preaching

fr BRAEKERS Marcel
fr DEEB Michael (President)
Sr DORTELMANN Maria Magdalena
fr GATT Raymond
fr GAVRILTCHIK Igor
fr MARSHALL Gordian
fr McVEY Chrys
Sr NILSEN Else-Britt
fr NUTTALL Jim
fr OOSTERVEEN Leo
fr RADCLIFFE Timothy
fr WOODS Richard J.

Commission II: Intellectual Life & Preaching

fr DION Denis
fr du GRANDLAUNAY René-Vincent
fr DONNEAUD Henry
fr GIERTYCH Wojciech
fr HAJAS Benedikt Robert
fr MOHELNİK Benedikt
fr PÉREZ DELGADO Esteban
fr PICCINNO Giuseppe
fr RAIC Kristijan Dragan
fr RIZZELLO Raffaele
fr SHERWIN Michael (President)
fr SICOULY Pablo Carlos
fr WEDIG Mark

Commission III: Common Life

fr CORTÉS GALLEGO Mauricio Antonio
fr LAZCANO OSA Francisco Valentín
fr MATEO GOMARA Salustiano
fr MAÑERO ESPINOSA Fernando
fr PAEZ OVARES Alexis
fr PROL CIRUJEDA Jesús
fr STRUIK Félix
fr VALENTE DA SILVA NUNES José Manuel (President)

Commission IV: Vocations & Formation

fr McCORMICK Gregory
fr ARNOULD Alain (President)
fr DAO TRUNG HIEU Francis Xavier
fr DELIK Wojciech
fr GEORGE Prasad
fr KHOSHABA Philippe
Mr OLEJNIK Remigiusz
fr PADREZ Mark
fr QUIGLEY James Ferrer
Sr ROLF Claire
fr STEINER Christian M.

Commission V: Government

fr BARNA Ferenc Maté
fr CHACACHAMA Miguel Gabriel
fr CHICO SÁNCHEZ Luis Gabriel
fr DE PAZ CASTAÑO Herminio
fr DE ROTEN Philippe (President)
fr GARUTI Paolo
fr KISYABA LAWARIDI Marie-Victor
fr OKURE Aniedi Peter

Commission VI: Economics

fr CARROLL Gregory
fr COURAU Thierry-Marie
fr FORTUNE Carlyle
fr NANTES Edmund
fr NDEGWA Martin
fr NTIBAGIRIRWA Symphorien
fr PAN PEI-CHI Paul
fr PRUS Wojciech (President)

Commission VII: Constitutions & Ordinations

fr HOLZER Christophe
fr BUNNENBERG Johannes
fr CASTIGADOR Honorato (President)
fr HOLDER Ronald
fr OMBRES Robert

12. The General Chapter approved as moderators for the plenary sessions those previously proposed by the Master of the Order, fr José Ángel López Legido, fr Philippe LeBlanc and fr Paul Philibert.
13. The Chapter approved the general norms of procedure proposed to the capitulars.
14. The Master of the Order, fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, presented to the capitulars his *Relatio de statu Ordinis*, signed in Rome on 22 July, the memory of St Mary Magdalen, the Apostle to the Apostles.
15. The Socii of the Master of the Order, together with the Syndic General and the other officials of the Order, presented their respective reports, which were made available to the members of the Chapter.
16. During the first days of the Chapter the following addresses were delivered:
 - *The Relevance of Dominican Preaching in the African Context*, by Sr Pétronille Kayiba of the Dominican Missionaries of the Rosary (bureaucracy impeded Sister Pétronille from being present).
 - On 27 July 2004, *The Challenge of Preaching after the War of 2003*, by fr Philippe Khoshaba.
 - On 4 August 2004, *A Report to the General Chapter of Diffinitors on the Presence of the Dominicans in Ethiopia*, by fr Ernesto Lapitan Jr.

- On 5 August 2004, *We Want to be a Universal Sign of the Order*, by Sr Claire Rolf, Prioress of the Dominican Monastery of Prouilhe.
 - On 6 August 2004, *The Task of the Dominican Order at the Seat of the United Nations in Geneva*, a report and proposals by fr Philippe LeBlanc (Geneva).
17. On 30 July 2004, before the start of the actual work of the Chapter, some themes for reflection were presented by Sr Mayte Merino of the Congregation of Missionary Sisters of St Dominic and fr Chrys McVey, Socius of the Master of the Order for the Apostolic Life. They delivered the following addresses respectively, *Obedience until Death: Freedom Committed to Mission* and *The Dying that is Mission*.
18. The Master of the Order, fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, following his election at the General Chapter of Providence in 2001, appointed the following collaborators:

Secretary General

fr Luis Ramos Gómez Perez

Vice-Secretary General

fr Michael O'Rourke

Socii

fr Chrys McVey, Socius for the Apostolic Life

fr Wojciech Giertych, Socius for the Intellectual Life

fr João Xerri, Socius for the Provinces of Latin America

fr Quirico Pedregosa, Socius for the Provinces of Asia and the Pacific

fr Rajmund Klepanec, Socius for the Provinces of Central and Eastern Europe

fr Umberto Frassinetti, Socius for the Provinces of Italy and Malta
fr Pedro Luis González, Socius for the Provinces of the Iberian Peninsula
fr Gerald L. Stookey, Socius for the Provinces of the United States
of America

Promoters General

fr Chrys McVey, Promoter of the Dominican Family
fr João Xerri, Promoter of Justice and Peace

Procurator General of the Order

fr Joseph Nguyen Thang.

Director of International Dominican Information

fr Yves Bériault and later fr Costantine Mamo

19. On 24 September 2003, the Master of the Order, fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, appointed fr Rinaldo Giuliani Secretary General of the Order.
20. The Master of the Order, fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, confirmed fr Enrique Sariago as Secretary of the International Dominican Youth Movement (IDYM) in 2004 and subsequently named him Director of Dominican Volunteers International (DVI).
21. The Master of the Order, fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, erected the Province of Slovakia with his Decree of 15 November 2001, the Feast of Saint Albert the Great.
22. On 4 April 2002, fr Augustine di Noia of the Province of St Joseph (USA) was appointed Under-secretary of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.
23. Since the General Chapter of Providence the following brethren were ordained bishops or promoted to other sees:

- *fr Vincent Darius*, Bishop of St George's in Grenada (Grenada) on 10 July 2002, until then Spiritual Director of the Regional Seminary in Port of Spain
 - *fr José Paala Salazar*, Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese of Butuan (Philippines) on 19 November 2002, until then Bishop of the Prelature of Batanes
 - *fr Anthony Colin Fisher*, Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Sydney on 16 July 2003, until then Founder and Director of the John Paul II Institute for Marriage and the Family
 - *fr Alano Maria Pena*, Metropolitan Archbishop of Niteroi (Brazil) on 25 September 2003, until then Bishop of New Fribourg
 - *fr Georges Marie M. Cottier*, Theologian of the Pontifical Household, was consecrated Titular Archbishop of Tullia in the Basilica of Santa Sabina on 20 October 2003.
24. On 21 October 2003, His Excellency, Georges Marie M. Cottier, was elevated to the dignity of Cardinal, with the title of the newly created Diaconate of SS Dominic and Xystus (Angelicum).
 25. On 17 February 2003, the Holy Father nominated *fr Thomas Bonino* and *fr Gilles Emery* members of the International Theological Commission.
 26. On 12 October 2003, the Master of the Order, *fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa*, wrote a letter to His Holiness congratulating him on the Silver Jubilee of his Pontificate.
 27. On 24 May 2004, the Feast of the Translation of Our Holy Father St Dominic, the book *To Praise, to Bless, To Preach – Words of Grace and Truth* (published in Spanish, French, English and Italian) was presented in Santa Sabina. It gathers together the principle messages to the Dominican Family of the most recent Masters of the Order, from *fr Aniceto Fernández* to *fr Timothy Radcliffe*.

28. The Master of the Order, fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, according to LCO 398, III, has made fraternal visits to the following Provinces of the Order: *Ireland*: 5-6 October 2001; *France*: 18-22 October 2001 and 2-6 December 2002; *Italy*: 24-25 November 2001, 2-4 June 2002, 4-5 August 2003 and 7-8 February 2004; *Brazil and Argentina*: 10-27 December 2001; *Belgium*: 5-6 June 2003; *Asia* (Pakistan, Singapore, Taiwan, Hong Kong, India, and the Philippines): 17 February - 11 March 2002; *Central and Eastern Europe* (Poland, Russia, Lithuania, the Ukraine, Czech Republic): 15 March - 1 April 2002; *Spain*: 2-9 April, 31 April - 1 June, 10-19 September 2002 and 1-5 May 2004; *Africa* (Kenya, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Angola, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Camaroon, Nigeria, Benin, Ivory Coast, and Senegal): 8 June-7 July 2002; *Canada*: 24 August-2 September 2002; *United States*: 2-28 September 2002; *Iraq and Jordan*: 9-18 October 2002; *Cairo*: 19-21 October 2002; *Mexico*: 6-16 December 2002; *Columbia*: 16-25 December 2002; *the Philippines*: 8-16 February 2003; *Vietnam*: 17-23 February 2003; *Poland*: 8-12 March 2003; *Germany and Austria*: 12-13 March 2003; *École Biblique, Jerusalem*: 13-16 March 2003; *Switzerland*: 25-29 March 2003; *Argentina*: 30 September - 9 October 2003; *Hungary*: 25-27 October 2003; *Chile*: 30 January - 2 February 2004.

He also personally conducted the canonical visitation of the *Project in Venezuela*: 4-6 December 2001; *England*: 29 March - 15 April 2003; *Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands*: 8 June - 6 July 2003; *Korea*: 7-14 July 2003; *Portugal*: 31 August - 9 September 2003; *the General Vicariate of Chile*: 10-18 October 2003; *the Province of Peru and the Provincial Vicariate of the Province of Spain*: 3-30 December 2003; *the Province of Spain*: 28 February - 29 March 2004; *the Province of Ireland*: 4-25 April 2004; *the General Vicariate and the two Provincial Vicariates of the Province of Teutonia and of the Rosary in Taiwan*: 26 June - 11 July 2004.

29. On 15 February 2002, the Holy Father received in his private library the Master of the Order, fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, and the General Council, in a private audience.
30. On 2 March 2003, the Master of the Order, fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, appointed fr José Montero Director of *Analecta Fratrum Praedicatorum* for six years.
31. On 13 April 2002, the Master of the Order, fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, closed the centenary of the birth of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati with a Solemn Mass in the Basilica of Santa Sabina.
32. On 1 November 2002, following the publication of the Apostolic Letter *Rosarium Virginis Mariae* the Master of the Order, fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, sent a letter of gratitude to the Holy Father, John Paul II.
33. The location of the Leonine Commission for the complete works of St Thomas Aquinas was transferred from Grottaferratta to the Convent of Saint-Jacques (Paris) in accordance with a previous agreement between the Master of the Order, fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, and the Provincial of the Province of France, fr Bruno Cadoré, signed on 16 November 2002.
34. In his letter of 18 November 2002 (Prot. 75/02/1358 Grottaferratta) the Master of the Order, fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, thanked the Minister General of the Franciscans for the hospitality which the members of the Leonine Commission had received from the Friars Minor during their thirty years in Grottaferratta.
35. On 24 May 2003, the Master of the Order, fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, addressed to the whole Order a letter on itinerancy entitled *Let us Walk with Joy and Reflect on our Saviour: Some Points on Dominican Itinerancy*.
36. On 7 November 2003, the Master of the Order, fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, appointed fr Vito Tomás Gómez Postulator General for the Causes of Beatification and Canonization of the Order.

37. On 22 December 2003, in response to a request from the Episcopal Conference of Ethiopia for the foundation of a Catholic University in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia), the Master of the Order, fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, erected a new religious house in Addis Ababa under the patronage of St Augustine of Hippo.
38. On 30 May 2004, His Excellency, Bishop José Paala Salazar, O.P., (1937-2004), Titular Bishop of Ippona Záríto and Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Lipa (the Philippines), died unexpectedly.
39. On 14 August 2004, the Master of the Order, fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, announced that fr Robert Ombres would be Procurator of the Order from 1 November 2004.
40. During the General Chapter the capitulars and the assistants at the chapter made two significant visits: one to Auschwitz-Birkenau, and the other to the Sanctuary of Częstochowa where the capitulars, together with the Master of the Order, recited a prayer of consecration to Mary, taken from *Analecta Ordinis Praedicatorum* 31 (1954): 388-389.
41. On 16 August 2004, at the proposal of the Master of the Order, fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, the Chapter approved the nomination of fr Allan White, Prior Provincial of the Province of England, fr Cletus C. Nwabuzo, Prior Provincial of the Province of St Joseph the Worker (Nigeria and Ghana), and fr Konstanc M. Adam, Prior Provincial of the Province of Slovakia, as members of the *Directorium* of the Pontifical University of St Thomas Aquinas (Rome).
42. On 17 August 2004, the Feast of St Hyacinth of Poland, the General Chapter concluded its work with a Solemn Concelebrated Mass in the Church of the Holy Trinity (Kraków) at which a great number of the faithful assisted. The Master of the Order, fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, presided at the Eucharist,

delivered the closing homily of the Chapter and received the religious profession of twenty-one novices of the Province of Poland and of one novice from the General Vicariate of Hungary.

CHAPTER II PREACHING

PROLOGUE

43. 'The Order of Preachers "was specifically instituted, from its beginning, for preaching and the salvation of souls." For that reason we, the sons and daughters of St Dominic, dedicate ourselves in a new way to the universal Church, devoting ourselves entirely to the complete proclamation of the Word of God to all men and women, groups and peoples, believers and non-believers and especially to the poor. We are conscious that history and the present world are the place where salvation is enacted. For that reason, attentive to the dynamism of modern society, we insist on the necessity of establishing our preaching on the development and realities that men and women daily present to the Christian faith.¹ Every preacher must be attentive to reality, seeing and listening to what it says to us.

GOING TO THE CUMANS – A MEDITATION²

44. Vincent de Couesnongle has described St Dominic's desire to go to the Cumans as 'a frame of mind, a power, a driving force in what is deepest in us, which always leaves us dissatisfied with what we are and what we do.' He asked, 'If that cry of Brother Dominic – I am going to the Cumans – were alive in us, if it tormented us all the time, would not our communities and our life with God for other people be totally different from what they are now?'³ We, like St Dominic, have to be ready to

¹ Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, O.P., *Proclaiming the Gospel in the Order of Preachers*. Cf. Kraków, *Relatio de statu Ordinis*, note 9.

² The present text was offered by the Commission on Preaching as a meditation, and was approved as such by the Chapter.

³ Vincent de Couesnongle, O.P., 'Who are my Cumans?' in *Confidence for the Future: Addresses to Dominicans*, trans. Raymond O'Donovan, O.P. (Dublin: Dominican Publications, 1982), 166-167.

take our life with Christ into a world without faith.

45. Our visit to Auschwitz presented us with an example of extreme exclusion, which did not end sixty years ago. Our world has always been a world of conflict but now this is global: a new world [dis]order, massive inequalities, discriminatory and bloody xenophobia, common attacks on the most fundamental rights to life, obscene wealth amid widespread misery, epidemics barely acknowledged and inadequately met. Albert Camus, speaking to the French friars after World War II, reminded them that 'there is in this world beauty and there are the humiliated. We must strive,' he said, 'not to be unfaithful, neither to the one nor to the other.' There are some people so tormented by the injustices in our world that they forget that the sun rises in the morning; there are others so taken with the beautiful that they are blind to the sufferings of others. These are some of the issues before us, provoking questions for which we have no complete answers. And yet, as an Order of Preachers, we must respond – not merely with words but with the Word that lives in our lives. We must strive not to be unfaithful, neither to beauty nor to the humiliated.
46. Do we dare imagine how this might change our lives? Dare we move beyond our fears in a world of terrorist alerts? Dare we act in a Church that is often tempted to close itself off from the 'fuller and deeper understanding' that John XXIII, in convoking Vatican Council II in 1959, dreamed would come from 'discussion' and from 'ideas striking against one another'?⁴ Do we dare risk being drawn beyond the security of what we know, dare to go out and enter the homes of those whom we do not know, to find ourselves bewildered and silenced? For this silence is creative: it is the silence of our nuns; it is the silence of the voiceless that invites us into another world.

⁴ John XXIII, *Ad Petri Cathedram* 71.

47. To enter this other world is to discover ourselves as one small part of a world where the liberating word comes from elsewhere. It comes from those on the margins of society. It comes from those in our world whose concerns are bigger than themselves, who care for creation and the environment, for prisoners and patients, often putting their own lives at risk. To enter this world is to yield the illusion of power in order to be 'possessed by others.'⁵ To do so is to learn humility, to be docile before the wisdom and language of others' experience, where we preachers receive much more than we give.
48. Like Dominic, we are but beggars, waiting in silence for a word from God and from others.
49. It is important for us to dare to learn with others how God has communicated himself to them, and from them learn the languages we need for our preaching. This is important if we are to be witnesses of a life that can only be experienced as gift and mystery.
50. To preach in this world is to share the life, the hope, and the promise that lives in the world of the other. To preach in this world is to walk on the frontier between sharing the lives of all those others and sharing the promise of salvation, bringing the Good News of Jesus Christ to them and discovering that he has gone before us into Galilee.
51. In this world we will have something to say, but only if it is a word for which we have suffered, a word for which we have fought, and a word for which we have prayed. And this response – like that of the trumpeter of Kraków,⁶ whose hourly call ends abruptly – might be a word that ends in silence as the only adequate response before suffering humanity or before the immensity of the mystery.

⁵ Mayte Merino, O.P., *Obedience until Death: Freedom Committed to Mission*. Kraków, Appendix III to the Acts of the General Chapter, 2004.

⁶ The trumpeter, atop the tower, was the town watchman who warned of danger. This he did in 1241 when the Mongolian Tatars advanced against Kraków. As he sounded the alarm, he was struck in the throat by a Tatar arrow. In commemoration of this, from the 16th century, on the hour, the tune ends suddenly. It is also said that only the Mongols know how the tune ends.

52. It is in just this crossing of borders, often fearful but sustained by the promise of the Gospel, that we create the space for others to share their fears and their hope, which prepares us for preaching – which prepares us to give them a word of hope.
53. We are bearers of God's Word made flesh, a gift we express in fragile words. We make language and language makes us. Many words, like 'terrorism,' 'freedom,' 'security,' and 'evil,' are today held captive by spin-doctors, demagogues and fundamentalists. Words have been corrupted to create a world of fear in order to legitimize a world of power. As we have seen by its role in the transformation of Central and Eastern Europe, the Church, which we love and to which we are faithful, is a place of courageous and truthful words. But the Church is also sometimes wounded by silence when it fears to address *quaestiones disputatae*. Our commitment to *Veritas* impels us to dare to address such issues with confidence and humility. As preachers we are called to search with courage and creativity for words that will break the silence. As preachers we are committed to the liberation of language for its true role of serving truth and exploring the frontiers. As preachers we are committed to an asceticism of care in the way we use language. As preachers we are committed to endless vigilance in defence of language. As preachers we break the silence to shed the light of the Gospel on human experience.
54. At Auschwitz-Birkenau the rail tracks terminate at the ruins of the ovens: the end of hope. Yet there are those who survived the camp and even today there are signs of life – flowers and birds and a memorial, which our guide reminded us is also a protest against any more 'final solutions.'
55. Auschwitz offered no resurrection, but our preaching offers hope. Faith, in a saying often attributed to St Augustine, only tells us that God exists, and charity only tells us that God is love. But hope tells us that God will work his will. Hope has

two lovely daughters, anger and courage. Anger, so that what must not be, cannot be; courage, so that what must be, will be.

56. Only in this hope will we have something to say. Only then can we courageously break the silence of an unheeding society. Only then can we use that anger to confront the 'dominant consciousness' of those who tell us what to think. Only then can we challenge false absolutes, face the future without fear, and speak the uncomfortable truth that both consoles and frees and that comes from our contemplation of the Crucified and Risen Christ.

INTRODUCTION

Some Challenges to our Preaching

Then the Lord said, 'I have seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters; I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey ... Come, I will send you to Pharaoh that you may bring forth my people, the sons of Israel, out of Egypt' (Ex 3:7-8,10).

PREACHING INCARNATED IN A WORLD OF POVERTY AND SUFFERING

'I have seen the affliction of my people ...'

57. We love our world, but the world saddens us because we see that many people live in a situation of misery that generates suffering, insecurity and fear which in turn lead to a world-wide imbalance and to the dehumanization of the person and the environment.
58. In this context we emphasize the following phenomena:

1. The gap between rich and poor has increased, and millions live in *poverty and exclusion* without any guarantee either for their human rights or the satisfaction of their basic needs. This creates despair, is a source of frustration and violence, and affects particularly the weakest in society.
 2. *Work* has become a form of slavery. It is already so for child-workers, and eventually evolves into aggressive competitiveness, economic profit, etc. Thus it dehumanizes people and causes suffering to families and other relationships.
 3. *Immigration*, a well-known phenomenon in countries which suffer poverty, war and political oppression, sows in a society, already weakened by the exodus of the young and talented, suffering and in some cases death.
59. Our preaching cannot be indifferent, ignoring these facts or remaining a mere ideology. It must be a courageous and committed word, speaking aloud for those who suffer in silence, with neither energy nor voice to free themselves, accompanying and assisting them to be protagonists, to initiate courses of action and to create structures that transform this reality.
- 60 The proclamation of the Gospel and our lives themselves should be filled with hope, announcing and witnessing to a merciful God who walks with us, and should emphasize the dignity of each person, making this world the home of all humanity.
- 61 We must ensure that our language bears a message of sympathy to those who suffer, a message of solidarity that expresses deep compassion for others (Mt 9:36), a message that emerges from our encounter with others, in imitation of Jesus who, humbling himself, became man (Phil 2:7). This is the universal language that touches the actual lives and feelings of others.

WHAT MODEL OF CHURCH DOES OUR PREACHING BUILD?

'I ... have heard their cry because of their taskmasters ...'

- 62 Jesus encountered a world with similar challenges, a world where some 'religious individuals' of that time justified discrimination in the name of the law (Caleruega 20, 1.6). His attitude invites us to question ourselves about our preaching within the Christian community. In order not to build a model of Church that avoids the important questions and hopes of people, our preaching has to reconcile faith with life and religion with justice.
- 63 As preachers of the Gospel we cannot help examining our consciences regarding fidelity to the task which has been entrusted to us by the Church and which we exercise in its name. We should therefore be attentive to our ministry, as it is a matter of concern that there are voices raised in demand for a return to the past, and an authoritarian mood has become present within some ecclesiastical institutions. Does this apply in any way to us as the Dominican Family? In the Jubilee of the Year 2000 Pope John Paul II offered in the name of the entire Church, in both word and deed, a clear example of an authentic examination of conscience.
- 64 In building up the Church our exercise of shared authority and honesty in our administration can be seen as prophetic signs. Preaching itself when born from dialogue, discernment and the common search for the truth, greatly contributes to the construction of a model of Church as People of God. Our variety and richness as a Family, seen in the creation and the history of different peoples, can be a beautiful expression of the grace and blessing of God.

PREACHING AS ENCOUNTER

'I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land to a good and broad land...'

- 65 That God 'comes down' and 'brings up' speaks to us of his desire for encounter and intercourse with humanity. The initiative comes from God and this must be seen when we preach according to the spirit of the Gospel. This divine initiative is not only found in the 'seeds of the Word' sown throughout diverse cultures, but also in the quest, concerns and desires of the human heart.
- 66 The Word that we preach does not belong to us. It has been given to us so that we can offer it freely as a most precious gift. This Word always desires to be welcomed but it cannot be imposed. God does not do that. Instead he has entrusted it to our weakness and to the free acceptance of those to whom we speak. By our very presence as believers, this Word also challenges what is not Christian in the world.
- 67 The multiplicity of cultures, each one with its own memories, expressions and 'mystery,' poses a challenge of mutual recognition and coexistence. It demands that we be open to the truth of another culture, daring also to test the various claims to truth of our particular culture. Our attitude should be that of a disciple open to the truth of others, which in turn can enrich our own vision. This demands a dialogue that seeks neither to conquer nor to convince but, with the guidance and support of the Spirit, desires that we arrive together at the truth of God.
- 68 To preach in a spirit disposed towards inculturation is to go to the encounter with the other, desiring to share with him freely and lovingly the Good News of Jesus. It is not possible to evangelize without genuinely accepting, respecting, appreciating and cherishing the culture, values and style of life of the people with whom the Gospel is to be shared.

- 69 In short, it is a matter of sincerely accepting the gift of the Spirit of Jesus which demands of us a great openness of mind and heart so that we ourselves can be evangelized, and a great love to accept others as they are.

PREACHING AS DOMINICAN FAMILY

'Come, I will send you ...'

- 70 We are sent as brothers and sisters who share a single mission and a single charism.
- 71 Collaboration between the different members of the Dominican Family, recommended by the General Chapters and the Masters of the Order, truly stands as a challenge and a prophecy rather than as the fruit of necessity.
- 72 We have not yet reached a situation of complete collaboration. In fact, a certain discrimination that does not respect our common charism is noticeable. To speak of collaboration in preaching is not to make concessions but to recognize a charism common to all.
- 73 Unity in diversity is a difficult task that demands huge internal freedom on the part of all concerned. This enables us to be open with each other and to recognize the authority and importance of the other.
- 74 Faced with tendencies that divide and exclude such as separatism, exclusion, racism, sexism, etc., the unity of the Dominican Family makes a prophetic statement. On the other hand, faced with the homogenization of culture, the consideration of difference as threatening and challenging, the intolerance of religious fundamentalism, etc., the diversity of the Dominican Family is proof that unity in diversity is possible, necessary and urgent because it responds to the human vocation.

- 75 Collaboration in preaching is born out of the abundant richness and diversity of human life. By the same token every member of the Dominican Family has a unique awareness and experience of the world in which we live and of Jesus Christ. Thus each person has a fresh and unique contribution to make. Together we can go through the whole world preaching the Gospel to all people in every language as a new Pentecost.

PREACHING INCARNATED IN A WORLD OF POVERTY AND
SUFFERING

Exhortation

- 76 We *remind* the brethren of the text *The Preaching of the Gospel in the Order of Preachers* written by fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, and encourage them to read it. This text will be appended to the Acts of this Chapter as it summarizes and integrates texts from many other General Chapters and faithfully expresses the way the Order understands the characteristics of Dominican preaching.

WHAT MODEL OF CHURCH DOES OUR PREACHING BUILD?

Recommendation

- 77 We are deeply concerned about the significant increase in the number of evangelical groups and other new movements. So we *recommend* that all the brethren be adequately prepared to face the varied and important challenges that these groups represent (cf. Mexico 52, Caleruega 4.5; Bologna 73-75) and to learn from anything positive that they can offer us.

Ordination

- 78 We *ordain* that both the Master of Students and the Regent of Studies ensure that our student brothers acquire an adequate knowledge of ecumenism and of what concerns the great religious

traditions, and that they should be well informed about the various forms of religious fundamentalism (cf. Mexico 53).

Commendation & Recommendation

- 79 Previous General Chapters have stressed the importance of inter-faith dialogue as part of our Dominican mission. We *commend* the work that many members of the Dominican Family are already doing in this area. We note, however, that recent world events and the prejudice arising from the association in many people's minds of terrorism with particular religious groups mean that inter-religious dialogue can no longer be seen as an optional extra to our mission. Moreover, as other religions, like our own, have different characters and emphasis in different areas and situations, it is important to be sensitive to the complexity of every tradition.
- 80 We therefore *urge* that provinces see the work of inter-faith understanding as a priority both in their programmes of formation and in their willingness to commit brethren to this work.

Recommendation

- 81 We *recommend* that the Regional Promoters for Justice and Peace should support and promote in our communities and ministries the organization of courses and workshops about these matters as well as setting up situations of encounter and dialogue with religious leaders willing and able to participate in these exchanges.

Recommendation

- 82 We *recommend* that our brothers work with our nuns, sisters, and lay members to establish places of dialogue and self-criticism in order to discern the model of Church we are trying to build up and to promote Dominican spirituality and style of government.

PREACHING AS ENCOUNTER

Ordination

- 83 The establishment of a mission outside its territory belongs to the full identity of a province (Providence, *Relatio de statu Ordinis* 4.3.1). We therefore *ordain* that the Socius for the Apostolic Life discuss with any province that has no such mission where it might develop one, alone or in collaboration with another entity. And we *exhort* provinces to take the initiative in establishing new missions outside their geographical or cultural setting, while observing LCO 261 § III.
- 84 We recall that the first step towards the establishment of a mission is the founding of a community, so that the brethren may become acquainted with the culture of the country and welcome vocations (LCO 112).

Recommendation

- 85 Due to the relevance that an adequate understanding of a new culture has for those who will minister in a cultural environment other than their own, we *recommend* that the provinces and vicariates that have missions outside their own territory, or missions in different cultures within their own territory, should take great care to prepare in advance those who will minister abroad in the future. In this we recognize that in many situations and cultures today there is no sense of God or of religion.

Petition

- 86 Over half of humanity lives in Asia and the presence of the brethren there is relatively weak. Therefore we *ask* the brethren participating in the Dominican Family Leaders' Conference – Asia Pacific Region – in February 2006 to advance collaboration in the establishment of our presence especially in countries where the sisters are already present.

Exhortation

- 87 Globalization means that the challenges we face transcend the boundaries of any single province. We are all inhabitants of the global village. The Order is one of the earliest multinational organizations, and so it is part of our charism to articulate a global response to these challenges. One way is for us to develop our presence at international institutions. We therefore *exhort* provincials to recognize the priority of such claims and respond to requests of the Master of the Order for brethren for the mission of the Order as a whole.

Commendation

- 88 Our presence at the United Nations in New York and at the United Nations Human Rights Commission in Geneva is of fundamental importance for our mission and deserves continuing support. We *commend* the work of fr Philippe LeBlanc and Sr Eileen Gannon, and of other brothers and sisters who work with them in these institutions.

Exhortation

- 89 The contact of the Order with the institutions of the European Union deserves more support from the European provinces. We therefore *exhort* the European provinces to offer continuing support to St Dominic's International Priory in Brussels by making brethren available to the project and to ESPACES.

Petition

- 90 We *ask* the International Commission for Justice and Peace to consider whether the Order should establish a presence at other international or continental bodies such as UNESCO and UNAIDS, and to participate actively in international bodies working for social change such as the World Social Forum.

Ordination

- 91 We *ordain* that the office of Promoter General for Justice and Peace be made a full-time ministry. The complexity and urgency of challenges to human rights and peace in the world impel us to make a brother completely free for this ministry. We *encourage* the Promoter for Justice and Peace to use the Internet to communicate matters concerning justice and peace to the Dominican Family.

Acknowledgement

- 92 We *thank* the Dominican Sisters International for presenting Sr Marie-Thérèse Perdriault as Co-Promoter General for Justice and Peace. We *thank* the Dominican Sisters of the Presentation for freeing her for this vital post in the Dominican Family.

Ordination

- 93 The Internet offers members of the Dominican Family an important and valuable means of preaching to those we might not otherwise reach (cf. LCO 104). But it also offers a possibility for members of the Family to keep in touch with one another, offer mutual support, and develop ideas together. This is particularly important where Dominicans working in a particular apostolate are geographically isolated from one another. The Internet offers the possibility of contacts through which members of the Dominican Family could collaborate in the apostolate. We therefore *ordain* that the Master of the Order appoint a full-time Promoter General of the Internet whose function would include, with appropriate technical assistance, establishing fora of communication and exchange, and that he should develop a Dominican Intranet.

Recommendation

- 94 We *recommend* the promotion and development of preachers

working in the fine and applied arts, including the electronic media, among ways of exploring and expressing truth and spiritual inspiration. Beauty has its own authority. We encourage the collaboration of Dominican artists on every level.

- 95 We *commend* the work of brothers and sisters collaborating internationally in *Dominicans in the Arts*, and encourage further and greater collaboration at all levels among Dominicans working in the arts, including art faculties of colleges and universities.

Commission

- 96 Our provinces in the United States of America are especially blessed with several brothers who have been trained to work in producing film and video. We therefore *commission* the provincials of these provinces to explore, with the collaboration of other entities, how the Order's mission might be developed in these media.

Exhortation

- 97 We *exhort* provincials and their councils to encourage existing musical, choral, and artistic initiatives.
- 98 We *recognize* the new apostolic initiatives in many provinces undertaken by members of the Dominican Family who are interested in making available and developing the European musical heritage, particularly with regard to ancient music.
- 99 We *invite* members of the Dominican Family and their friends to develop their creativity in common projects, and we suggest that the Province of Poland should take the lead in collaboration on ancient European music.
- 100 We *suggest* that during the 800th anniversary of the founding of Prouilhe a music festival be held at Prouilhe-Fanjeaux.

- 101 We especially *thank* the friars and the choirs of young people for whom music is so clearly part of their apostolate who have supported our liturgies during the General Chapter.

Exhortation

- 102 The Order needs courageous preachers for a world and Church often marked by fear. We need the courage to proclaim our faith to a world that is often hostile, and the courage to listen to those whose convictions are different. We *exhort* our formators to encourage those in formation to grow in their capacity for dialogue, even with their brethren, learning to listen in charity and intelligence to other points of view in the pursuit of truth, and letting themselves be drawn beyond the security of their initial convictions.

Exhortation

- 103 Preaching emerges from a vital community life in which common study, contemplation and prayer all contribute to preparation. Having the courage to talk to each other about God is part of the tissue of our lives. Therefore, while preaching ultimately remains a personal expression, we *encourage* preachers to reflect in community on the liturgical texts, and even better with other brothers, sisters, and lay people. We also recommend having, at regular moments, a critical evaluation of our preaching to facilitate better preaching.

PREACHING AS DOMINICAN FAMILY

Exhortation

- 104 We recognize the fact that wherever members of the Dominican Family have collaborated to form a specific common project, youth groups and lay groups have grown and that the Order as a whole gained more vitality and presence (cf. Kraków, *Relatio de statu Ordinis* 13). In line with Providence 427, we *exhort* that projects and foundations of the Order be representative of the

whole Dominican Family and that efforts be made to invite other branches of the Order to take part in the initial planning of such projects and foundations.

Exhortations

- 105 We *confirm* and *appreciate* the International Dominican Youth Movement (IDYM) for responding with generosity and energy to the call to be preachers of the Word in the places where they live, work, and study, especially to the young men and women of our times. They are truly companions who bring Gospel light and wisdom to our mission. We *encourage* the brothers to collaborate with the International Commission of IDYM, along with the Promoters General for the Laity and Dominican Family and the Director of Dominican Volunteers International (DVI), to continue to integrate these groups into the preaching mission of the Order (Providence 448 & 449).
- 106 In line with Providence 430 and in order to facilitate collaboration with all branches of the Dominican Family, regional or continental structures of the Dominican Family are indispensable. We *exhort* the Promoter General of the Dominican Family to ensure the establishment of such structures where they do not yet exist.
- 107 Due to the fact that our preaching has to be carried out – as much as possible – as a family, we *exhort* that from the time of initial formation our young members be given the opportunity to participate in formation projects and apostolate with other members of the Order, both men and women (cf. Bologna 41).

Acknowledgement & Recommendations

- 108 We *acknowledge* the work of the commission established by Bologna 42 to 'examine the charism of preaching in the Order.'
- 109 We *support* the ongoing study committed to the Socii for the Apostolic Life and for the Intellectual Life by Providence 435.

- 110 We *encourage* response to this study, the purpose of which is
1. to stimulate wide discussion among the branches of the family
 2. to gather data on the different experiences of preaching (by the end of 2005)
 3. to make this known to the Dominican Family.
- 111 We *recommend* focusing on the following two questions for the future:
1. Is collaborative preaching by Dominican men and women, lay and ordained, essential to our witness to the Gospel?
 2. How does profession in the Order of Preachers imply a commission to preach as a participation in the essential mission of the Order?
- 112 We *recommend* that before the next chapter a small meeting of theologians, historians, pastors, and canonists be held to evaluate responses, continue the reflection, and propose future steps to be taken.

Commendation

- 113 The chapter strongly *commends* our brothers and sisters in Iraq for their enduring faith, resolute courage, and steadfast witness during the long years of sanctions, armed conflict, and recurring violence about which we heard so movingly during this Chapter. We celebrate our solidarity with the entire Iraqi Dominican Family as they continue to proclaim the Good News to their country, which stands in such great need of encouragement in the struggle for dignity, security, and stability.
- 114 We also *commend* our many Dominican brothers and sisters throughout the world, and especially in the United States of America, for their prophetic stance against unacceptable use of power and force both in their home countries as well as in Iraq.

Commendation

- 115 We *commend* the initiative of the members of Dominican Sisters International and the Justice and Peace Commission in establishing the Palestinian Solidarity (Rosary) Project and recommend it to the members of the Dominican Family.

Commission

- 116 We *commission* the Promoters of Justice and Peace and the International Justice and Peace Commission to continue to monitor all such situations of serious conflict and oppression in the world and to help all our brothers and sisters to determine appropriate responses to these situations.

Additional Commendations

Commendations

- 117 The Chapter recognizes and *commends* the apostolic contributions of members of the Order who are challenged by physical disabilities, including chronic illnesses. We encourage efforts to include our physically-challenged members in the preaching apostolate and commend those who minister to those outside the Order who share such physical challenges.
- 118 We *commend* the Dominican Missionaries for the Deaf Apostolate, a new foundation in the Diocese of Oakland, California, which has been recognized as part of the Dominican Family, for progress in recognizing and developing the vocations of those challenged by physical disability.
- 119 We *commend* all members of the Dominican Family who minister to people having mental or psychological disability or illness.

Petition & Commendation

- 120 The greatest missionary challenge of the Order remains China, home to one fourth of humanity. We *ask* the Master of the Order

and the Wenzao community of the Chinese General Vicariate to continue to seek and form volunteers from other entities for this mission. We *commend* the Holy Rosary Province for its courageous fidelity to its commitment to this mission.

Commendation

- 121 We *acknowledge* and commend our brother Gustavo Gutierrez for his great contribution to theology and the Church. We are grateful for the wonderful way in which God has used him in our time to highlight the centrality of the poor for our preaching and theology. We also recognize his contribution to recovering the rich Dominican history in Latin America, especially in the life and teaching of fr Bartolomé de Las Casas. Fr Gustavo is an inspiration to all of us to deepen our prophetic witness without fear. We *commend* him for his faithfulness to the Church, notwithstanding difficulties, and we do not hesitate to propose him as a model for young Dominican theologians.

Commendation & Petition

- 122 The Rosary is traditionally part of our prayer (*LCO 67 § II*) and preaching. Because we can easily involve the laity with it, it represents a very fruitful apostolic tool with which to meet the offensive from evangelical groups and sects, in particular in rural areas or in the poorer areas of large cities. Many groups of brothers and sisters are actively involved in promoting the Rosary. We *commend* their ministry and *ask* the Socius for the Apostolic Life to consider how they might receive the support of the Order for its wider diffusion.

PETITION FOR THE BEATIFICATION OF BARTOLOMÉ DE LAS CASAS

- 123 Considering the teaching and the work for peace which fr Bartolomé de las Casas achieved for the benefit and defence of the poor and of those whose rights were not respected, a task

that was carried out in the spirit of the Gospel, and considering the values and concerns of the world today, the General Chapter respectfully asks the Holy Father to acknowledge officially the heroism of his virtues. The process of beatification was started in the Archdiocese of Seville on 2 October 2002.

CHAPTER III INTELLECTUAL LIFE & PREACHING

PROLOGUE

- 124 Study, the search for truth, is inseparable from the Order's mission to preach. The General Chapter of Providence describes the intellectual mission of the Order as 'a mercy of the truth' (*Misericordia veritatis*, Providence 104-201). We refer to this text, which can still inspire the intellectual life of the Order, and our present proposals are based upon it.
- 125 Having its origin in compassion, our study 'is ordered to the ministry of salvation' (*LCO* 76), and, because it has an authentic apostolic character and value, 'to apply oneself to assiduous study [...] is an apostolic activity already' (*RSG*, Preface 1, I). Our study, therefore, assists the Church and works throughout the world in illuminating human questions with the light of the Gospel.
- 126 Strengthened by this conviction, we wish to underline the importance for the Dominican vocation of promoting its intellectual dimension. This dimension touches all aspects of our life and the formation of the friars. Our common life which prepares us for preaching should also promote this intellectual life. They are both called to mutual enrichment.
- 127 We consider the stimulation and encouragement of the intellectual life in the entities of the Order, the preparation of professors as well as the formation of the friars for the service of the mission of the Order, to be a primary challenge. Desiring to build upon what was begun at the Chapter of Providence, and without claiming to exhaust these subjects, we present here in three parts some aspects of their realization:

1. Intellectual formation for service of the mission of the Order
2. The role of the regent of studies
3. Centres of studies, research institutes and libraries.

1. INTELLECTUAL FORMATION FOR SERVICE OF THE MISSION OF THE ORDER

A perennial and necessary task today

128 The Chapter of Providence underlines in *Misericordia veritatis* the importance of philosophy for our intellectual formation. We want to realize this point of view through a better interdisciplinary integration of the diverse branches of knowledge. This effort at integration is a perennial task and the friars of the Order have made a notable contribution to it in the history of thought. Yet, this task is particularly pressing in our own time because of the double challenge posed by relativism (radical pluralism and the 'post-modern' distrust of reason) and fundamentalism. The former contests human reason's capacity to attain absolute, definitive and universal truths. The latter treats partial truths as absolute and denies reason the natural exercise of its critical powers. These two apparent contradictory errors have their source, often inadvertently, in the same philosophical reductionism, characterized by a mistrust or fear of reason and the eclipse of the ontological and analogical dimension of reality. Both are likely to alter the confident search for the truth and the means to true dialogue. Dialogue about what is true and human has assumed particular importance in our time, living as we do in such diverse societies. Our quest for truth and humanity presupposes a dialogue with the other, adapted to his ability to understand. In return, it finds itself strengthened and enriched by this need for dialogue

and encounter. In these last few years, there has arisen on this horizon a new challenge, the development of conflicts between cultures and religions which threaten to obscure the universal vocation to search for truth, peace and communion, as well as the search for genuine dialogue and encounter ordered to the promotion of these values.

- 129 Our intellectual compassion, flowing from the mercy of God revealed in his Son (cf. Eph 2:1-10), should be directed primarily, with kindness and lucidity, toward contemporary culture and its contradictions. With all our strength and moved by a spirit of evangelical service, we must attempt to respond to these challenges by 'cultivating man's inclination toward the truth' (LCO 77 § II). Care for an intellectual formation characterized by confidence in reason and by an effort to integrate the diverse forms of knowledge seems to us particularly important, not only for the formation of young friars, but also for the adequate preparation of teachers and researchers who must enter into critical and fruitful dialogue with contemporary currents of thought and other religious traditions.

Philosophy and theology in the tradition of the Order and in our intellectual formation today

- 130 How are the diverse branches of knowledge to be integrated in the face of the disintegration of contemporary culture? Beyond the necessity of having recourse to the human sciences, the mediating role of philosophy seems to us in this respect to be irreplaceable. For this reason, what is required is a philosophical formation that arouses the spirit to a critical freedom and to an authentic wisdom which direct philosophy toward synthesis. 'The metaphysical consideration of being is a light always needed to understand and direct humankind to establish solid foundations in anthropology, epistemology, ethics and the anthropological study of religion' (RSG 14 § 2) while it makes

contact possible between these diverse branches of knowledge and the human and natural sciences, and elevates the mind from created reality to the mystery of the transcendent. Philosophy also furnishes the necessary tools for a critical analysis of the social, political, and economic evolutions of society.

- 131 The doctrinal tradition of our Order, marked by care for research in common, recognizes the respective autonomy of philosophy and theology, while acknowledging that these two disciplines are intimately linked. In this regard, St Thomas appears to us with his 'perennial novelty' (*Fides et ratio* 43) as a 'master and model' for our life of study (LCO 81). In approaching the doctrinal tradition of the Order, and in particular St Thomas, far from the rigidity of some neo-scholastic manuals, we should take care to base our approach upon direct contact with the texts, through a critical and historical study of their contexts. It is not merely an historical interest that should prompt us to such a study, but the concern to apply the unified vision of St Thomas to the currents of contemporary thought. Without doubt, the Church, but also the world and secular culture, in particular its university institutions, expect this service from us. Our preaching itself should be shaped and strengthened by this service, in order to offer a better account of the mystery of Christ 'in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge' (Col 2:3).

'In dulcedine societatis quaerere veritatem'

St Albert the Great *In Libr. VIII Politicorum Aristotelis*

Recommendations

- 132 We *recommend* that our centres of study devote particular attention to the relationship between philosophy and theology, as well as to the interdisciplinary dialogue between philosophy

and the human and natural sciences.

- 133 We *recommend* that regents of studies of entities and moderators of centres of study regularly organize meetings of professors to discuss their courses and their research, to integrate more effectively the different disciplines, to stimulate their own work, and to help their students move toward a unified vision.
- 134 We *recommend* that professors at our centres of study stimulate a direct and historical approach to the principal works of the Dominican tradition through the centuries, particularly the texts of St Thomas Aquinas.
- 135 We *remind* regents, or those responsible for studies in entities that do not have a centre of institutional studies, to form a college of professors who can complete the formation received by the student brothers in centres outside the Order, by a living contact with our philosophical, theological and spiritual tradition (cf. LCO 233 § III; RSG 53 § III).
- 136 We *recommend* that regents or those responsible for studies in entities that cannot form the college mentioned above develop inter-provincial collaboration to ensure this living contact with our intellectual tradition.
- 137 We *recommend* that entities and institutions of the Order with adequate means offer instruction in our intellectual tradition to those entities which are without these means (intensive sessions, courses for a term or semester, etc.).
- 138 We *recommend* that regents of study encourage the preparation of brothers specialized in a profound knowledge of other religious traditions of the world.
- 139 The People of God expect from the Order wise and illuminating counsel that will encourage and direct their thirst for knowledge, reflection and truth. For this reason, we *recommend* that the brothers in the diverse forms of their preaching and apostolate (among parishioners, primary and secondary-school students,

university students, lay groups, etc.) be attentive to all that can nourish this search for education by fostering a critical spirit and an ability to make judgments.

- 140 Following the symposium in Rome, we *recommend* that our faculties of philosophy (the Pontifical University of St Thomas in Rome, the University of St Thomas in Manila and the Centro de Estudios de Filosofía y Teología OP/UNSTA in Buenos Aires), with the participation of brothers, sisters, and members of the centres of study of the Order, regularly organize international symposia on currently disputed questions in judicious dialogue with the doctrinal tradition of the Order, in particular on the relationship between reason and faith, philosophy and theology (cf. Providence 115).
- 141 We *recommend* that the faculties of philosophy and theology of the Pontifical University of St Thomas (Rome) prepare a conference on relativism and fundamentalism.

Appreciations

- 142 We *thank* the faculty of philosophy of the Pontifical University of St Thomas (Rome) and the Socius for the Intellectual Life for organizing the symposium on the role of philosophy in the Order, requested by the Chapter of Providence (Providence 141) and held in Rome from 2 – 4 May 2003. This symposium confirmed the importance of a profound reflection on the role of philosophy and on the development of its study in the service of the mission of the Order.
- 143 We *congratulate* the Pedro de Córdoba Institute (Santiago, Chile) for organizing ‘interdisciplinary conferences’ since 2000 and we encourage it to continue this activity in the future.

2. THE ROLE OF THE REGENT OF STUDIES
IN THE ENTITIES OF THE ORDER

- 144 Upon recommendation from the provincial chapter, the Regent of Studies is appointed by the Master of the Order, to preside over the future of the intellectual life in an entity of the Order. (LCO 93 § 3; 230, 2°). This appointment highlights the eminent position accorded to the intellectual life, not only in the life of every brother, but also in that of the entire Order.
- 145 The General Chapter of Walberberg (1980) distinguished the role of the Regent of Studies from that of Moderator of the Centre of Institutional Studies. It seemed to us that the role of regent is not always sufficiently integrated and recognized in the life of the provinces. This state of affairs not only makes the task of the regent more difficult, but devalues the very place of the intellectual life in the provinces. As a consequence, the Order's mission cannot truly reach its full potential.
- 146 This is why, ratifying the work of the General Chapter of Providence (2001), and drawing inspiration especially from the spirit of *Misericordia veritatis*, we wish to provide the regent of studies with the means to carry out more decisively his role of service to the brothers' vocation to a life where intelligence allows itself to be enlightened by faith in Jesus Christ.

Promotion of the intellectual life and the preparation of professors and researchers

Declaration

- 147 We *declare* that in spite of the insistent appeals of the last General Chapters (Oakland 122; Mexico 151 & 166; Bologna 104; Providence 125-135, & 154) the Order, more than ever before, finds itself confronted with the urgent need to form a

new generation of professors and researchers for its centres of study, both provincial and international. Ensuring the preparation of future professors requires the vigilant attention and continued support of priors provincial, regents of studies and provincial commissions for the intellectual life. The vision of each of these must extend beyond the terms of their mandate and the immediate requirements of their particular entity.

- 148 We *remind* all the brethren of the existence of a database of the qualifications of the brothers of the Order, specialized in the various fields of knowledge. This database is available for consultation from the Socius for the Intellectual Life. We express our gratitude to all those who provided the information from which the database was created.

Exhortations

- 149 We *invite* regents and members of commissions for the intellectual life not to be discouraged by the difficulties which affect the intellectual life, such as the shortage of teachers and students for example, or the lack of economic and financial resources, but rather to explore with courage and creativity new ways of developing the intellectual life of the provinces of the Order.
- 150 We *exhort* all the brothers, both as individuals and collectively, to give special attention to the intellectual life and to its development in their entities and in the Order. We invite them to cooperate with the regent of studies, on whom falls the immediate responsibility of planning the intellectual mission of their entities.
- 151 We *exhort* regents of studies to give special attention to those brothers who, if well supported, might be attracted to teaching or research. The regent of studies with the help of the Commission for the Intellectual Life and others responsible for formation, (the Moderator of the Centre for Institutional Studies,

- Master of Students, Formation Council, etc.) should judge which brothers might be capable of exercising the offices of teaching and of research, and in what areas, and then invite them to take up the challenge of academic life. 'Immediate pastoral needs should not be given so much weight as to prevent the timely preparation [of these brothers]' (Providence 143).
- 152 We *exhort* priors provincial, who are the ones ultimately responsible for the intellectual life of their provinces, not to withdraw from teaching or research too lightly the brothers prepared for this role.
- 153 We *exhort* regents of studies to accompany the brothers during the period of their complementary studies, or throughout their ongoing research, maintaining regular contact with them, visiting them, meeting their teachers, helping them to surmount the difficulties which might impede their progress, and if possible, regularly organizing meetings between them, so that together they may be able to reflect on the progress, the obstacles and the success of their academic work.
- 154 We *remind* regents of studies that in planning the intellectual future of their province, they ought to take into consideration, not only the needs of the latter, but those of the whole Order (cf. LCO 93 § 1, 7°).
- 155 We *exhort* regents of studies to meet the members of the centres of studies and research of their province, in order to help them to coordinate and plan their future.
- 156 We *remind* regents of studies of the obligation of the Commission for the Intellectual Life to submit to the provincial council an annual report on the state of academic life in the province (LCO 89 § II, 4°).
- 157 We *exhort* the principal academic centres of the Order to prepare a long-term plan for the replacement of professors, in collaboration with the Socius for the Intellectual Life.

Commissions

- 158 *We charge* the Socius for the Intellectual Life with the preparation of a questionnaire for the annual report of the regent of studies (cf. LCO 93 § I, 8°) so that this report will assist the entities and the Master of the Order in the organization of professors. This information on the intellectual specializations of the brothers of the Order could be made available.
- 159 *We charge* the Socius for the Intellectual Life with ensuring that meetings of regents be held at regional level, and that at these meetings the planning of academic projects and cooperation between the entities be developed.

Ordination

- 160 *We ordain* that regents of studies present to the provincial council an annual report on the preparation of future professors.

3. CENTRES OF STUDY, RESEARCH INSTITUTES & LIBRARIES

The Pontifical University of St Thomas Aquinas (PUST/Angelicum)

Appreciations

- 161 *We thank* the Rector and the academic authorities of the Pontifical University of St Thomas Aquinas for their efforts to raise the academic standards of the university and for the range and quality of services provided. We appreciate in particular the development of the Faculty of Social Sciences, the work of the Institute of Spirituality which in answer to the request made at the Chapter of Providence (Providence 239) published a fascicle of the journal, *Angelicum*, dedicated to Dominican spirituality, the creation of a Chair of Thomistic Studies and of the Tillard Chair for Ecumenical Studies.
- 162 *We thank* fr Val McInnes, President of the International

Dominican Foundation, together with the Office of Public Relations of the Pontifical University of St Thomas and the four provinces of the United States, for their fund-raising efforts to meet the needs of the Pontifical University of St Thomas, of the Convent of SS Dominic and Xystus and of the other projects of the Master of the Order. We also thank all the benefactors who have generously responded to the appeals of the Order.

- 163 We *appreciate* the generosity of benefactors as we do the work of the administration of the Pontifical University of St Thomas, thanks to which the renovation of the building at Largo Angelicum 1A has made progress. Thus the buildings of the Pontifical University of St Thomas will soon be enlarged, providing more lecture halls and offices.

Exhortations

- 164 We *appreciate* the 'Strategic Plan' of the Pontifical University of St Thomas which is due to begin in January 2005, and we *exhort* all brothers collaborating in any way in the Pontifical University of St Thomas generously to offer their talents and their creative support to this initiative which aims at improving the standard of teaching, research, and the internal functioning of the university.
- 165 Aware of the immense value of the *Rassegna di letteratura tomistica*, a precious source of information on the evolution of Thomistic studies throughout the world, the publication of which was interrupted by the death of its editor, fr Clemens Vansteenkiste, we *invite* the *Istituto San Tommaso* to continue its publication.

Ordinations

- 166 Aware of the difficulties of reconciling with the Statute of the Pontifical University of St Thomas and the *Liber Constitutionum et Ordinationum* the ordination of the General Chapter of Caleruega (Caleruega 160) establishing 'a sole economic

administrator,' we *ordain* that the Master of the Order revise and eventually suppress the function of this 'sole administrator.'

- 167 Desiring to respect the principle of subsidiarity, we *invite* the Convent of SS Dominic and Xystus to reflect seriously on its unique mission and on the quality of its community life. We *ordain* that the convent hold a conventual chapter *ad modum capituli provincialis*, in the light of the suggestions recently made by the Master of the Order. This extraordinary chapter could enact a statute for the community. Should this initiative prove fruitful, it could be renewed on a three-yearly basis.

The École biblique et archéologique française (Jerusalem)

Congratulations

- 168 We congratulate the brothers of the *École biblique et archéologique française* (Jerusalem) who pursue with dedication their work of education and research in biblical and archeological areas in circumstances that are still very difficult. We wish here to express the solidarity of all the brothers of the Order.

Exhortation

- 169 Echoing the invitation of the *École biblique*, we *exhort* provinces to send their students there, in order to undertake complementary studies.

Declaration

- 170 The dynamism of the *École biblique* is particularly manifest in the new project for an edition of the Bible entitled *La Bible en ses traditions*. This vitality ought to be encouraged not only by the Provinces of France and Toulouse (Providence 172.3), but also by all the entities of the Order which could add their support to this project.

Exhortation & Recommendation

- 171 We *exhort* all the brothers capable of contributing scientifically to the edition of *La Bible en ses traditions* to collaborate in this project.
- 172 We *recommend* that the brothers of the *École biblique* investigate the possibility of an edition of *La Bible en ses traditions* not only in book form, but also on CD-ROM.

Commission

- 173 In a practical spirit and in one of encouragement with regard to the many actual tasks of the *École biblique*, we *charge* the Socius for the Intellectual Life, at the regional meetings which he will organize with the regents of studies, to include on the agenda the planning of professors for the *École*, with special emphasis on the following disciplines: archeology, Oriental studies and the Letters of the New Testament.

Congratulations

- 174 We *congratulate* the Provinces of Ireland and of Switzerland, which by their generous assistance have recently contributed to the modernization of the facilities of the *École*.

Fribourg

Appreciations

- 175 We *thank* the commission established according to the recommendation of the Chapter of Providence (Providence 176) for its work.
- 176 We *thank* the other members of the convention – the Canton of Fribourg and the Episcopal Conference of Switzerland – for extending the convention to the year 2015.

Declaration

- 177 We *note*, however, that several Dominican professors in the

Faculty of Theology of Fribourg are approaching retirement age, and that the need for new Dominican professors is a vital factor in the years to come.

Recommendations

- 178 Therefore, following on the Chapter of Providence (Providence 174), we *recommend* that the provinces of the Order, in particular the French-speaking and German-speaking provinces, be more attentive to the development of the faculty in Fribourg and to the provision of professors. We likewise *recommend* them to consider the faculty in Fribourg as a privileged centre for the pursuit of higher studies in theology.
- 179 We *recommend* that the Master of the Order, as Grand Chancellor of the Faculty of Theology, avail of the occasions which mark academic life (the opening of the academic year, *dies academicus*, inaugural lectures by new professors, etc.) to meet the academic community.

University of St Thomas (Manila)

Congratulations

- 180 We *congratulate* the Province of the Philippines, the Province of the Rosary and the University of St Thomas for their extraordinary role in Catholic education in Asia. The teaching and development of philosophy and theology from an Asian perspective represent an important contribution to the Church's knowledge and reflection. We invite the province and the university to find ways to relieve the professors of the ecclesiastical faculties from excessive administrative duties so that they can devote themselves more to their primary task. We invite the university to ensure regular contacts and exchanges with its affiliated institutions.

The Leonine Commission

Appreciation & Congratulations

- 181 We *thank* the brothers of the Leonine Commission for the serious endeavour they were obliged to make in transferring their main office to Paris, and we *congratulate* them on how well they have settled into the community of the Convent of Saint-Jacques. We also *thank* the Convent of Saint-Jacques for the fraternal welcome extended to the Commission.
- 182 We *congratulate* the Commission for its wider insertion into the scientific world and for the diligent renewal and emphasis of the apostolic thrust of its work.
- 183 We also *acknowledge* the *socii adiuncti* who in a variety of ways assist the Commission.

Recommendation

- 184 In order to ensure that the Commission has the means to pursue its mission, we *exhort* the brothers responsible for the intellectual life in the provinces to discern, encourage and assist those brothers in formation, who in the future might be capable of working for the Commission, either as members or as collaborators.

The Historical Institute

Appreciation

- 185 We *appreciate* the fine and serious work of the Historical Institute of the Order. We *thank* the Institute in particular for preparing and hosting the first colloquium on the Inquisition, and for their publication of the Acts of the same colloquium.

Commission

- 186 We *charge* the Historical Institute, as a complement to the CD-

ROM containing the *Acta Capitulorum Generalium Ordinis Praedicatorum 1232-2001* and the most important editions of the Constitutions of the Order, to produce a CD-ROM containing, in their original language, the Dominican sources of the 13th century according to the editions currently available.

Dominican Centres of Studies

- 187 We *welcome* the efforts and sacrifices of various entities of the Order made to ensure the development of their centres of studies. We encourage the entities to ensure wherever possible that there will always be centres in which the Dominican intellectual tradition will be maintained, developed and transmitted to the next generation.
- 188 We *congratulate* the provinces which organize their most qualified friars so as to maintain excellent standards of teaching and research in the field of Thomistic studies. In particular we *commend* the Province of Toulouse, the Province of St Joseph (USA), the Province of England and the Province of Switzerland.
- 189 We *congratulate* the endeavours of provinces which due to the reduced number of their members are unable to maintain a full centre of studies, yet still offer supplementary courses to introduce the Dominican school of thought (the Province of Ireland, the Province of Peru, the Province of Croatia and the Vicariate of East Africa).
- 190 We *note* with satisfaction the development of provincial centres of studies and their recent affiliations to our faculties of theology (the Dominican Institute in Ibadan; Blackfriars Studium in Oxford; the Dominican Centre of Studies of Our Lady Queen of Martyrs in Vietnam). We encourage the affiliated centres to maintain academic contacts with the faculties of theology, with a view to the possible exchange of professors and projects of common research.

- 191 We *note* the creation of the Faculty of Theology in Bologna by the Province of St Dominic in Italy in collaboration with the Episcopal Conference of Emilia-Romagna.
- 192 We *commend* the efforts of various provinces to improve the facilities of their centres of study (the Provinces of St Joseph, the Holy Name and St Albert the Great in USA, the Province of England and the General Vicariate of Russia and the Ukraine).
- 193 We *congratulate* the Provinces of the Iberian Peninsula for their move towards cooperation in the academic sphere. We encourage the Faculty of St Stephen (Salamanca) to develop new teaching methods and to work towards opening the faculty to sisters and the laity. We invite the Faculty of St Vincent Ferrer (Valencia) to ensure the continued presence of Dominican professors in this centre of studies. We *invite* the Dominican entities of the Iberian Peninsula to explore the means of mutual collaboration, in order to ensure a higher profile for the theological tradition of the Order.
- 194 We *congratulate* the Vicariate of West Africa for its efforts towards establishing a Dominican Centre for Theology and Development (CDTD) in Yamoussoukro (Ivory Coast). We hope that this centre will in the future become an important Dominican centre of studies for French-speaking Africa.
- 195 We *thank* the St Dominic Fund for having financed the construction of the library building in the centre of studies of Kinshasa (Democratic Republic of the Congo).
- 196 We *commend* the initiatives of numerous entities of the Order which, in various ways, offer programmes of study open to the laity, thereby giving them access to our intellectual tradition and mission. In particular we note our presence in locations where the specific cultural conditions and *kairos* provoke profound reflection on the challenges confronting our preaching of the Gospel.

- 197 We *encourage* especially our brothers in Baghdad (Iraq) whose theological school has had to suspend its activities temporarily. We also commend the IDEO in Cairo (Egypt), engaged in dialogue with Islam, and the Pastoral Institute in Multan (Pakistan) which works with the Dominican centre in Lahore.
- 198 We *commend* the Dominican presence and cooperation in the Chair of Three Religions in the University of Valencia (Spain).
- 199 We *note* with satisfaction the establishment of a permanent commission for the presence of the Order in the field of dialogue with Islam as ordained by the Chapter of Providence (Providence 199) and the second meeting on 'Dominicans of the Mediterranean in Dialogue' that was held in Istanbul. We *urge* perseverance in the search for conditions of dialogue with Islam and in our presence in Islamic countries.
- 200 We *congratulate* St Thomas' Higher Institute for Religious Sciences in Kiev (the Ukraine) which offers a basic theological formation to its Catholic and Orthodox students.
- 201 We *congratulate* the Ecumenical Institute of San Nicola in Bari (Italy) for its long-standing efforts in ecumenical dialogue with the Greek and Russian Orthodox Churches.
- 202 We *thank* the Province of the Philippines for its positive response to the request for the establishment of a Catholic university in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia). We encourage the community of the new house of St Augustine of Hippo in Addis Ababa to continue its efforts for the establishment of the university.
- 203 We *commend* the attention given in the Order to the social sciences, in which the economic, social and political changes leading to globalization are examined with a critical eye, with concern for human dignity and the inalienable rights of the poor and oppressed. These sciences help to foster the hope that a more just world is possible. In particular we note the achievements of the Faculty of Social Sciences of the Pontifical

University of St Thomas (Rome) and the Instituto Pedro de Córdoba (Chile).

- 204 *We encourage* those Dominican centres of study which until recently seemed to be located in a Christian cultural setting but which are now faced with the need of a new inculturation in a society that is drifting away from Christian values and points of reference. The challenges raised by a post-modern and post-Christian world provoke us to raise deeper questions about the Church, our way of life and our place in society. We appreciate the efforts of our centres of study, such as the Dominican College of Ottawa and Montréal (Canada), the Aquinas Institute in St Louis and the Centre for Dominican Studies at Barry University (USA), ESPACES (Brussels/Strasbourg/Kraków/Berlin) any many others that are seriously facing up to these questions.
- 205 *We encourage* the Dominican Centre of Studies of Philosophy and Theology of Buenos Aires (Argentina) which since this year has combined the Faculty of Philosophy and the Institute of Theology, so as to unite the teaching and research in these two disciplines more closely.
- 206 *We consider* important the work of entities that are engaged in studying the phenomenon of sects and of the pastoral challenges that they pose. We suggest that a serious study in this area could unite the theological, pastoral and psychological approaches.
- 207 *We encourage* the numerous initiatives taken in different parts of the Order to expand the field of long-distance theological training through the Internet. We see in this possibility a new and pertinent way of preaching the Word of God.

Libraries in the Order

- 208 The spirit which has led us to make propositions aimed at

giving a concrete expression to the spirit of *Misericordia veritatis* leads us finally to stress the role of libraries in the intellectual and apostolic life of the friars.

Declaration

- 209 Great attention needs to be given to the places that are our libraries. They are not simply store rooms of books, but also and above all, as is the case of those libraries that willingly receive external readers, they are places of encounter and exchange. This is the experience of numerous libraries of the Order that offer to readers the occasion to encounter an image of the Church that is open to discussion and the exchange of opinions. That is why it seemed important to us to draw the attention of the brethren to the modern means of communication, so as to make the often rich documentation of our libraries known and more accessible.

Recommendation

- 210 We *recommend* that the Socius of the Master of the Order for the Intellectual Life entrust to a friar the responsibility of preparing for the next general chapter at the latest, a report on the state of the great libraries of the Order and to study the means of promoting their cooperation. This friar will have to see to the establishment of an effective network of the Order's librarians.

Exhortation

- 211 We *exhort* all the friars to cooperate with the librarian in enriching the collections by means of their judicious recommendations. Renewing the appeal of the Chapter of Providence (Providence 150), we *exhort* the brothers and sisters responsible for libraries that are being closed or reorganized to support the new libraries which are being established in the Order throughout the world.

Appreciation

212 We warmly *thank* those provinces which, through the donation of books, have very generously assisted the new libraries being established.

CHAPTER IV
COMMON LIFE

PROLOGUE

- 213 According to LCO 1 § VI 'the structure of the Order, as a religious society, arises from its mission and fraternal communion.' Community life is thus a fundamental element in Dominican life. Recent General Chapters have produced numerous and beautiful texts in this regard. Community life is very pleasant in many communities and this attracts many people to our communities. Community life is a gift from God and we should live it joyfully.
- 214 What follows is not a treatise on religious life. Rather, it is a realistic examination of our situation, a situation which is positive in many aspects but is still marked by deficiencies that challenge us. Moving on from this examination we have to look for ways that can help us overcome these deficiencies. All of this should help us improve the quality of community life, the elements of which 'not only [...] contribute to the glory of God and our sanctification, they also bear directly on the salvation of mankind, since together they prepare and impel us to preach; they give our preaching its character and in turn are influenced by it.' (LCO 1 § IV).

Why A Common Life?

- 215 The goal of our common life is none other than to try to live the main precept of the Gospel: fraternal charity. The *Rule of St Augustine* reminds us of this. It is also stressed in LCO 3: 'the brothers [...] ought first of all to build in their own convent the Church of God, which by their efforts they must then spread throughout the world.' The human person, created in the

- image of the Trinity, is essentially a relational being (existing with others and for others). Responsibility for our brothers is one of the principal manifestations of the commandment of fraternal love taught by Jesus Christ. This should be our concern since we want to imitate Christ. Therefore, our religious profession makes us responsible for our brothers, aware that before anything else we must accept what is implied in our life and vocation.
- 216 Yahweh's question to Cain: 'Where is [...] your brother?' (Gen 4:9) must constantly resonate in our lives and should be an incentive in our community relationships. This question inquires of us what place our brother occupies in our heart, in our interests and in our concerns. God has entrusted certain people to our care so that they can experience God's love, a love which we should reflect and express in our relationship with each brother. This love should also lead us to stimulate and challenge our brother to personal growth. This responsibility and this challenge are principles which stimulate our common life.
- 217 This attitude will prevent our brothers enclosing themselves in a destructive solitude or looking outside their community for the human warmth that they do not find among their brothers. This is a duty which arises from the profession we make before God.
- 218 The ideal of common life as presented in the *Liber Constitutionum et Ordinationum* ought to be valued and considered as a gift of the Spirit. Fully aware that the common life is in itself a *praedicatio*, its delicate and fragile character requires care and protection from us all.
- Community: A place to learn*
- 219 Solicitude for our brothers is not something that arises spontaneously. It has to be valued, tended and cultivated in an ordered way. Our relationships do not come into existence in

the same way as relationships between members of a family: 'we are alley cats that a mysterious hand has placed in the same bag.' Our social background, our culture and our personal history do not share the same origin. This variety enriches the community that welcomes us, but it can also be the cause of tension. That is why community life presents itself as a place for gradual friendship with one another, thus learning to love others as they are loved by Christ. Community life opposes our natural and contemporary tendency toward individualism, and demands from us constant care.

- 220 Each one of our communities must be 'a house of formation' for all its members. Aware of the voluntary character of our community life, we must continually learn how to practice openness, understanding, forgiveness and compassion towards our brothers, especially towards the weakest. In this process, the daily and persevering practice of the evangelical counsels should guide and assist us in dealing with others: poverty as a free and eager imitation of Jesus who invites us to live in total dependence upon the Father, chastity as a visible sign of the love of God, and obedience as availability to live what we profess (cf. Bologna 128).

Community: A place of encounter

- 221 For St Dominic, an essential means of learning to live in common was the chapter of faults. We have not found any suitable means with a similar purpose to replace the chapter of faults in order to foster the renewal of our personal and fraternal life. Such a gathering would have to recover not only the penitential character of our life, as LCO 7 § II indicates, but also offer to each brother an opportunity to be honest and open with others, making himself vulnerable to their critical but fraternal observations. In other words, he should have an opportunity to speak openly of his emotions and exertions,

hopes and frustrations, achievements and failures, ideals and weaknesses, his search for truth through study and his experiences in prayer: in a word, his entire life! Such an experience would promote the growth of the individual and of the community. The entire person should find sufficient acceptance in community so that the brethren may grow in liberty and remove the obstacles that can generally make us strangers to one another (cf. Gal 6:10). Such a special gathering should also be an occasion to express our mutual appreciation, recognizing in each other the gifts that God's grace and our efforts have accomplished in our life.

- 222 For St Dominic, prayer was equally important, precisely as a part of community life. In prayer, uniting ourselves to Christ the High Priest, we offer to the Eternal Father the praises of all mankind. We also place before him the life of our brothers, thanking him for the gifts they have received and appealing to him for their needs and infirmities. This fortifies our fraternal bonds and strengthens community (cf. Bologna 122, Providence 203-205).

Community: A place of celebration.

- 223 As friars preachers we are called to be bearers of the Good News. This will only have credibility if people see us as joyful (cf. Jn 15:11). Therefore, joy is part of the preacher's vocation. Thus, a Dominican community must cultivate a well-balanced life for the brethren. Understood in this way, community life improves the quality of our life, opens the way to personal freedom, leads to greater human development and makes our relationships more satisfying. The recommendations of LCO 7 are insufficient in this regard. Our efforts should lead us to know each other in a more personal way, aware that without healthy self-criticism and genuine fraternal correction, our life could wander in ways contrary to the Gospel. To enjoy the quality of life of which we are speaking, we must adopt the

necessary means. Participating in a retreat beyond the usual context and the celebration of feasts and events in the lives of individuals or of the community are all means that foster friendship and fraternity and unite us ever more closely in our common life.

- 224 The composition of a 'Community Project' must be enriched with such concrete rituals in relation to our fraternal life so that we can contend in a positive way with routine, supported by the festive moments that must always be present. Therefore, it is important to understand that in the long run community discipline enriches us, since it cultivates each friar and provides the necessary psychological harmony that can make our community a home. It enables us to enjoy healthy human relationships and leads us to feel fulfilled and satisfied. With this in place it is easier to manifest the truth that makes us free and so bring to others the light of the Gospel, which is 'life and [life] abundantly' (Jn 10:10).

Community: A 'House of Preaching'

- 225 The quality of our community life enables us to preach the Gospel with greater power (cf. LCO 3). Our tradition confirms the power of the community which is behind each preacher. This does not intend the creation of communities of 'refuge' in which to hide from the challenges of life or attachment to false ideals of community life: a good common life would be pointless if it lacked a genuine apostolic thrust.
- 226 Our communities must be places open to all those who wish to participate and share in our faith and apostolic labour. Those who once belonged to the Order but eventually decided to leave should find a special welcome in our communities. Our communities must never become unconquerable fortresses to which no one has access. Nor must we isolate ourselves from the life of those around us.

Community: Risks And Challenges

227 We are aware that the goodness and beauty of community life also have their risks. These demand of us all determination and courage to prevent passivity in the face of negative attitudes that do not favour fraternal life.

Community life also has challenges that invite us to overcome our limitations and to strive for greater fidelity to the call of the Gospel. To achieve this we must rely on the help of God and on the structures of a well organized community life. These challenges involve us all in the search for a better quality of common life at all levels.

228 The risks and threats that we note should not be seen either as a motive for malicious judgment or criticism of specific personal situations, but as an opportunity to exercise mercy and support (cf. Rom 15:1-3), yet without excluding professional help. It is not enough simply to point out what is wrong: we must also contribute what our common responsibility demands of us.

Among the most common problems, we wish to focus attention on some which could prompt us to self-examination and enable us to avoid situations that cause pain and tension in community.

a) Individualism

229 In our tradition we frequently commend our personal independence. Instead of the 'cloning' that can be perceived in other parts of the Church, we pride ourselves on our respect for the individuality of each brother. However, emphasizing our individuality to the detriment of the quality of our common life is dangerous: we can slide into individualism very easily. Such individualism encompasses a whole range of negative attitudes that reveal themselves in the following behaviours:

1. Self-exemption from community obligations, constantly leaving duties to the same people.

2. Inability to work with others.
3. Lack of transparency in financial matters, an issue that is always difficult to resolve and that always creates inequality in a community.
4. Inventing reasons to live outside the community and a reluctance to return to community when work no longer requires such a way of living.
5. Looking for a compensatory affective life outside the community.
6. Acceptance, without the consent of the community, of work which subsequently becomes a burden for the community.

b) Cold and disruptive behaviour

- 230 There are certain forms of behaviour in community that do not express what we understand and describe as fraternal life. The contradiction is even more striking when the attitude towards visitors is friendly while within the community itself a very different atmosphere exists (cf. Eph 4:31). We see this reality in:
1. The inability to understand generational and cultural differences, the limitations of the elderly or the exhaustion of brothers overburdened with work.
 2. Destructive criticism, calumny and mistreatment which can sometimes be detected in our dealings with one another.
 3. Superficial relationships within community.
 4. The double life that is maintained unknown to the community.
 5. Lack of solidarity among different communities.
 6. Physical or verbal violence.

Challenges

- 231 Our reality, with all its limitations, invites and challenges us to

grow within this structure of the evangelical common life. There are numerous elements in the very reality of our communities which call us to grow as individuals, overcoming routine and striving to establish a good quality of life. We wish to draw attention to some of them:

1. The age of the brethren. In many communities the average age is high. We can very easily fall into the temptation of living as if retired even when we still have the strength to continue collaborating in various activities.
2. A reduced number of friars in communities can impoverish community life (cf. Caleruega 177).
3. The dispersion due to work that obliges some friars to live on the edge of their community and that weakens their relationship with the brethren. It may well be necessary to determine a basic number of community events which all friars should attend.
4. Routine can become a destructive element in our life. Although it is an element in our common life, we should not content ourselves to endure it without enthusiasm: creative fidelity is a necessity for us all!

Dysfunctional Situations in Community

- 232 With increasing frequency we find in our communities situations of personal breakdown which subsequently cause various problems for our common life. While trying to be understanding, one also has to avoid giving in to the idea that problems will resolve themselves. Not to act allows these situations to continue. It is not the exclusive responsibility of the prior to deal with these situations. It is the responsibility of the house council to examine and resolve these irregular situations.
- 233 This is especially noticeable in psychological and relational dysfunctions that make one's life difficult and alter the rhythm

of the community. This shows itself in pathological dependencies: alcoholism, addiction to the internet, affective disorders, compulsive gambling and unhealthy isolation. Many of these realities, even though their origin may escape us and it is not for to us to analyse them, lead to depression or self-exclusion (cf. Providence 265.4). In addition to the understanding and kindness that these persons deserve, we should also provide other means of assistance.

- 234 More and more, factious and difficult individuals are found who do not accept community decisions and project their problems through the constant rejection of decisions made by the community. We should also mention the attitude of those who claim that their way of living Dominican life is the only valid one and should, therefore, be imposed on everyone.
- 235 Ideological, political or ethnic divisions, which sometimes destroy the very heart of fraternal life.
- 236 There are friars who have been in the same house for a long time or are unmovable and unwilling to accept any change in their assignation. This often paralyses the life of entire provinces and hinders the natural development of community life (cf. Providence 282).

Ordinations

- 237 We *ordain* that priors provincial, vice-provincials and vicars general, with their respective councils, establish clear norms for first assignations, so that those friars who have finished their institutional studies may find a healthy environment for the growth of their vocation and so fulfil their ministry. We also *ordain* that during visitation the Master of the Order revise these norms and verify their application.
- 238 We *ordain* that priors provincial, vice-provincials and vicars general, with their respective councils, according to LCO 32 § II, establish norms to be followed in relation to those friars who

repeatedly refuse to hand over their income to the community in spite of fraternal correction. In addition, we *ordain* that priors provincial, vice-provincials and vicars general, with their respective councils, take care that these norms are carefully followed.

- 239 We *ordain* that superiors not permit brothers to live outside of their community of assignation, for pastoral or other reasons, unless such absences are justified. In such cases there should be determined community events or gatherings where their presence is required.

Exhortations

- 240 In order to avoid unjust inequalities between communities we *exhort* priors provincial, vice-provincials and vicars general, with their respective councils, to ensure that each of their entities practice a genuine sharing of goods with no accumulation of economic resources.
- 241 We *exhort* all superiors and their communities, in accordance with LCO 9, that as they care in a special way for elderly and sick friars, they should also give special attention to those brothers who are overburdened with work, depressed or affected by some form of dependency.
- 242 The brethren will feel more fulfilled and useful if they carry out some pastoral work or some service to the community as their health allows, 'earning the food that they eat' (2 Thess 3:10; cf. Caleruega 43.1.1). Therefore, we *exhort* superiors not to allow the friars in their communities to live as if 'unemployed' or on early retirement.
- 243 We *exhort* communities when they are arranging days or occasions of study to use these also as a means for the brethren to get to know each other better, sharing their hopes and disappointments, fears and ideals (cf. Providence 274; Kraków, *Relatio de statu Ordinis* 40).

- 244 We *exhort* superiors to include in the annual Community Project elements which often are omitted from it: community celebrations, birthdays, feasts of the saints of the Order, assignations and gatherings between communities. Days when the brethren can express as a community the penitential character of our life should also be clearly set aside.
- 245 We *exhort* provincials to promote mobility among the brethren in terms of their readiness to be assigned to another community in order to meet the various needs of the province, and thus to make the best use of the talents of the friars.

Recommendations

- 246 We *recommend* to all the brethren a greater interest in sharing their faith, either through the preparation of the Sunday homily, or through sharing their experience of faith or reflection on the Word (cf. Caleruega 42.3).
- 247 We *recommend* that superiors promote recreation and other community gatherings (e.g., common room, TV room, excursions and cultural events) in such a way that they contribute to the promotion of fraternal life.

On Co-operator Brothers

Declaration & Exhortation

- 248 There are many valid ways to live out the Dominican vocation. A brother may be involved in public ministry, teaching or preaching, for which he will need the full course of institutional studies, or he may give his life to the service of the brethren and need more basic studies and perhaps formation in technical skills. He may devote himself completely to pastoral work or research. He may be ordained deacon or priest or not be ordained at all.
- 249 The presence of brothers who are totally devoted to research is

a sign of the Order's commitment to study, even if we are not all called to such a way of life. The presence of brothers who devote themselves to the service of the community emphasizes the importance of the life we share as brothers and religious. These are all ways of fulfilling our vocation which should be cared for and fostered.

- 250 Following the spirit of the Chapter of Bologna 135-137, we can say that all these things make us brothers who cooperate in the mission of the Order. We are all co-operators in the preaching of the Gospel. Some of us are ordained co-operators and are defined as clerics in our constitutional and legislative texts.
- 251 We *exhort* the Order to use the term 'brother' to define us all, and if there is need to refer to the ordained, to use 'brother-priest' and 'brother-deacon.'
- 252 From the beginning, St Dominic incorporated into his apostolic labour the companionship and the work of friars who, without being ordained priests, contributed to the 'Holy Preaching,' accepting obedience and contributing in their own way to the daily needs of the friars and convents. This vocation is maintained in the Order through the service of many co-operator brothers who, consecrated to the service of preaching, contribute to the apostolic diversity of the Order.

Ordination

- 253 In this context, we acknowledge that there are some brothers who, after having finished their philosophical and theological studies, prefer to carry out their preaching ministry without receiving priestly ordination. Therefore we *ordain*, in accordance with LCO 179, that each province establish times and conditions so that each candidate may make known what he believes is his vocation.

Declaration

254 We *declare* that 'we are all brothers in the same profession' (cf. Kraków, *Relatio de statu Ordinis* 46) and have been called by our vocation to fulfil the preaching mission according to the charism of St Dominic. Therefore, nobody should exclude himself from this responsibility.

Exhortation

255 We *exhort* all provinces to 'discern and evaluate the manner of exercising the priestly ministry (cf. Kraków, *Relatio de statu Ordinis* 46).

Recommendations

256 Taking into account the declarations of the General Chapters of Oakland 164 and Providence 290, and of Canon 164 of the *Code of Canon Law*, we *ask* the Master of the Order to continue his discussions with the Holy See concerning the dispensation for co-operator brothers, duly postulated, to become priors, sub-priors and superiors.

257 We *commend* to the Master of the Order the creation of a commission to study the history and precise significance of our status as a 'Clerical Order.'

258 Taking into account Providence 289, as well as the conclusions of the pre-chapter commission concerning co-operator brothers, we *ask* the Master of the Order to promote theological research in order to arrive at a deeper understanding of the role of the co-operator brother.

Appreciation

259 We *appreciate* and acknowledge the work of the pre-chapter commission concerning co-operator brothers.

CHAPTER V VOCATIONS & FORMATION

INTRODUCTION

'I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly' (*Jn 10:10*).

260. The future of the Order depends on the formation of its members. It is necessary, therefore, that great care be taken so that those who belong to the Order be led into the fullness of Dominican life through an integral formation.

Vocations

261. The Dominican vocation is an invitation to gradual and ever greater participation in the life of the Triune God: it is at once an abiding in the God who is Love and a being sent forth. 'As the Father has sent me, even so I send you' (*Jn 20:21*). Our being sent forth to preach is itself an image of the generosity of Jesus, who emptied himself, out of love for the Father, for the sake of the world. At the same time, our obedience is a freely chosen response to the Paschal mystery. Our food and drink as preachers is to do the will of the Father. The unity of the Order, expressed in an obedience freely given, is an image of, and participation in, the unity-in-diversity of the Trinitarian God. Faced with the challenges of a globalization that threatens to render the world homogeneous, Dominican life and preaching witness to a vision of life and love which is truly Catholic, in which differences, rather than being reduced to an indifferent sameness, are reconciled, enriched, and find their truth within a harmonious and integrated whole.
- 262 The challenge of attracting and inviting others to the fullness of life in the Order has always been a great concern, and for some provinces today a source of considerable suffering. Nevertheless

we are called to look beyond the number of vocations we draw and to see vocations as a pure gift from God. St Dominic was never preoccupied with numbers but rather consumed with the mission of holy preaching. Today in the fast-paced age of globalization, men and women may learn of us through the modern means of communication and be drawn to join us through our authentic preaching and sincere living, which are rooted in our contemplative life.

263. Whom do we wish to invite into the Order? Conscious of the diverse world from which our vocations are coming (Providence 348), those we invite cannot be asked to be perfectly motivated. Rather they should have the capacity to mature gradually and integrate themselves joyfully into our professed way of life. Thus they will come to understand that throughout their Dominican life they will be challenged to die willingly to self for the life of the mission.

Exhortation

264. Since vocations are a gift from God, and mindful that at times in the early years of the Order older candidates were accepted, we *exhort* provinces and vicariates to be open to consider seriously the special challenges presented by older candidates, such as integration into community life or docility for formation. As a way to address these needs it may be useful in particular circumstances to adapt the novitiate programme accordingly, including the possibility of interprovincial collaboration.

Recommendation

265. We *recommend* that provinces and vicariates appoint a promoter of vocations.

Initial formation

266. Just as the disciples were called by Jesus to be with him before

- being sent forth to preach (cf. Mk 3:13-14), so too those who join the Order are to be formed as followers of Jesus according to the spirit of St Dominic who himself walked the Way of Christ.
267. The initial years of formation should be characterized by an ever-deepening awareness on the part of the brothers in formation of the essentially contemplative and missionary dimension of the Order's vocation.
268. Today, this means that special care needs to be taken to ensure that all aspects of initial formation – religious, spiritual, intellectual, pastoral, communal and personal – flow from, and are ordered towards, an integral vision of Dominican life and mission. Dominicans are never formed simply for their own sakes; they are formed for the sake of preaching the Gospel to the whole world (LCO 1 § VI). The *missio ad gentes* is, and always has been, a responsibility of the Order as a whole (LCO 108 § I). Today more than ever, the universal nature of the Order presents special challenges to initial formation, this 'urgent and difficult task' (fr Damian Byrne O.P., 'Letter on Formation,' in *Analecta Sacri Ordinis Praedicatorum* 99 (1991): 219).
269. Therefore, we mention in particular the importance of the preparation of the brethren for a more explicitly global ministry, the need to assist those in formation to discern the heart of their Dominican identity, the facilitation of contacts between provinces and vicariates across linguistic boundaries, a willingness to dialogue with those of other faiths or none, and a broadening of the brothers' awareness and appreciation of the international character of the Order. Formators, for their part, need to be given adequate opportunities to prepare themselves for their task. In preparing the brethren during initial formation, formators should not avoid the task of equipping the brothers for the concrete realities of conventual life and ministry awaiting them on their first and subsequent assignments. Ideally, initial formation should provide the

brothers with a broad experience of the ministries of preaching and pastoral work, such that they will be enabled to deepen their sense of vocation and further integrate the various elements, intellectual and pastoral, during the period covered by initial formation (cf. *RFG* 76-77).

Exhortation

270. We *exhort* provinces and vicariates to provide for the brothers in initial formation an opportunity for a different linguistic and cultural experience.

Exhortation

271. We *exhort* provinces and vicariates to organize a pastoral placement for brothers in initial formation, prior to solemn profession, for a time of up to one year, under appropriate supervision. This allows the brothers a broader experience of ministry and community life, a better integration of intellectual and pastoral education, and provides formators another context for assessment.

Recommendation

272. We *commend* provinces and vicariates that are organizing regional meetings of formators to exchange experiences and offer mutual support for their ministry.

Exhortation

273. We *exhort* those provinces and vicariates which have not yet done so to organize regional gatherings of formators.

Petition

274. We *petition* the Master of the Order and his regional *socii* to study and implement regional programmes for the formation of formators.

Ongoing Formation

275. Integral formation is a lifelong process. Constant attention should be paid to our human, spiritual, and intellectual development. These dimensions need to be addressed differently at various stages of life and according to circumstances of ministry and regional needs. Authentic renewal or growth in all dimensions of our being is a form of interior itinerancy that should characterize the life of a preacher.
276. We remind brothers that ongoing formation is the responsibility of each friar (Providence 361) as well as the responsibility of the communities where we live and work. The lector (LCO 326-bis) and the brothers responsible for ongoing formation in the province (LCO 251-bis, 251-ter) should create opportunities to contribute to the vitality of our communities. Provincial and interprovincial sessions of ongoing formation (Providence 432) could also offer opportunities for Dominicans engaged in similar ministries (university chaplains, itinerant preachers, brothers involved in parish ministries, etc.) to deepen their professional skills and learn from one another.

Exhortation

277. We *exhort* provinces and vicariates to organize interprovincial sessions of ongoing formation, as well as offering opportunities for Dominicans engaged in similar ministries.

Petition

278. In the light of the Chapter of Providence (Providence 321-325) which speaks of the importance of the historical places of the Order, we *draw attention* to Prouilhe, which will soon celebrate the 800th anniversary of its foundation by our Father St Dominic.
279. We *commend* those monasteries and members of the Dominican Family around the world for their efforts to implement the

- petition contained in Providence 325 by the creation of an international community of nuns at Prouilhe.
280. In order to *preserve* and *rehabilitate* our common heritage at Prouilhe and Fanjeaux as places of resource and renewal, especially for the Dominican family,
281. We *commission* the Master of the Order to appoint in consultation with the Prior Provincial of the Province of Toulouse a committee to:
1. advise the community of Prouilhe on decisions concerning matters pertaining to the restoration of the site
 2. discern the mission of the Dominican Family in Prouilhe and Fanjeaux
 3. investigate the possibility of establishing an international centre for the study of Dominican history and spirituality.
282. We *recommend* that the project of the restoration of the site of Prouilhe be put on the list of the projects under the International Dominican Foundation (IDF).
283. We *recommend* that Prouilhe and Fanjeaux be encouraged and strengthened by the presence of additional brothers, nuns and apostolic sisters.

CHAPTER VI GOVERNMENT

284. 'For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven' (Mt 16:1). The Order of Preachers can only exercise its mission with authority if each community is a living proclamation of Jesus Christ (*praedicatio Iesu Christi*): it is the lived Gospel which is the basis of our common life and government. It is always a challenge to find brothers to assume responsibilities in government, constantly open to the spirit of real collaboration, which goes beyond ties of flesh and blood. It is also a challenge to find provinces willing to put their brothers at the service of the universal mission of the Order – a condition of true itinerancy. It is in the spirit of co-responsibility, freedom and collaboration between all the branches of the Dominican Family that we are sent towards new horizons of mission.

THE DOMINICAN FAMILY

285. 'What you hear whispered, proclaim upon the housetops' (Mt 10:27). In a world which is gradually becoming a global village and yet deeply divided, in a Church which proclaims the value of each vocation, the Dominican Family must be a model of integration and of respect for identities. What is at stake is the impact and the weight of our preaching: sons and daughters of the Church, we are by our identity as preachers the face of Christ, radiating the beauty of the Kingdom to come. From its beginning the Family of St Dominic has been a place of communion where numerous links are forged: between friars and nuns who make profession to the Master of the Order, between lay people, brothers and sisters in mission, between members ordained for the ministerial priesthood and those who participate in the common priesthood of the baptized.

Ordination

286. We *ordain* that where it is desirable to appoint as Provincial Promoter of the Laity or Director of a Fraternity a person subject to an authority other than that of the friars of the Order, this should be done by means of a prior written agreement with the competent authority.

Recommendation

287. We *recommend* that each province or vicariate determine in its statute the occasions and circumstances when representatives of other branches of the Dominican Family may attend the chapters of the province or vicariate.

Exhortations

288. We *exhort* all the entities of the Order to intensify their collaboration with other branches of the Dominican Family. In particular, in the spirit of Bologna 40 we *exhort* the provinces and vicariates to encourage the presence of the nuns, sisters and laity in chapters and assemblies.
289. We *exhort* the brethren not to admit individuals to the Laity of the Order by privately receiving their profession, but to put them in contact with the nearest Lay Dominican Fraternity or with a member of the provincial or vicariate council of the laity.
290. We *exhort* priors provincial or vicars to consult the provincial council of the laity before appointing the provincial promoter and to consult the local council of the fraternity before appointing a spiritual director, as is also required by the Rule of the Lay Dominican Fraternities, 20 (b) and 21 (c).
291. We *exhort* priors provincial or vicars to consult the provincial promoters before appointing the spiritual director of a fraternity.

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE ORDER

292. 'I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail; and when you have turned again, strengthen your brethren' (Lk 22:32). The service of authority in the Order of St Dominic is not a purely administrative or bureaucratic matter. It also consists in 'confirming the brothers and sisters in their vocation as those who further the life and mission of the Order' (Kraków, *Relatio de statu Ordinis* 70). This service of confirming the brethren is found at all levels of the Order, in its government and throughout its entities, in such a way that each member of the Dominican Family performs this service, beginning with his own particular mission. This nourishes and strengthens the unity between the friars and the elected officials of the Order.

Commission

293. We *charge* the Master of the Order to accompany the entities of the friars present in the Caribbean so that they will associate more closely and collaborate in matters of common interest and concern and, if appropriate, unite. This could be brought about in agreement with the provincials and vicars concerned through the mediation of a committee and/or a vicar of the Master of the Order (LCO 400).

Exhortation & Commission

294. We *recognize* the efforts which the different entities present in Bolivia have made towards greater coordination. We *exhort* them to continue in this direction. We *charge* the Master of the Order to promote and sustain this cooperation.

Exhortation

295. Bearing in mind the central place of the priestly charism in our Order, but also the tradition of equality founded on our profession and on the sharing of the same Eucharistic Body, we

exhort provinces and vicariates to promote the participation of co-operator brothers in provincial chapters. We also *exhort* the Master of the Order to invite co-operator brothers to general chapters as experts when necessary.

THE GOVERNMENT OF PROVINCES AND HOUSES

296. 'On finding one pearl of great price, [he] went and sold all that he had and bought it' (Mt 13:46). The confirmation of the brethren constitutes the very heart of the principle of subsidiarity. Thus no province, convent or house may excuse itself from this principle. Today we feel the increasing necessity to pool our energies and resources in order to accomplish our mission more effectively. Therefore, collaboration between provinces, vicariates, convents and houses is ever more important.

Exhortations

297. The service of confirming the brethren can only be exercised in the spirit of our profession of obedience. We *exhort* all the brethren to subordinate their personal commitments to the community and to the person to whom authority has been entrusted (LCO 20).
298. We *exhort* the provinces to whom parishes have been entrusted and who have experienced difficulties following the promulgation of Canon 520 of the *Code of Canon Law* to send a detailed report to the Procurator General, so that he may study the question, possibly with experts from other orders or congregations.

Congratulations

299. We *congratulate* the provinces which took part in the reflection on the presence of the Order in the countries of the 'former Soviet Union,' and who collaborate in order to intensify our mission in Central and Eastern Europe.

300. We *congratulate* the *Junta Ibérica de Provinciales* for the success of their collaborative projects.
301. We *encourage* the provinces of Italy to continue their efforts towards greater collaboration, and we congratulate them on having organized a national meeting of diffinitors.
302. We *congratulate* the brethren of Venezuela for the progress achieved in view of future unification.

Alteration in Liber Constitutionum et Ordinationum

303. Inchoation: LCO 417 § II after 7^o: A session must be held of the voters alone if a third of the capitulars have either previously requested this, or have approved this by vote at the request of a member of the chapter.
304. Inchoation: Change LCO 348 § I in the following manner: When a prior provincial ceases to hold office in accordance with no. 344 § I, the vicar of the province, as laid down in the statute of the province, will be either the prior provincial who has himself left office or a brother who is or has been a conventual prior in the province.

CHAPTER VII
ECONOMICS

PROLOGUE

'The community of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had everything in common. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of what was sold and laid it at the apostles' feet; and distribution was made to each as any had need' (Acts 4:32, 34-35).

They lack nothing

305 A vast majority of our contemporaries living in developed countries and a very small elite in developing countries lack nothing.

Yet they lack everything

306 For most of these find life meaningless. On the other hand millions live on less than \$2 a day. Their plight constantly haunts us because it is we who have vowed poverty and yet it seems that others live it.

307 We have chosen voluntary itinerancy and mendicancy. Both of these two attitudes dominate aspects of our Dominican life. They allow us to be sent to the poorest, as well as to the richest, to proclaim the Word made flesh.

We lack nothing

308 By our profession, we left everything to follow Christ, and we do not cease to receive brothers, sisters, houses, lands, etc. (Mk 10:29). Putting together our goods, our capabilities and the generosity of our benefactors, gives us a quality of life often better than that of our fellow citizens and even of some of our benefactors.

Yet we lack everything

- 309 We will always be dependent. The direct fruit of our works only partially supports the formation of our brothers, apostolic initiatives, care of the sick and elderly and new outreaches.

We are responsible

- 310 The God-given material resources, received through the years, impose upon us vigilance and stewardship. They must never become ends in themselves and must be managed well like the talents mentioned in the Gospel.

Yet we are not

- 311 In a world where differences in the level and quality of life are so evident (Bologna 204), do we not see even within our Order the same differences between rich and poor entities, between rich and poor communities within an entity, and finally, differences between brothers in spite of being 'poor' by profession (Kraków, *Relatio de statu Ordinis* 121)?

We are our brother's keeper

- 312 Our vows point us to the values of the kingdom. The accumulation of wealth must give way to sharing and communion. Living up to the mutual economic obligations we owe each other requires us to be generous and resourceful. Our needy entities and many of our brothers deserve our attention. We lose the authority of our preaching when within our ranks the gap continues to widen. Our past chapters in Bologna and Providence give us useful guidelines on how to be faithful stewards. Each friar must accept accountability to the community in all financial matters, and the actual management of our goods must be responsible, transparent, dynamic and generous.

Declarations

- 313 In accordance with *LCO 569*, the Syndic of the Order, fr Edmund Nantes, presented to us the accounts of the General Curia and other administrations under the immediate jurisdiction of the Master of the Order, for the fiscal years of 2001-2003. These accounts have been approved.
- 314 In accordance with *LCO 572*, the Syndic of the Order, fr Edmund Nantes, presented the personal accounts of the Master of the Order. These accounts have been approved.
- 315 The Syndic of the Order, fr Edmund Nantes, presented the accounts of the Angelicum Fund. These accounts have been approved.
- 316 The Syndic of the Order, fr Edmund Nantes, presented the accounts of the Solidarity Fund. These accounts have been approved.
- 317 The Syndic of the Order, fr Edmund Nantes, presented the accounts of the St Dominic Fund. These accounts have been approved.

Ordinations

- 318 We ordain that *LCO 560 § III* be changed to read:
'Entities of the Order are to define in their chapter legislation and/or statutes the proper procedures for financial operations – administration, safe keeping of cash and negotiables, investments (*LCO 583*) and banking – in a manner suitable to their local conditions.'
- 319 We *ordain* that the above text become *LCO 560 § I* and the present I & II become II & III respectively.
- 320 We *ordain* that vicariates submit economic reports to their home provinces, as laid down in *LCO 563 § II*, and that the provinces integrate this information in their own reports.

- 321 We *ordain* that the entities, which received some funds from the curia, report each year to the syndic on how the money has been used. This evaluation report will help us to improve our monitoring procedures.
- 322 We replace Providence 380 with the following text:
 We *ordain* a progressive method of assessment whereby provinces and general vicariates are taxed at different rates according to their ability to pay. The rate of taxation is calculated as the proportion of the individual province's gross income (or general vicariate's gross income) relative to the total income of all provinces and general vicariates.
- 323 Formation expenses and donations to Dominican entities, other than one's own, are tax deductible.
- 324 The Syndic of the Order calculates the deductible sum by first calculating the formation expense of the median brother (in formation) and then multiplying this figure by the number of brothers in institutional formation.
 Thus:

$$\frac{\text{income of province A} - \text{deductible expense}}{\text{total income of provinces} - \text{deductible expense}} = \text{tax rate of province A}$$
- 325 However, the provinces' and general vicariates' actual formation expenses per friar will be used if such expenses fall beneath the median formation expenses of the entire Order.
- 326 The total contribution paid by the individual province will be its tax rate multiplied by the portion of the curia budget to be paid by all the provinces together. No province will be made to bear more than 10% of this total and no province will pay less than the set minimum contribution.
- 327 We *ordain* that ordinary contributions for the provinces, vice-provinces and general vicariates not be less than €1500.

328 We *ordain* that the houses under the direct jurisdiction of the Master of the Order continue to be taxed at a rate of 6% of their gross income.

Recommendations

329 We *recommend* that the entities of the Order send their economic reports (LCO 567), taking note of these definitions:

1. The *Economic Reports* as stated in LCO 567 § I comprise the complete information of the financial activities of the entities including the income, the liabilities and the capital. This report is compiled according to the format approved by each entity and generally accepted accounting procedures.
2. The *Economic Questionnaire* as stated in LCO 567 § II is an aspect of the economic report based on the financial operations of the previous year. It is the basis for calculating the tax to the curia. The format of this questionnaire is prepared by the Syndic of the Order and approved by the Master of the Order.

330 The ordinary budget for the year 2004 is €2,030,000. The different entities are providing €1,418,000.

331 We *recommend* that in coming years at least 70% of ordinary income should come from the contributions of the entities. The remaining ordinary income should come from other sources.

332 We *recommend* that funding should be: for Asia and Pacific (€10,000), Latin America and Caribbean (€20,000), Eastern and Central Europe (€50,000), Africa (€100,000). We remind these entities to give an annual report to the Syndic of the Order on funds spent, for evaluation purposes.

333 We *recommend* the Syndic of the Order to work towards establishing a standard method of analytical accounting and internal reporting for the institutions under the direct

jurisdiction of the Master of the Order. These accounts and reports should include:

- 1 a separation of ordinary and extraordinary expenses
2. a budget for both income and expenses
3. a comparison of accounts over a three-year period which would help anticipate the need for future subsidies.

Exhortations and declarations

- 334 *We exhort* the entities of the Order to adhere to LCO 583 & 584, and to establish guidelines to assist in managing their investments in accordance with Caleruega 149, Bologna Appendix 4 and Providence 387.
- 335 *We exhort* that these investments should be reviewed at least once a year by the economic and provincial or vicariate council in the light of their investment policy.
- 335-bis *We exhort* the Syndic of the Order and the Order's Economic Council to update the administrative statute for the Order (LCO 553).
336. *We exhort* each entity of the Order to make an inventory of all property, including works of art, held within that entity.
337. *We exhort* the entities of the Order to support and replenish the Solidarity Fund and the St Dominic Fund.
338. *We exhort* the entities of the Order that when they sell real estate properties to be mindful of the growing needs of the Order by contributing to the St Dominic Fund a percentage of the capital proceeds of the sale, particularly when this would merely add to their surplus funds.
339. *We exhort* that as a tangible way of supporting each other's preaching, especially of the poorer entities of the Order, and in thanksgiving to God for unmerited gifts and blessings, entities of the Order (are invited to) give to the St Dominic Fund a

freewill offering of 0.5% (half of one percent) of the value of bequests or any larger donations they receive. Entities of the Order may choose, however, to share more than this minimum amount, just as many have done so generously in the past.

340. We *exhort* those in charge of studies and formation to provide students with the rudiments of accounting and with practical experience with a syndic.
341. We *remind*, in the spirit of Bologna 227 and Providence 386, that brothers with credit cards have to have the permission of their local superior and follow the limitations prescribed locally.

Fund-raising

342. We *declare*, in accordance with Providence 388, that the International Dominican Foundation (IDF) was formed in February 2002 as a 501 (c) (3) tax-exempt charitable organization in the United States.
343. We *declare* that a professional fund-raising firm (Community Counselling Services) was engaged to assist in the initial stages of the fund-raising campaign. This involved an initial investment, which is to be repaid to the Order by the International Dominican Foundation.
344. In the light of Providence 391, the Syndic of the Order, fr Edmund Nantes, presented a report on the International Dominican Foundation, which was reviewed and evaluated.
345. In the light of Providence 372, the Syndic of the Order, fr Edmund Nantes, also presented accounts for the International Dominican Foundation for the years June 2002 – May 2003 and June 2003 – May 2004. These accounts have been approved.
346. We *approve* the direction that the International Dominican Foundation is taking in the United States and we encourage its development in the other regions of the world.

347. We *exhort* the entities of the Order to help the International Dominican Foundation in identifying donors for the Fund.
348. We *acknowledge* and *compliment* the work being done on behalf of the fund by fr Val McInnes and all those involved in the International Dominican Foundation.
349. We *confirm* the establishment of the Fray Francisco de Vitoria Justice Fund to support and sustain the presence and the work of the Order at the United Nations.

Costs

350. The cost of the General Chapter is to be shared equitably, i.e., reflecting the portion in which each entity contributes annually to the ordinary budget of the Order. We divide the transportation costs equally and share the administrative costs proportionately. Each capitular pays his actual *per diem* costs.

Thanks

351. The Chapter thanks all the provinces, vice-provinces, general vicariates, monasteries, convents and communities of friars, nuns, sisters and laity for the taxes and gifts, especially those who have generously responded to the growing needs and the financial demands on the Master of the Order, and other entities within the Order.

CHAPTER VIII
CONSTITUTIONS & ORDINATIONS

PREFACE

352. For a clearer presentation of the changes made in the *Liber Constitutionum et Ordinationum* in the Chapter, the same method is followed as was used in the Acts of the General Chapters of Walberberg (183), Rome (307), Avila (188), Oakland (208), Mexico (248), Caleruega (Chapter IX, page 90), Bologna (240) and Providence (Chapter X, page 149).

The numerical order of the *Liber Constitutionum et Ordinationum* is followed. At each number a specific sign indicates whether the text has been approved for the first, second or third time:

*** a confirmed constitution (three chapters)

** an approved constitution (two chapters)

* an inchoate constitution (one chapter)

(Note: If the approval or inchoation of a constitution has been made 'with an ordination' it is denoted with the sign [O].)

◆◆ an ordination voted upon for the second time, abrogating the previous ordination

◆ an ordination accepted for the first time

[A] abrogated text

New texts are printed in italics.

Since the correct interpretation of changes made demands a knowledge of the preceding text and its history, references to previous chapters are given with the following abbreviations:

A = Avila, 1986

O = Oakland, 1989

M = Mexico, 1992

C = Caleruega, 1995

B = Bologna, 1998

P = Providence, 2001

The abbreviation 'Techn.' will indicate changes made.

For changes simply in redaction, cf. LCO 246; 335 § I 2°.

According to the norm of LCO 285 § I some ordinations made at the General Chapter of Oakland (1989) have been approved at this chapter and have been inserted definitively in the *Liber Constitutionum et Ordinationum*. These ordinations are indicated with the words 'Insert. def.', viz. nn. 111, 251 §§ I+II, 317 §§ I+II, 330, 356 I°, 369 § I, 386 § III, 428 § I, 563 § II.

353. (P-472)

◆◆38. Ord. – § I – The brothers may have books and equipment for personal use, *as determined by the provincial chapter.*

§ II. – When brothers are assigned to another convent, they may take with them *only those things which have been determined by the provincial chapter and the provincial statute.*

354. (P 173)

◆◆43. Ord. – *For a long journey or a prolonged absence a brother needs the permission of the competent superior as determined by the provincial statute.*

355. [A] 44. Ord. – Abrogated.

356. ◆97. Ord. – § I. To be promoted a Master in Sacred Theology, it is required that a brother:

1° be commendable for his life and prudence;

2° have been totally dedicated to intellectual work for at least ten years from the completion of his complementary studies;

3° be presented to the provincial chapter by the commission for the intellectual life of the province, and be approved by two thirds of the voters at the same chapter, or *by the chapter*

of the province of affiliation or by the Master of the Order, if the brother is living in a convent or institute immediately subject to him;

- 4° that a commission of at least three experts in the brother's field of scientific specialization, chosen by the Master of the Order, pronounce favourably on the value of his work and his capacity to pursue it;
- 5° that he be promoted by a general chapter, or by the Master of the Order with his council;
- 6° that the newly promoted master give a public lecture.

357. (Insert. def.) (O-218)

111. Ord. – The brothers ought to be ready at all times to both initiate and engage in discussion and dialogue at every opportunity with the adherents of other faiths, and with non-believers. It is essential to bear in mind that special training is clearly needed to cope with the problems which are encountered in this kind of apostolate.

358. (P-483)

** [O] 217. Const. – After their novitiate, the co-operator brothers shall spend three full years in a convent designated for their formation under the care of their own master *who may be a solemnly professed co-operator brother* and who will guide their spiritual and human formation. The regent or some other suitable brother, appointed by the prior provincial with his council, shall be responsible for their intellectual and professional formation.

** [A] § II.

359. (Techn.)

246. Const. – Only those brothers may be promoted to orders who:

- 1° are solemnly professed;
- 2° have the necessary qualities;

3° are presented by their major superior;

4° are approved by the conventual council whose responsibility it is to ensure that they have the requirements for ordination.

360. (Insert. def.) (O-233)

251. Ord. – § I. – A special examination must precede the exercise of the office of confessor. The manner in which this examination is to be conducted is laid down in the *Ratio Studiorum Generalis*.

§ II – Brothers must take this examination no later than six months after the completion of the institutional theological curriculum of studies, or no later than six months after ordination to the priesthood if this is postponed for any just cause.

§ III – Before this examination a vote is to be taken on the moral behaviour of the candidate as mentioned in no. 318, 4°. This is required for validity.

361. (B-255; P-484)

*** 258. Const. § I – If, for a period of three years, a province does not have three convents or thirty-five voters assigned in that province and habitually living there, the Master of the Order, having consulted his council, shall declare that it no longer enjoys the right to take part in general chapters as a province and shall reduce it to a vice-province in accordance with no. 257 unless a general chapter has already been convoked.

362. (B-256; P-485)

*** [O] 270. Const. § III – Assignment outside one's own province for the purpose of study does not entitle one to a vote in elections. *The prior provincial of the province of assignment, with the previous consent of the prior provincial of the province of affiliation, determines other rights and obligations of the brother assigned by reason of study, without prejudice to no. 208.*

§ IV. As in LCO.

§ V – Every brother needs a direct assignment to a specific convent from the time of first profession, which assignment of itself has no time limit. An indirect assignment lasts only for as long as the office. *As for the duration of an indirect assignment by reason of study, that is determined by the prior provincial of the province of assignment, with the consent of the prior provincial of the province of affiliation. When the time of indirect assignment has elapsed, the direct, or simple, assignment revives.*

363. (P-486)

◆◆ 271. Ord. – § I. – *A general chapter or the Master of the Order may freely assign brothers to any province or convent.*

§ II. – A provincial chapter or a prior provincial may make assignments within their own province.

§ III. – A provincial chapter or a prior provincial may assign a brother from another province to theirs, with the consent of the provincial chapter or of the prior provincial of the provincial of affiliation, the Master of the Order having been informed.

§ IV. – A brother who in accordance with § I or § III has been assigned simply to a province, also needs to be assigned to a specific convent.

§ V. Direct or indirect assignments by reason of study must be made in writing (see Appendix no. 13).

364. (P-487)

◆◆305. Ord. – § I – A prior who is prevented by illness from properly fulfilling his duties shall resign from office if there is no hope of recovering his health within six months.

§ II. If he is unable or reluctant to indicate his willingness to resign, the subprior, having heard the views of the council, must submit the case to the prior provincial.

365. (P-488)

◆◆309. Ord. – § I – The chapter shall have a secretary, whom it elects in a single ballot. *He shall enter an account of matters discussed and resolutions in a book set aside for that purpose.*

366. (Insert. def.) (O-240)

317. Ord. – § I – Except in cases expressly indicated in the law, the votes of the council are decisive and not merely consultative.

§ II – In more urgent cases, when more members cannot be present, it suffices that two councillors and the president be present.

§ III – The bursar shall always be called to take part in council deliberations without, however, having a vote unless he is already a member of the council.

§ IV – Other officials of the convent shall be called to the council to be heard when the matters pertaining to their duties are to be treated.

367. (Insert. def.) (O-244)

330. Ord. – A prior, with the consent of his council, appoints the sacristan and the librarian. To appoint other officials he may deem useful he does not need the consent of the council. *For each official, a provincial chapter shall determine the conditions, length of service, duties and other relevant matters.*

368. (Techn.)

335. Ord. – § I, 1° as in LCO.

2° - *The prior of a convent or the superior of a house shall appoint a vicar, who in all matters should act according to the directives given him by the superior.*

369. ◆ 348. Ord. – § I – When a prior provincial ceases to hold office in accordance with no. 344 § I, the vicar of the province, as laid down in the statute of the province, will be *either the prior provincial who has himself left office or a brother who is or has been a conventual prior in the province.*

370. (Insert. def.) (O-247)

356. Ord. – When the letter of convocation has been received:

- 1° the election of delegates mentioned in no. 352 § I, 5° shall be held; and in convents having the right, the election of the socius or socii of the prior going to the chapter shall be held under the presidency of the subprior; further, an election shall be held for supplementary voters to provide for the situation referred to in no. 352 § II;
- 2° three months before the beginning of the chapter, the prior provincial shall send a report on the state of the province and the more serious problems facing it, and the officials of the province (see nos. 376-381) a report on all that is within their competence, to the capitulars and convents;
- 3° in every convent of the province a discussion shall be held under the presidency of the prior in which the reports described in 2° shall be examined, and proposals or petitions to be sent to the chapter to the benefit of the province or the convent shall be determined.

371. (Insert. def.) (O-248)

369. Ord. – § I – In more urgent cases, when more members cannot be present, it suffices that two councillors and the president be present.

§ II. – Whenever the agenda includes matters pertaining to the studium, the professors, and the students, or even to an apostolic school, the regent and the moderator of institutional studies shall always be present.

372. (P-494)

◆◆385. Ord. – § I – The regional prior has charge of the vicariate *as the vicar of the prior provincial* and has, in addition to the faculties granted by the provincial chapter, the right:

- 1° to assign brothers who are in the vicariate, without prejudice

to the rights of the prior provincial;

- 2° to confirm a conventual prior as provided for in no. 467 and to appoint superiors of houses as provided for in no. 332, unless the vicariate statute provides otherwise;
- 3° to participate by right of office in the provincial council, unless something different has been laid down in the provincial statute;
- 4° to participate by right of office in a provincial chapter (see no. 352 § I, 1°).

§ II. As in LCO.

373. (P-495)

◆◆386. Ord. – § I – In every vicariate there shall be a council whose consent or advice the regional prior must seek on more serious matters as laid down in the vicariate statute. *The acts of this council must be sent to the prior provincial after it has met.*

§ II. – The number of these councillors and the manner of their election or appointment shall be determined by the vicariate statute.

374. (Insert. def.) (O-250)

386. Ord. – § III – *When, in accordance with the prescriptions of the Book of Constitutions and Ordinations or the statute of the province or vicariate, the prior provincial has to deal with matters which concern the vicariate, he must first consult the vicariate council before consulting the provincial council. When however it is a question of confirming, appointing, or removing the regional prior, he consults only the provincial council (see no. 373, 1°).*

375. (P-496)

◆◆391. Ord. – The following may be used to foster collaboration among the provinces of a region or nation:

- 1° regular meetings between the priors provincial or different officials, such as the masters of novices, of students and of co-operator brothers, of regents, professors, promoters, etc.;

- 2° interprovincial conferences or commissions for the study of common problems;
 - 3° national or regional promoters for different activities;
 - 4° a common novitiate or studentate or common centres, according to norms to be approved by the Master of the Order;
 - 5° an agreement entered into with the consent of the Master of the Order for the erection of interprovincial convents
 - 6° an agreement between two provincial chapters or priors provincial for making direct assignations from one province to a house of the other province, with due respect for nos. 270 § I and II, 497 § I and 600, the Master of the Order, however, having been notified.
376. (P-498)
- ** [O] 407. Const. – The following are assembled and have votes in a general elective chapter:**
- § I. – In the election of the Master of the Order:
- 1°-6°: As in *LCO*.
- 7° a delegate from each province which has between *twenty* and one hundred brothers assigned in vicariates or houses of the province outside the boundaries of the province. The delegate shall be elected from and by those brothers according to the provincial statute. Furthermore, from each province which has between 101 and 200 brothers assigned in vicariates, a second delegate shall be elected, and so on.
377. (P-499)
- ** [O] 409-bis. Const. – Each province which has at least *twenty* brothers assigned in vicariates or houses of the province outside the boundaries of the province has the right to send to a general chapter of diffinitors or priors provincial one delegate elected from and by those brothers according to the statute of the**

province (see Appendix no. 16). The latter selection shall be made in such a way by the Master of the Order with his council that half of the provinces shall be represented in one chapter and the other half in the next.

378. ♦ 417. Ord. – § II – 1°-7° as in LCO.

8° *A session must be held of the voters alone if a third of the capitulars have either previously requested this, or have approved this by vote at the request of a member of the chapter.*

9° within two days after every session, the minutes as well as the approved texts verified by the revisers shall be set out in a suitable place so that they can be examined by all. If a doubt is raised about an approved text the revisers shall refer the matter to the chapter as soon as possible;

10° in the Acts the time and place of the next chapter shall be noted;

11° during the chapter the Acts shall be prepared and signed by the president, the revisers and the secretaries.

379. (Insert. def.) (O-264)

428. Ord. – § I – Other socii foster the mutual relationships of the provinces with the Master of the Order. They help him by communicating the decisions and the directives of the central government to the provinces committed to them, and by knowing the provinces well, and according to the plans of the Master of the Order, by frequenting them often, and also by visiting them in his place. However, they enjoy no jurisdiction over individual provinces.

§ II. – Their chief function is to help the provinces and to promote collaboration between those of the same region, putting into practice what is said about this in nos. 390-395. If the Master of the Order so decides, they may also be put in charge of some secretariats.

380. (B-280; P-504)

*** 429. Const. § II – The appointment of *socii* for the apostolate and for the intellectual life shall take place after the views of all priors provincial have been ascertained.

§ III – The appointment of *socii* to deal with relations between provinces and the Master of the Order shall take place after the priors provincial concerned have been consulted. When they shall have reached an agreement on the matter they shall offer three names to the Master of the Order. The Master of the Order is obliged to appoint one of the three or to ask that three other names be offered.

381. (P-505)

◆◆ 438. Ord. – It is the duty of the promoter general for nuns:

1° to assist the Master of the Order and the procurator general in matters concerning the nuns;

2° to collect information concerning them or for them and to communicate it to them and to the different provinces.

[A] § II.

382. (P-507)

◆◆ 494. Ord. – § I – *In convents where only one socius is to be elected, the election is held according to the manner indicated in no. 452.*

§ II – *In convents where several socii are to be elected (see no. 490 § II), a secret vote must be cast to determine whether they are to be elected all together or one after the other.*

§ III – *If the majority agree, there can be a discussion about the candidates before the election.*

§ IV – *The election is to take place as follows:*

1° *if the socii are elected all together, the election is to be terminated in the seventh scrutiny, in which a relative majority suffices;*

2° *if they are elected one after the other and if by the third scrutiny no candidate has been given a clear majority of votes, in the fourth and final scrutiny the candidates are reduced to two: those who have received the most votes in the previous scrutiny, with due regard for no. 450 § III.*

383. (P-508)

**** [O] 497. Const. § I** – Without prejudice to no. 491 § II and with the exception of those who in accordance with no. 352 § I and § III are already represented, the following elect a delegate to a provincial chapter, provided they enjoy active voice (see nos. 440 and 441):

1° brothers directly assigned to houses of the province;

2° unless the provincial statute stipulate otherwise, brothers directly assigned to houses or convents under the immediate jurisdiction of the Master of the Order, always excepting those who belong to the general council;

3° brothers indirectly assigned outside the province, provided they are not superiors;

4° brothers assigned to convents, for which an agreement has been reached in accordance with no. 391, 4°-6°, provided that they are not *conventual priors*.

384. ♦560. Ord. – § I – Entities of the Order are to define in their chapter legislation and/or statutes the proper procedures for financial operations (administration, safe keeping of cash and negotiable, investments (LCU 583) and banking) in a manner suitable to their local conditions.

§ II – Only in banks of assured security may money be deposited and, in accordance with no. 555, it must be deposited in the name of the respective moral person or institute to which it belongs.

§ III – The bank must be chosen by the administrator himself with the consent of the superior.

385. (Insert. def.) (O-282)

563 Ord. – § I – Each month, the conventual bursar must give an account to the council of all revenues and expenses, debits and credits.

§ II – Each year, the superior of a house, the conventual prior, the vicar provincial, and the regional prior must send to the prior provincial an accurate and complete account, prepared by the bursar. It must include a budget for the following year, prepared after consultation with the conventual chapter – if the provincial chapter shall have so determined – and approved by the council of the convent or the vicariate. Copies must be kept in the files of the respective bursar.

386. (P-512)

◆◆567. Ord. – § I – Each year, the prior provincial, the vice-provincial, the vicar general and the heads of institutions in receipt of financial help from the Order must within five months after the end of each financial year send their economic reports directly to the Master of the Order.

387. (P-513)

◆◆ 575 Ord. – § I: As in LCO.

§ II – With regard to the expenses of a general chapter, the following must be kept in mind:

1° travelling expenses are to be met by what is known as the 'peraequatio' method, whereby each person pays an equal share of the expenses.

2° lodgings and general expenses for a chapter must be shared proportionately by the general curia and by each province, in such a way that equity and proportion are observed, the details to be determined by the chapter itself.

3° six months before the convocation of a general chapter, the bursar of the Order and the bursar of the convent where the chapter is to be held must prepare a budget of the chapter

expenses to be submitted to the Master of the Order with his council. Afterwards, this must be sent to each province for consultation.

Declarations

388. *In our laws everywhere the word 'assistant' of the Master of the Order is found, it is changed to 'socius' of the Master of the Order.*

389. **Declaration with respect to LCO 391, 6°** (cf. Providence, 460, 496, 508)

The form of assignation

A direct assignation with all rights and obligations is concerned, unless it is expressly provided otherwise (cf. LCO 270) by virtue of a particular delegation of a General Chapter (cf. LCO 271 § 1).

The procedure to be followed:

1. *Consent between two provincial chapters or two priors provincial is necessary. Careful attention is to be given in this agreement to LCO 600.*
2. *The prior provincial of the province to which the convent belongs gives the assignation. It is expressly declared that the assignation is made by force of LCO 391, 6°, with the consent of N.N. the prior provincial of the province in which the brother is assigned.*
3. *It is necessary to send to the Master of the Order a copy of the agreement and the document of assignation.*

The rights and obligations of the brother assigned:

1. *With respect to the convent to which the brother is assigned*
 - a. *he has active and passive voice in the convent of assignation*
 - b. *nevertheless, according to the mind of the General Chapter celebrated at Providence, he does not have active and passive voice with respect to the election of the socius or socii of the prior for a provincial chapter (LCO 491 § 1); or of the delegate*

for a chapter of the province in which the convent of his assignation belongs (LCO 49 § I, 1°).

- c. therefore a brother assigned according to LCO 391, 6° is not counted as a vocal for the election of the socius or socii of a prior going to a provincial chapter of the province to which the convent of his assignation belongs (LCO 497).*
- 2. With respect to the province of his assignation, a brother maintains active and passive voice in the election of a delegate going to a provincial chapter of his province of assignation, according to the norm of LCO 497 § I, 4° (cf. Providence 508).*

This Declaration is to be inserted in Appendix 16 of the *Liber Constitutionum et Ordinationum*.

APPRECIATION

390. The General Chapter of Diffinitors assembled in Kraków expresses its gratitude to all who either individually or collectively devoted their efforts to the preparation and successful outcome of the Chapter, namely:

- to the Province of Poland for its kind hospitality and for its appropriate and ordered arrangements;
- to the community of the Convent of the Holy Trinity in Kraków, which received the Chapter fraternally;
- to the brothers and sisters who carefully and diligently devoted their efforts to the Chapter: to the members of the secretariat, to all appointed to simultaneous translation and to the translation of texts, to those who prepared the liturgical celebrations, to those who prepared the minutes, and all others who according to their particular function greatly assisted the Chapter.

LOCATION OF THE NEXT GENERAL CHAPTER

391. We declare the next General Chapter of Provincials will be celebrated in the Convent of St Dominic, Santafé de Bogotá, of the Province of St Louis Bertrand in Colombia, from the 17th day of July to the 8th day of August in the year 2007.

SUFFRAGES FOR THE LIVING

392. For Pope John Paul II, Supreme Pastor of the Church and most benevolent benefactor of our Order, each province shall celebrate one Mass.

For fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, Master of the Order, each province shall celebrate one Mass.

For the entire episcopal order, for the socii of the Master of the

Order, for the Procurator General of the Order, for our benefactors and for the well-being of our entire Order of Preachers, each province shall celebrate one Mass.

SUFFRAGES FOR THE DEAD

393. For the souls of Pope Paul VI and Pope John Paul I, the most recently deceased Supreme Pontiffs, each province shall celebrate one Mass.

For the soul of fr Damian Byrne, the most recently deceased Master of the Order, and for the souls of all the brothers and sisters of the Order who have died since the last general chapter; on this occasion only each province shall celebrate one solemn Mass.

When these prescribed suffrages, for either the living or the dead are to be fulfilled, they should be announced publicly and in sufficient time, so that the brethren of the convent where the suffrages are to be fulfilled can participate in the Mass celebrated for this intention.

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These are the Acts of the General Chapter of Diffinitors, celebrated in Kraków (Poland) in the Convent of the Holy Trinity from the 28th day of the month of July until the 17th day of the month of August 2004. To the original text and to the printed copies of these Acts sealed with the seal of the Master of the Order the same esteem should be shown.

We command the superiors of every province, convent and house to have the same Acts read and published as soon as possible in every convent and house subject to them, and to ensure that they are carefully observed by all.

*In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Given at Kraków, in the Convent of the Holy Trinity, on the Solemnity of
St Hyacinth, on the 17th day of the month of August in the year 2004.*

Seal

fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, O.P.
Master of the Order

fr René-Vincent du Grandlaunay, O.P.
Diffinitor of the Vicariate in the Arabic World
of the Province of France

fr Pablo Carlos Sicouly, O.P.
Diffinitor of the Province of St Augustine in Argentina

fr Richard Woods, O.P.
Diffinitor of the Province of St Albert the Great in USA

fr Grzegorz Chzanowski, O.P.
Secretary General of the Chapter

fr Mirosław Ostrowski, O.P.
Vice-Secretary

fr Paweł Trzopek, O.P.
Vice-Secretary

APPENDIX I
RELATIO DE STATU ORDINIS

fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, O.P.

Master of the Order

In accordance with LCO 417 § II, 3° I present my *relatio de statu Ordinis* to the General Chapter of Diffinitors assembled in Kraków (Poland) beginning on 28 July 2004.

I. SOME PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

1. *Time flies!* (and so do I, keeping in mind that trips have occupied two thirds of my agenda in these first three years). This is the first idea that comes to mind as I begin this enterprise of presenting a report on the state of the Order (2001-2004). First, allow me some reflections which might help the individual reader!
2. First of all, I consider it a *privilege* to have been able to collaborate with fr Timothy Radcliffe during his last four years of service to the Order as Master. This taught me much from various perspectives, and helped me greatly in the initial exercise of the ministry that the brethren entrusted to me in Providence on 14 July 2001. That day we observed the anniversary of the death of fr Vincent de Couesnongle († 1992) whom I remember very well since I made my first profession in the Order to him.
3. As I begin this *relatio*, I ask myself: how should I offer an overview, as penetrating and exhaustive as possible, on *the life and mission of the Order in these three years*? Even though the *relatio* is not a report on everything that has happened in that time, it is true that many images of what has happened in these three years come to mind at this very moment. Could we ever forget the horror of 11 September 2001? Are not the images of

our conventual church in Bahawalpur after the massacre of Christians on 28 October of this year engraved in our memory? How important the presence of our Dominican sisters in the poorest neighbourhoods of Kinshasa! Can we relegate to the past the history of the people who live in Campodos in the Diocese of Tibú (Colombia) in the parish where our Dominican brothers and sisters continue preaching the Gospel in a situation where war shows no mercy, not even to the poorest? How can we forget the celebration of the Word at the end of September 2002 in the garden of the United Nations in New York, next to the image of fr Francisco de Victoria at the conclusion of the fast for peace, made by some brothers and sisters under the title *There must be Another Way*? How can we forget the meetings with our brothers and sisters in Iraq during the visit in October 2002 while they were expecting the worst? Does not what has since occurred – and what we still contemplate – confirm the prophetic intuitions of so many of St Dominic's sons and daughters who live and preach in these lands?

4. Each year, *Christmas messages and chronicles of trips* try to portray in summary these heartfelt encounters, mere outlines of 'that ... which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon and touched with our hands ...' (1 Jn 1:1).¹ For taking the pulse of the life and mission of the Order, *the letters concluding the canonical visitations* are also significant. These express in some way our most important challenges, joys and hopes, sorrows and concerns.
5. *How should one define the mission of the Master of the Order?* I will not transcribe here an extract from Blessed Humbert's *De officiis Ordinis* as was done in various official editions of our

¹ Cf. *IDI* nos. 398 (2001), 407 (2002) & 417 (2003). The chronicles of trips published in *IDI* also serve to describe the life and mission of the Order in various parts of the world. These chronicles are dedicated in a particular way to our contemplatives. It is they who have sustained with their prayer and sacrifices the preaching of the sons and daughters of St Dominic since 1206.

Constitutions.² Nor shall I reproduce a series of texts of the *Liber Constitutionum et Ordinationum* and of the General Chapters which refer to this theme. In fact, the description of the obligations, duties and rights of the Master of the Order is summarized well in the *Index Analytico – Alphabeticus* of the *Liber Constitutionum et Ordinationum*.³ Nevertheless, during these three years, I have discovered that the principle task of the Master is to confirm the brothers and sisters in their vocation of developing the life and mission of the Order, wherever obedience takes them. This means to comfort those who are suffering (2 Cor 1:4), to reconcile those who are in conflict (cf. 2 Cor 5:16-20), to convince, rebuke, exhort with untiring patience and to teach enthusiastically (cf. 2 Tim 4:2).

6. Without doubt, this service extends to the whole Order, understood as Family, according to our tradition,⁴ as interpreted and updated in General Chapters, especially since 1968.⁵ It is a ministry that is carried out in two spheres or at two levels which constantly alternate without interruption: the fraternal and canonical visits to our communities scattered throughout the whole world and the work carried out in the General Curia in the Convent of Santa Sabina (Rome). This is why the tasks are not centred solely in the Master. The members of the General Council, the Promoters General (some of them now women), the officials, friars, sisters, lay women and all the members of the community of Santa Sabina collaborate in this mission. Therefore, keeping in mind that this *relatio* is directed particularly to the friars who are Diffinitors, it is important to

² See *Liber de instructione officialium Ordinis Fratrum Praedicatorum in Constitutiones Fratrum Ordinis Praedicatorum*, ed. V. Bandello (1505) and ed. A. Cloche (1690).

³ *Liber Constitutionum et Ordinationum* (ed. 1998).

⁴ See Buenaventura García de Paredes, O.P., *Adnectenda Epistolae Patris Generalis specialis sectio de monialibus ac sororibus Ordinis nostri* (25 December 1926) in *Analecta* 18 (1927): 122-127 and Aniceto Fernández, O.P., *Litterae ad moniales O.P. & Litterae ad sorores OP* (12 November 1968) in *Analecta* 39 (1969): 23-28.

⁵ LCO 1 § IX & 141. *Acta Capituli Generalis (ACG) Tallaght* (1971) no. 122; *ACG Madonna dell'Arco* (1974) nos. 224-226 & 234; *ACG Quezon City* (1977) nos. 65, 70 & 72; *ACG Walberberg* (1980) no. 92; *ACG Bologna* (1998) nos. 146-148; *ACG Providence* (2001) nos. 416-421.

read it, in a supplementary and complementary way, with the other reports that the *socii* (assistants) and other officials have presented during the preparation for the Chapter.

7. I intend to present in a general, comprehensive and wide-ranging way the beauty of the life and mission of the Order throughout the world. I repeat, I want to be *an echo of the joys and hopes, sorrows and anxieties of St Dominic's disciples*. It is true that there are regions of light and darkness, but the power of Christ is made manifest through our weakness (cf. 2 Cor 12:9). I am presenting this *relatio* according to themes which more or less coincide with the Chapter Commissions, prepared with the General Council for the work of the Chapter.⁶ There is no special commission for the Dominican Family. This does not mean that this reality has been cast aside. On the contrary, it is presumed! As the years pass, strengthening the processes of collaboration and integration through general and regional organizations, important yet insufficient progress has been made by working together as brothers and sisters, all sons and daughters of St Dominic. From this perspective, I urge you to read the Reports of the Promoters General for the Nuns, for Justice and Peace, for the Dominican Family, for the Laity, for the Dominican Youth Movement (IDYM) and for Dominican Volunteers International (DVI).⁷

II. PREACHING

8. Our Order 'is known to have been established, from the beginning, specifically for preaching and the salvation of souls.'⁸ In November 2002 I was invited to present to the 61st *Semester Assembly of the Union of Superiors General* a brief address entitled

⁶ Cf. LCO 415 § V.

⁷ Cf. Documents sent to the Chapter [Code: B, 1-6 respectively].

⁸ LCO 1 § II, citing the Prologue of the Primitive Constitutions.

*Proclaiming the Gospel in the Order of Preachers.*⁹ The organizers wanted it to summarize the unique character of our evangelizing mission in the world today. This gave me the opportunity to examine the theme of *preaching* in the Acts of the General Chapters since the Chapter of Diffinitors celebrated in Quezon City in 1977 (the Chapter which identified the celebrated 'priorities of the Order') up to the most recent Elective Chapter of Providence. I will refer to this address which aims to bring together the chapters' most important points of reflection on this theme, and as such can benefit our own reflections.

9. In recent years (I am not referring only to the last three), we, the sons and daughters of St Dominic, have been discovering to our increasing advantage the unique character and the particular challenges of our vocation: *the grace of Preaching*. In many places, I realize that Dominican women are the ones meditating and reflecting most on this essential aspect of our vocation. In this way, they help us friars to understand and integrate it more profoundly. Many lay fraternities also instil in their members this fundamental mission of the Order (I am thinking at this moment of the Fraternity of Bamenda, born in the Monastery of Bambui in Cameroon, where the friars are not present). In many monasteries, our sisters are ever more conscious of the apostolic roots of their vocation as nuns of the Order of Preachers, faithful to their contemplative mission in the Church.
10. The Chapter of Bologna in 1998 considered the importance of *the preaching of the brothers and sisters of the Order* and asked the Master of the Order to establish a commission of theologians, brothers and sisters of the Order to examine, among other aspects, the charism of preaching.¹⁰ The Chapter of Providence

⁹ Cf. USG 61° *Contentus Semestralis, Laicos y Religiosos juntos ante los desafíos del III Milenio* (2002): 83-92. This text should be added as an Appendix to this *relatio* and to the Acts of the General Chapter of Kraków given that it summarizes and collects texts from various General Chapters.

¹⁰ ACC Bologna (1998) no. 42.

in 2001 commended the Socii for the Intellectual Life and for the Apostolic Life to continue the study of the theme with the help of experts from different parts of the world.¹¹ In the General Council, we believed that a task such as this – given its importance for the whole Order – could not be left exclusively to eventual ‘decisions’ or ‘definitions’ of general chapters of the friars.

11. We believe that *the reflection and study of preaching must take place at various levels, in various spheres, faithful to the principle of subsidiarity*. As such, attempts were made to promote this reflection in the heart of various branches of the Order, at various levels (general and regional) and in varied ways (meetings, assemblies, seminars, etc.).
12. Little by little, in recent years, *the Dominican Family, faithful to the spirit of St Dominic, has been organizing itself in different structures* which facilitate reflection and study at various levels and further our mission: regional structures of the friars (for example: CIDALC, IEOP, IAOP, etc.); Dominican Sisters International (DSI) and its regional organizations (CODALC, etc.); the International Commission of the Nuns which through its bulletin, *Moniales*, produces a very important tool of communication; the International Council of the Lay Dominican Fraternities (ICLDF) and the regional secretariats that also have been established: the secretariat of the Dominican Youth Movement (IDYM) and Dominican Volunteers International (DVI). Finally, a novelty for the whole Dominican Family of the region: the ‘Asia-Pacific Region Leadership Conference’ that gathers and convokes representatives of all the branches of the Family.
13. Any discussion in the Order on the preaching which is our mission is a challenging task. In these three years, I must stress that the most important thing I have learned is that in those

¹¹ ACG Providence (2001) no. 435.

places where *projects of collaboration between brothers and sisters of the different branches of the Family* are developed, the Order has greater vitality and presence. Such collaboration opens up new and unexpected possibilities for our preaching.

14. I suggest that the capitulars continue *to promote projects of collaboration* in continuity with the last three general chapters. This needs to be done at two levels: collaboration between different entities of the friars and collaboration at the level of the Dominican Family in various places, countries and regions. Two significant examples are the Aquinas Institute in St Louis (USA), an academic model, and the mission of the friars and sisters in Campodos, Tibú (Colombia), a missionary presence among the poor who are also victims of appalling violence.
15. Decisions about our preaching or mission, or our presence in certain places, are often resolved with reference to a merely numerical criterion (the number of brothers we have). Sometimes this is the only consideration that prompts us to close houses, to reduce convents to houses or to establish an autonomous community as a filial house. On many occasions our presence in places which are important according to the priorities indicated by general (or provincial) chapters is threatened. As a consequence our presence in certain places is favored simply because 'we have always been there' or 'we have more brothers there.' We appeal to 'tradition' perhaps because we are afraid to take a risk. In many provincial chapters the following situation is not unknown: to all the brothers it seems necessary *to redistribute our presence* in the territory of our province; to many, not without apprehension and anxiety, it seems that there are *presences that could or should disappear* to enable us to be present elsewhere; to very few, if to any at all, does it ever seem that the community in which they live should be 'suppressed' or 'relocated.'
16. The *Internet* stands out among the 'new places of preaching.'

The General Chapter of Bologna asked the Master of the Order to name a friar to help in the development and coordination of this mission.¹² The pages dedicated to preaching, aids for homilies and many other resources and initiatives (the Provinces of Canada, Flanders, Spain, France, Colombia and others) have gradually multiplied. In fact, each province has its own page and through the website of the Order, one can gain access to almost all of them. In fact, there is now a friar responsible for the website of the Order, who is not a member of the General Curia, and so there is no Promoter for the Internet.

III. INTELLECTUAL LIFE & PREACHING

17. The General Chapter of Providence in 2001 offered us a 'precise and precious' text on the importance of study, a text which continues to be an important source of inspiration, *Misericordia veritatis*.
18. In many provinces the importance and care of the *Centres of Studies* is quite evident. This is not without sacrifices, both in personnel and finance. Many entities have requested 'affiliation' of their centres to other Faculties of Theology of the Order in order to grant academic degrees in accord with ecclesiastical laws, e.g., the Centre in Ibadan (Nigeria), the Centre in Oxford (England) and the Centre in Ho Chi Minh (Vietnam).
19. *Many provinces are also developing their centres, by improving their premises or trying to find a more appropriate site, mindful of a growing number of students. This is true of our Centres of Studies in the Provinces of St Joseph, the Holy Name and St Albert the Great (USA).*
20. In those provinces which have experienced a decline in vocations or perhaps signs of stagnation for various reasons, there are *new efforts towards renewal of the intellectual life and the*

¹² Cf. ACG Bologna (1998) no. 77.

provision of new and attractive proposals, e.g., Salamanca in the Spanish Province, Tallaght and Limerick in the Irish Province, and the projected Faculty of Theology in Bogotá in the Province of Colombia.

21. Provinces which for the moment lack a sufficient number of students and/or professors to have a proper centre of studies *are offering elements of our doctrinal tradition during initial studies, which the friars conduct in other centres, in a supplementary and original way* (the Provinces of Perú, Ireland and Croatia).
22. In some provinces, even with few resources, there is a desire to *continue developing the academic centres that they have* (the Provinces of Canada and Argentina). In other provinces, as mentioned above, there are important signs of development and expansion (the Provinces of Vietnam and Nigeria). Other centres of study are already being planned for the future (e.g., the Ivory Coast for French-speaking Africa).
23. Various provinces have developed programs of *distance learning through the Internet* (*DOMUNI* in the Toulouse Province, the Province of Spain, the Universidad de Santo Tomás in the Province of Colombia). There are projects of collaboration between provinces of the same region in the area of studies with a single interprovincial *Ratio Studiorum* (the Provinces of Italy and the Provinces of the Iberian Peninsula).
24. In many entities, there is serious academic work being done not only in the area of the *formation of their own students, but also in the area of the formation of non-Dominican students*, through the study of questions that go beyond programmes of theological initiation (Chile, Montreal in Canada, Baghdad in Iraq – although this year the classes have been suspended, St Louis in the Province of Saint Albert the Great, Berlin in Germany, and Holland). Priorities for the Order such as inter-religious dialogue (Cairo in Egypt, Istanbul in Turkey, Manila in the

Philippines and Multan in Pakistan) or the *theological understanding of diverse social and economic aspects* (Instituto Pedro de Córdoba in Santiago in Chile and the Faculty of Social Sciences in the Angelicum) are gaining acceptance as areas of our intellectual life.

25. An increase in new vocations also invites us to renew *the body of professors and the academic life*. In some entities, there is a serious effort to do this, e.g., the Province of St Joseph (USA), the Provinces of France and Toulouse, and although the number of new candidates is fewer elsewhere, they are thinking of the future (Australia and Slovakia). Nevertheless, in other provinces the lack of any provincial policy in this area is evident.
26. In various centres of studies of the Order, there are positive signs. Gradually *there is a movement from discouragement to new initiatives*. The Angelicum is studying a Strategic Plan for the future. In Fribourg, the convention with the civil and ecclesiastical authorities has been renewed. The *École biblique* in Jerusalem is diligently working on a new project, *La Bible en ses traditions*. The Leonine Commission has moved to the Convent of Saint-Jacques (Paris) to develop a higher 'profile,' in order to attract more young people interested in the critical edition of the works of St Thomas Aquinas, and to take advantage of the excellent conventual library.¹³ In Addis Ababa a new cultural project for the Order has been born. I will briefly take up some of these themes again later.
27. Various efforts in *fund-raising for some selected academic projects* are underway through the International Dominican Foundation (IDF). Other necessities might possibly be included in the future.
28. On one hand, we are seen as those who must offer a valuable

¹³ To provide this arrangement with formal status, two protocols were adopted: one with the Province of France and the other with the Convent of Saint-Jacques. These protocols regulate various matters, in particular, the rights and obligations of the members of the Leonine Commission with respect to the community of assignation, to their provinces of affiliation, etc.

and precious intellectual contribution in the life of the Church – and in fact, some projects in this field have been initiated, e.g., Sri Lanka and Addis Ababa. On the other hand, there are *difficulties in relation to degrees or affiliation of centres of study to ecclesiastical faculties*. In many cases ecclesiastical degrees are limited to seminarians. This complicates the situation since it makes it more difficult to count on a higher number of students, especially those who being members of other branches of the Dominican Family would be very interested in studying in one of our centres. This same lack of students makes it more difficult when it comes to requesting ‘affiliation’ of our centres.

29. *Where can we expand?* It is important that the Order have different *centres of studies* in each region and in the most common languages to form our youth in the Dominican tradition. At present, there is no centre of studies in French-speaking Africa (although, one is being planned in Yamoussokro). Neither do we have a centre of studies in the German region in Europe (as of yet, there are no plans to establish one in the future). There is a Portuguese Dominican Centre in Brazil, but not yet in Europe or Africa, even though the centre of studies in Portugal as such exists, and in Angola the *Mosaiko* Cultural Centre offers hope for the future.
30. The *Regent of Studies* in each entity should be the primary advocate of the intellectual life, not only in the field of his own ministry of teaching or research, but also as someone who plans, accompanies and shows his personal interest in those who are doing complementary studies, ensuring the support necessary so that these brothers do not feel alone, become isolated from the life of their Province or prone to individualism or a lack of enthusiasm for what they are doing. In various provinces, this aspect of the role of the regent is not considered. The General Chapter could offer an opportune word on this subject.

31. *The Dominican intellectual vocation needs to be promoted.* Evangelization in the intellectual field is a service to the Church and the world and is the vocation to which we have been specially called. This ministry bears fruit only in the long term: its fruit is not immediately visible. Various entities, perhaps, are occupied with survival or the creation of indispensable structures – especially the younger entities – and so do not yet devote sufficient attention to the preparation and organization of the academic life. Other entities are mainly focused on pastoral work, and perhaps consider everything that concerns the intellect as something of a ‘private hobby’ for a few eccentrics or a pastime, and not part of the very mission of the entity. Other entities, which have important academic institutes, dedicate great efforts to filling administrative and executive posts. As a result, they run the risk of not investing sufficient energy in academic work (perhaps this is the case in the Provinces of the Philippines and Colombia, both of which have very important universities). Finally, in many provinces after institutional studies the friars favour pastoral activity to such an extent that sometimes they seldom or never study.
32. Provinces have to ask themselves *what fields of research they have not developed sufficiently and what fields of research need to be promoted.* In many entities, it might be necessary to send a certain number of friars to study philosophy. In others, the number of philosophers might be sufficient but there might not be a sufficient number of theologians. Others, in spite of having vocations might not for example have friars specialized in Canon Law, etc.
33. With reference to *International Centres of Studies*, many of which are under the immediate jurisdiction of the Master of the Order,¹⁴ they invariably need the cooperation of the provinces.

¹⁴ Reference will subsequently be made in the *relatio* to the houses under the immediate jurisdiction of the Master of the Order.

Many provinces, it must be recognized, respond generously to the requests of the Master while other provinces resist them and fail to understand that these centres are 'ours'! The friars make their profession to the Master of the Order, even if they are formed by the entities – perhaps for this reason some do not respond generously to our requests. The provinces that do not have sufficient means are sometimes the most generous. A spirit of itinerancy, docility and co-responsibility for the most pressing needs of the Order needs to be developed. It is not always possible to plan in advance for the needs that will arise. One cannot promise a young friar that he will necessarily occupy a post as a professor in an important international institution. What is needed is a spirit of responsibility and hope which enables the friars and communities to welcome these unexpected requests and to respond with generosity, even when the absence of a qualified friar, who has been called to serve in another place, is disagreeable.

34. In some of our centres, *friars with a specific and high degree of specialization in very particular fields are needed*. Normally, it would be very difficult to challenge a young friar to enter into such a field, one in which he has perhaps never expressed any interest. Nevertheless, it is important that regents be attentive to such necessities and that when a province has a brother who could specialize in a rather unusual area, one not necessary for his own province, the brother be encouraged and accompanied. Often, thanks to other brothers we discover possibilities different from those we ourselves imagine or prefer. To illustrate this point, I want to cite the example of fr Marie-Humbert Vicaire. While working on his Lectorate, fr Marie-Dominique Chenu, the regent of studies of his province, put the young friar under the direction of fr Pierre Mandonnet. After some initial work in the field of mediaeval philosophy, Mandonnet inspired his disciple to adopt forever that which became the most

important occupation of his Dominican existence: the study of the life of St Dominic.¹⁵ How greatly we can benefit from the insights of our brothers!

35. Where shall we find biblical archeologists? Where shall we find specialists in mediaeval, Latin or even Islamic Paleography? Do we have provinces which can offer specialists in ecumenical dialogue with the Greek Orthodox? Is preparation in the sphere of social and economic ethics or bioethics considered a possibility by our younger brethren? How many brothers do we have capable of translating theological works into Chinese? One particular province now has a young novice who is a specialist in African languages! Does the formation that is provided in a province take into account only the needs of that province or are the needs of the Order as a whole also considered?
36. I would refer you to the report of the Socius for the Intellectual Life¹⁶ for further elaboration, and end with a *renewed invitation to a broader vision and magnanimity* necessary for the intellectual mission of the Order, the mission of the Order! In some very difficult times, including the period when the number of friars reached its historical low at the beginning of the 20th century, various provinces zealously wished to preserve their special character. In this regard, fr Marie-Joseph Lagrange wrote: 'Nothing will be done (to reform the studies of the Order) until all objections proceeding from the 'spirit of the provinces' cease, and the number of *studia generalia* is reduced to a strict minimum. The 'spirit of the provinces' is mentioned neither in the Constitutions nor in any life of our saints, and is the principle obstacle that has impeded the serious development of the *studia*.'¹⁷

¹⁵ See *Analecta* (1993): 309.

¹⁶ Documents sent to the General Chapter [Code A.2].

¹⁷ *Votum* of fr Marie Joseph Lagrange, O.P., sent in writing in 1907 to the Commission for Studies charged with elaborating the *ratio studiorum*. Cf. Bernard Montagnes, 'Perfil humano y espiritual del P. Lagrange' in *Teología Espiritual* 131 (2000): 150.

IV. COMMON LIFE

37. *The common life continues to be the strength of the Order and one of its most prized gifts.* Most of the young people who wish to become members of the Order, at least in the West, point out this aspect of our life as one of the principle motives of their joining. Even the fact that some leave as a result of difficulties in this regard proves the importance of our fraternal life in community.
38. *There is an important relationship between good government, which functions according to the *Liber Constitutionum et Ordinationum* (even if some decisions are not perfect!) and a good atmosphere in the local or provincial community.* Our government must be communitarian,¹⁸ superiors accepting their responsibilities. Otherwise, we would lose our 'salt,' our soul, and would be missing something in our way of life, our way of being Dominican. Our way of life is embodied in our style of government which presupposes listening, dialogue, acceptance of responsibility, fraternal cooperation, etc.¹⁹ Lack of commitment to community, and individualism, etc., can often be explained by faults in government and vice-versa.
39. *Even though general chapters insist on the so-called Community Project,²⁰ few communities take the time necessary to reflect on the various aspects of community life, their apostolates, etc. Wherever this effort is made, an improvement in the quality of the common life is seen.²¹*
40. *In this context, I stress the importance of conventual chapters and other meetings provided for in our Constitutions²² where more than*

¹⁸ Cf. LCO 1 § VII.

¹⁹ Cf. LCO 20.

²⁰ Cf. ACG Walberberg (1980) nos. 17 C & 28; ACG Oakland (1989) nos. 38 & 70-71; ACG México (1992) nos. 36, 3.3.3, 39 & 40; ACG Caleruega (1995) no. 44; ACG Bologna (1998) no. 127; ACG Providence (2001) nos. 272-275.

²¹ Cf. LCO 6.

²² Cf. LCO 7 §§ I-II, 40, 307, 311 § 1 1° & 3°, 312 § I and ACG Providence (2001) no. 274.

routine business is discussed. A definite and fixed time is needed for these meetings. Meal times do not offer an adequate venue to treat these matters (and not just because there are sometimes invited guests or we dine in the kitchen). The allocation of time and an adequate place provide the necessary climate to examine, determine and approve that which concerns everyone.

41. With regard to the common life, it is important to discover *the role of the prior*, who is neither responsible for everything, nor simply a social administrator – nor head nurse! With reference to the young, especially in their first assignation, his responsibility of welcoming and accompanying them is vital.²³
42. *The liturgy is a fundamental point in our life.* Reading fr Yves-Marie Congar's *Journal d'un théologien* I was impressed to realize how important it was for him, especially in the most difficult moments of his life, to pray the psalms in community, independently of personal preferences concerning the manner of recitation.
43. *The way we celebrate the liturgy* also most certainly reveals the state of the community. Sometimes the celebration of the liturgy is minimal because of the range of other commitments. Of course, the times of prayer must be balanced with our daily work, yet these times of prayer are the moments that strengthen the spiritual life of the community. Does the liturgy spiritually nourish us, or is it performed as a duty in a minimal time in order to fulfill an obligation? This is certainly a delicate subject and touches an intimate fibre in each one of us – it touches our very relationship with God – but each and every community must discuss this subject and have the courage to make any necessary changes. Fr Timothy Radcliffe always insisted on common prayer, our presence in the conventual church, as a sign of the 'visibility' of our life and its relationship with the promotion of vocations.

²³ Cf. ACG Bologna (1998) no. 97.

44. The texts of the Chapter of Providence on *our contemplative life* are very rich and relevant. Have we applied them to the concrete life of the friars? Have we been able to discuss them in community? In the light of visits to various communities, this is not so evident. It is normal and – I would say – very Dominican that there be a certain tension between apostolic activity and the contemplative life, but do we not sacrifice too often and almost habitually the contemplative life for the ‘effectiveness’ of the active life?
45. With regard to the liturgical life of the Order, *the Liturgical Commission of the Order* has been renewed in some of its members and is working seriously and competently on the conservation of the rich patrimony of our liturgical tradition, renewing it always in conformity with the spirit of Vatican Council II and that of the Order.²⁴
46. The last two general chapters dedicated a lot of time in particular to *the vocation and mission of the co-operator brother*.²⁵ The Chapter of Providence ordered the Master of the Order to establish a commission of experts to prepare a text with proposals of possible changes to our Constitutions. This text was intended for examination at the subsequent general chapter.²⁶ The Commission was established and has presented its report which is at the disposal of the capitulars.²⁷ This is not the place for a detailed analysis: that is the work of the chapter. Nevertheless, in the light of the report and of canonical visitations, I think that we must discern and evaluate more effectively *the manner of exercising the priestly ministry in the Order* before we automatically think of a ‘crisis in the vocation

²⁴ The Commission has also presented its report to the Chapter. Documents sent to the Chapter [Code B. 7].

²⁵ ACG Bologna (1998) nos. 135-145; ACG Providence (2001) nos. 284- 290.

²⁶ ACG Providence (2001) no. 289.

²⁷ Documents sent to the Chapter [Code C. 4]. Two appendices are included with the report. Appendix I contains the questionnaire sent to the whole Order, various statistics and the responses to the questionnaire. Appendix II contains a list of the ‘Study Documents’ relating to different subjects as requested by the members of the Commission.

of the co-operator brother.' *There is no parental relationship of 'father/son' among the friars of the Order of Preachers. We are all brothers in the same profession.* This is our only and most beautiful, distinguished, noble and compelling title! In this context, it is important to ask ourselves how we promote and understand the Dominican vocation of a friar as a religious, priest or co-operator.

V. VOCATIONS & FORMATION

47. With joy I can say that *the Order is being blessed with abundant vocations.* In general, we have a good number of vocations in Africa, Latin America and the Asia-Pacific region, where approximately one fifth of the professed friars are in formation. In some places we have more vocations (Vietnam, the Philippines, Poland, Colombia, India and Nigeria) and few in others (Italy, Germany, Taiwan, and the Caribbean). Surprisingly, we have a good number of vocations in France and the United States. We are also receiving vocations again in the south of Belgium, in Australia, Japan and Canada. We can also include the candidates in Indonesia, Myanmar, Papua New Guinea, the Sudan and Singapore.
48. These vocations are a sign of the attraction and vitality of our Dominican charism. In my meetings with postulants and novices, when I ask them why they decided to join us, they invariably mention one or two values of our vocation as their principle motivation: *our fraternal life, common prayer, our intellectual tradition, the life of preaching.*
49. Sometimes I actually worry that we consider having vocations more as an absolute sign of the vitality of a province than as *a pure gift from God.* Similarly, the lack of vocations is sometimes interpreted simply as a clear sign of a lack of life. Consequently, one detects in some cases a certain successfulness in entities that can feel secure because they are expecting a good number

of novices 'for next year.' On the other hand, a certain disillusionment affects those who have none. In such a delicate matter, full of the Mystery of God and where situations are as varied as they are complex, it sometimes seems that we foster a theology of reward and punishment that must 'see' and 'touch' the signs of the blessing of God (long life, riches, descendants) and of his curse (the lack of any of these signs). There are places in which we might never have many vocations, perhaps only a few or perhaps none. Could we imagine the Order deciding to end our presence in Cairo or Jerusalem because there are no young people there who wish to be friars? The Order is not a business that invests personnel and then, on not getting recruits in the areas where it is present, withdraws in search of new markets. In some provinces, with very few vocations, the brothers ask for the statistics of other provinces. They look around wondering why they have no new vocations and often lay the blame on 'the youth of today' who do not knock on the doors of our convents. I usually ask them how many friars there are in their entity. When they answer with an approximate number, according to the directory of that year, I tell them: 'then you have this number of vocations and as such, you have to care for them, encourage them, promote them' (the care of the vocations that we already have is the best promotion of vocations vis-à-vis those who want to dedicate their lives to the preaching of the Gospel).

50. Speaking of *the promotion of vocations*, what are the factors that contribute to the fruitful promotion of vocations? The testimony of the life of the brethren, the visibility of our apostolic life in specific places and the confidence that each brother has in inviting others to join us! I have also seen that where a *full-time vocations promoter* has been appointed, there are better chances of receiving candidates to the Order. It is not that the work of

the promoter attracts vocations. The Holy Spirit always blows, inspires, calls ... and raises up friars preachers. We must know how to prepare the soil! We must make ourselves instruments of this inspiration! We must make ourselves visible!

51. *The candidates we receive are men of these times – our times.* Certainly, they are very different from the candidates of the recent or distant past. These young, and not so young, people come from their own cultural context, with new gifts, experiences, questions and hopes. They also bring their weaknesses, doubts, distress and suffering. As I have said, it is becoming increasingly common that many candidates come to the Order more advanced in age. Many have finished university studies or have a previous academic preparation or have worked for some period of time. Therefore, they arrive with various life experiences, new questions and different aspirations! All of this invites us to form our candidates in the best possible way. To form our candidates as preachers for the contemporary world is a great challenge for us to keep in mind.
52. *What are the principle challenges in formation?* In general, formation is carried out satisfactorily in the Order. Many entities have their own *Ratio Formationis Particularis*. Some have not yet formulated one. This does not have to become a bureaucratic requirement – much less a canonical one. Formulating a *ratio* helps us to comprehend the question that fr Vincent de Couesnongle and fr Damian Byrne always put to themselves and to the provinces: *Why do we want vocations?* If all we want to do is simply replace those who die or who leave or who no longer make a significant contribution, we have no need of a new *ratio* and we can still make do with the response we gave to the world and its demands in the past.
53. *The formation of formators* continues to be a fundamental question for formation. This subject was examined at the General Chapter

in Bologna in 1998.²⁸ It is not easy to face up to this challenge, especially in smaller entities.

54. I am happy to see that in many places they respond to this challenge with *programmes of joint formation* as in the Provinces of the Iberian Peninsula and of Italy. Two other examples that come to mind are the novitiate in Cusco (the Province of Perú) to which various entities in the so-called 'Bolivian zone' of South America send their novices and the novitiate in Mar del Plata (the Province of Argentina) to which other entities of the so-called 'Southern Cone' send their novices.
55. If formation is a priority, then it is clear that our most qualified friars should be reserved for this task. This is an absolute necessity for the entire Order! Many entities are doing this at great sacrifice. The Province of Australia (New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands), in spite of the reduced number and advanced age of many of its friars, has assigned to this task some of its most qualified brothers.
56. Many provincials have spoken of *the difficulties in finding friars for formation*. One reason – among others – is the resistance of the brethren to accepting the ministry of Master of Novices and/or Students. It is true that nobody concludes his own formation prepared to be the one responsible for the various stages of initial formation. That is where the importance of preparing brothers for this task lies. Forming formators in their own context and from the Dominican tradition is an ideal that is constantly before us. The *Asia-Pacific Dominican Formation Centre*, with its base in Caleruega (the Philippines), is an excellent model for responding to this necessity. Every three years since 1993 (when it was founded), they have offered a programme for the brothers and sisters responsible for formation. Could other regions consider something similar? Once again my mind turns to the Institute of Pedro de Córdoba

²⁸ Cf. ACG Bologna (1998) nos. 107-115.

in Santiago (Chile). Even though its principal commitment lies elsewhere, they could optimize their resources in order to offer such an important service to all the entities of *CIDALC* or to some regions, in collaboration with *CODALC* and open to the Dominican Family.

57. *The question of vocations, like that of formation, is for everyone and, as such, is the responsibility of everyone.* The formation of our candidates urges us to ask how do we form ourselves. Every one of us must nurture his own vocation. I repeat, the vocation of each one of us is important, not only the vocation of our candidates, but also the vocation of those who are already following in the footsteps of St Dominic, including those who are very advanced in years. *As with our formation, our vocation is a life-long task.*
58. Finding *brothers to assign to formation communities*, as I said above, is a difficult task. Formators often speak of the lack of ideal models or model Dominicans for the brothers in formation as much in their communities as in the provinces in general. These comments reveal two things. First, that there is an essential connection between initial formation and ongoing or permanent formation. Second, there exists an urgent need to commit ourselves to permanent formation, both personal and Dominican. How can we adequately respond to these serious challenges?
59. I have seen that many entities try to resolve the issues surrounding the various stages of initial formation by changing *the place or location of the convent of the novitiate or studentate*. In some cases, each provincial chapter adopts new initiatives, investigates new possibilities and explores new alternatives. It is a clear sign of 'Dominican itinerancy.' Nevertheless, this raises certain questions. It is odd that such exploration involves moving our novices from one place to another or changing the assignation of the simply professed friars according to the

composition of a particular community where the solemnly professed friars are more suitable, or can be formators or can incorporate the formation community. Would it not make more sense to ask the solemnly professed friars – professed until death –to move, change and respond to this challenge? The difficulties that such a change presents would not undermine the vocation of a solemnly professed friar who has already offered his life as a disciple of St Dominic whereas instability in the process of formation could prove an unhelpful factor in the formation of a novice or simply professed friar.

60. In relation to initial and ongoing formation, in addition to my previous comments, it seems to me that the crucial question for our formation today is: *for what are we forming ourselves?* This presents us with another challenge: *formation for our mission.*
61. The Order certainly does not exist for itself. Rather it exists for its mission to preach the Gospel. From this it follows that *our formation should render us faithful to this mission.* During the canonical visitations in these three years, I have seen at times different situations with regard to creativity and itinerancy in our apostolic life. There are communities who are very focused on themselves. Too worried about internal questions, they neglect the necessities and challenges of the society in which they live or other important questions. A fundamental question arises: how do we preach the Gospel in our own context? There is a tendency to maintain that which we know how to do in our work or ministry. It is understandable that a similar inertia may extend in a certain measure to our houses of initial formation.
62. *How can we rediscover or strengthen the missionary dimension of our formation?* I ask the General Chapter to help the Order to face up seriously to this crucial issue. In this *relatio* I simply raise this issue.

63. Does not our fundamental identity as Dominicans consist in being preachers, called to the mission of preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom of God?
64. Are we in touch with and do we help the friars in formation to be in touch with the situation in which we live, the societies in which we find ourselves? Do we know and have we made known to our brothers the social, economic, political, cultural and religious reality of the people we serve?
65. Is our way of being Dominican truly adapted to local circumstances and culture, in dialogue with and in response to the situations and necessities of the local Church and society?
66. What efforts do we make to inculturate our programmes of formation? Do we encourage our candidates to study and to love their own culture and history? Do we give sufficient importance to the study of social sciences?
67. Do we give the same attention to missionary and pastoral formation or to the renewal of our brothers as we do to their human, religious and intellectual formation?
68. Finally, in response to the request of the General Chapter of Providence,²⁹ a *Commission for the study of the connection between solemn profession and active and passive voice in our legislation* was established.³⁰ After studying the subject, this commission sent a questionnaire to the provinces and other entities. In the light of the response of the provinces and of the study of the commission, some conclusions have been presented to the Chapter in a final report.³¹

VI. GOVERNMENT

69. I am constantly mindful of all that fr Timothy Radcliffe said to us in one of his most important and beautiful letters to the

²⁹ Cf. ACG Providence (2001) no. 352.

³⁰ Cf. LCO 440 & 443 § 1. Cf. also ACG Rome (1983) no. 379; ACG Avila (1986) nos. 275 & 278.

³¹ Documents sent to the Chapter [Code C.2].

Order, *Dominican Freedom and Responsibility: Towards a Spirituality of Government*.³² Without a doubt, Dominican government expresses our life and mission in a completely singular way.

70. At the beginning of this *relatio* I said that the task of the Master consists in *confirming the brothers and sisters in their vocation as those who further the life and mission of the Order*. One of the most concrete ways of promoting and ensuring this freedom and responsibility is the confirmation of elections and decisions at various levels. The Master of the Order confirms the election of priors provincial, vice-provincials, vicars general and priors of the convents under his immediate jurisdiction. Similarly, the prior provincial (and similar authorities in the Order) confirms the election of regional priors, vicars provincial and conventual priors within a province or similar entity.
71. *The confirmation of an election or decision* is not accomplished simply with a signature on the appropriate document. During their mandate these brothers – already confirmed – need to be accompanied in their ministry and in their decisions.
72. Elected or appointed to a particular task in various areas (general, provincial or conventual), *each friar needs to be 'confirmed' in his mission*. When the brothers who are members of a local, provincial or general chapter decide certain matters, we must also confirm with our life and commitment what has been decided in common, even if at the time we voted another way!
73. *A brother, elected and confirmed for a certain mission, can find himself abandoned 'in the howling waste of the wilderness'* (Deut 32:10). In effect, we can abandon our brothers or subject them to our howling criticism. The culture of the world of sports (as a 'spectacle to see' rather than a 'discipline to practice') thrives

³² Cf. *IDI* no. 353 (1997). Beginning with the figure of St Dominic, a man of freedom and government, the letter deals with the basic principles and various levels of Dominican government.

in our daily life like second nature. Many spectators or enthusiasts become experts and judge the players and the coaches from the comfort of their chair in front of the television or from the comfort of their place in the stands. In a way, we friars do the same, acting as if we were no longer responsible since someone has been elected or some decision has already been taken. We make ourselves comfortable in the life and we observe (we are very 'observant'!) how the one who holds authority arranges matters and how he carries out the decisions taken. For this reason many excuse themselves from assuming the responsibilities of government, aware of the difficulties that exist.

74. *When it is time to enact decisions*, we can leave completely to the responsibility of the prior or other official of the priory what we have decided in common, without any personal involvement. When this occurs, it is difficult to bring the decisions to a successful conclusion. Without realizing it, we can promote a 'sit-down strike' (and perhaps we will be the first to point out to those 'in charge' that what was decided has not been fully carried out)! How important in this respect the text of *LCO 4*!
75. At times, new positions or responsibilities, or even new assignments, can be refused for *reasons of conscience*. The 'consciousness' of psychology and one's own sentiments occupy the realm of the authentic moral conscience which judges and leads to action driven by virtue and knowledge, and which in the religious life is sustained by theological or faith-based reasons inspired by the vow of obedience. *Resistance to accepting an office or to embracing a new mission* (assignment) arises from 'classifying' these possibilities into one of two mutually exclusive categories: 'reward' and 'punishment.'
76. *The government of provinces*. Without going into detail, I must say that priors provincial, vice-provincials and vicars general have performed their duties with great responsibility in their

respective entities. During my visits I was comforted and indeed impressed by their work. In some particular situations, I wanted to accompany provincials (or similar authorities) more closely, helping them to carry forward some processes that required the participation of all the friars without exception. In effect, as Humbert of Romans summarized it: 'the good accepted by all is completed with rapidity and facility.'³³

77. Similarly, the preparation and promotion of *the canonical visitation*, the composition and communication of the charge, and subsequent contact, constitute a privileged means to accompany these processes and to help the friars assume what is a common responsibility in the life of a province.³⁴
78. In the context of the ChristoLogical discussions of his time, St Gregory of Nyssa, with reference to the human nature assumed by the Word, said: 'what is not assumed is not redeemed.' During these three years, I have seen how important it is to accept the circumstances of a community in order to be able to heal that which must be healed. This is essential in Dominican government. For this reason, I tried to accompany particular entities through well-prepared processes so that those very brothers would accept their situation and make the necessary decisions to confirm the mission of these same entities. I would like to point to some examples.
79. *The General Vicariate of the Guardian Angels (Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia)*. In March 2003, there was a meeting in Warsaw (Poland) of the Regional Socius, the Vicar General, the Provincial of the Province of France, and the Provincial of the Province of Poland, the Vicar General of the Vicariate of Russia and the Ukraine, and the then Pro-Vicar of the General Vicariate of the Baltic States and the members of their respective Councils. The

³³ *Expositio Regulae, XVI* in *Opera de Vita Regulari*, ed. J. J. Berthier I (Casali, 1956), 72. Cf. LCO 6.

³⁴ Article 28 of the Acts of the General Chapter (Kraków) contains a list of the canonical visitations conducted between the General Chapter of Providence (2001) and July 2004.

agenda was to analyse the presence of the Order in the countries of the former Soviet Union. Within this framework, the very existence of the General Vicariate was discussed. As a result of the meeting, it was finally decided to confirm and promote the mission of the General Vicariate. Later, a Vicariate Chapter was convoked and the Vicariate signed an agreement of cooperation and assistance in the area of formation with the Province of France and the General Vicariate of Southern Belgium.

80. *The General Vicariate of Hungary.* Given the current circumstances of the General Vicariate, its very existence and possible integration with another province were also discussed. The canonical visitation, made by the Regional Socius and the Vicar General, was able to begin a process to invigorate the Vicariate. In this way, a process of preparation for the next Vicariate Chapter was initiated.
81. *The Project for a New Entity of the Order in Venezuela.* Fr Damian Byrne insisted that the Provincial Vicariates of the Rosary Province and the Province of Bética respectively initiate a joint formation programme for candidates to the Order. With the passage of time and given the increase in vocations, Fr Timothy created the 'Project for a New Entity of the Order in Venezuela.' During my canonical visitation to this project in December 2001, the idea of creating a General Vicariate³⁵ surfaced. With common agreement, some goals and a process with precise deadlines were established. Various circumstances influenced the younger members of the Project to decide that it would be better to integrate themselves into the Provincial Vicariate of the Rosary Province. They did so accepting their situation and thinking of the best way to ensure the future of the Order in this country. Through a joint process in which the three entities present in the territory were involved,³⁶ it was decided to

³⁵ Cf. LCO 257 § II.

³⁶ The three entities involved were the aforementioned Project, the Vicariate of the Province of Bética and the Vicariate of the Rosary Province.

suppress the Project, integrating it definitively into the Provincial Vicariate of the Rosary Province.

82. *The community of Wenzao (Taiwan)*. In 1995 the Master of the Order created a team to reflect on the mission of the Order in China. In 1998 the Wenzao Dominican Community was established to assume this priority. The General Chapter of Bologna congratulated the Master and the General Vicariate on this initiative.³⁷ After the approval of the specific Statutes, the community, made up of friars from different entities and nations, was put under the jurisdiction of the General Vicariate of Our Lady, Queen of China (in Taiwan), the Master reserving some prerogatives to himself. In 2002, confronted with the difficulties which the situation presented, the Statutes were revised and simplified. At that time, three volunteer friars from two other entities were added to the community. During the recent canonical visitation we had the opportunity to speak with all the friars assigned in one way or another to the General Vicariate. Various possibilities were presented for the legal organization of the project. Finally, the General Council decided that the Wenzao community be fully inserted into the General Vicariate. Among other motivations, this solution was adopted in the light of what the General Chapters of Walberberg³⁸ and Rome³⁹ had established as the mission of the General Vicariates: entities under the immediate jurisdiction of the Master of the Order, promoting the mission of the Order according to the principle of subsidiarity, and maintaining the project as a priority for the whole Order.
83. We have fully realized *the importance of good preparation for provincial chapters* so that they admit the reality, and examine and define what is proper to the life and the mission of the

³⁷ Cf. ACG Bologna (1998) no. 47.

³⁸ Cf. ACG Walberberg (1980) no. 36

³⁹ Cf. ACG Rome (1983) no. 123 b.

province. A list of the prerogatives of the provincial chapter, norms that must be included in the Statute of the Province and norms dealing with the Economic Statute of the Province were sent to all provincials (and similar authorities).

84. In some cases, to assist in this process, Vicars⁴⁰ of the Master were appointed to accompany and help priors provincial and their councils in this task (the Province of St Catherine of Siena in Ecuador and the Province of St Thomas Aquinas in Italy).
85. I have also noticed that on many occasions, without any denial of the prerogatives of the provincial and the provincial council,⁴¹ it is usually left to them to make decisions about matters that could and should be treated and defined at the provincial chapter. As a matter of fact, once the chapter is concluded, it is sometimes difficult to make certain decisions and to ensure that they are carried out. Some concrete examples come to mind: the erection and suppression of houses and convents,⁴² assignations⁴³ or appointments, etc.
86. *The strengthening of institutions of the Order in some countries or regions* must also be a priority as this also ensures our mission. In some countries or regions, the Order is present in the form of various entities which depend on provinces (regional vicariates or provincial vicariates) or on the Master of the Order (general vicariates⁴⁴ and some houses or priories under his immediate jurisdiction). The creation of a vicariate (regional, provincial or general) aims at ensuring the mission of the Order in a defined territory. As a specific mission is advanced, we try to establish a foothold for the presence of the Order *in medio Ecclesiae*. As far as possible this implies a long-term goal: the creation of a province with full rights and obligations in

⁴⁰ Cf. LCO 400.

⁴¹ Cf. especially LCO 374.

⁴² Cf. LCO 261 § 1, 1° & 264.

⁴³ Cf. LCO 271 § 1.

⁴⁴ Cf. ACG Rome (1983) no. 123 b.

view of the mission.⁴⁵

87. The path to *the establishment of the Order in the form of a province* in certain countries or regions demands some previous stages: common formation, communities made up of friars from various entities present in the territory or other possibilities.⁴⁶ The Chapter of Bologna in 1998 dealt with a special way of indicating the progress in collaboration since the Chapter of Caleruega in 1995 and offered practical guidelines to continue in that same direction.⁴⁷ In particular, it established some norms for *the process of unification of entities*.⁴⁸
88. The Chapter of Providence in 2001 also wished to address *the life of vicariates, their statutes, their relationship with the provinces* to which they belong and cooperation between entities.⁴⁹
89. I consider it important that the General Chapter of Kraków, in keeping with our tradition, encourage decisions on the subject of government (*de regimine*), keeping in mind the necessity of promoting ways to *strengthen the presence of the Order in certain areas or regions*. For example, the following might be considered: the presence of the Order in Bolivia (there are two provincial vicariates), the presence of the Order in the Caribbean (in particular, the entities of a common language such as the vicariates of the English and Irish Provinces⁵⁰) and the presence of the Order in Taiwan (there exist a general vicariate and two provincial vicariates).
90. The Order continues to grow and develop. Vocations come from countries in which the friars are not present (in many of these there are communities of sisters from various congregations or some lay fraternities as in Bulgaria). Some

⁴⁵ Cf. LCO 253-255.

⁴⁶ Cf. LCO 390-395.

⁴⁷ Cf. ACG Bologna (1998) nos. 180-191.

⁴⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, no. 254 & LCO no. 256-bis.

⁴⁹ Cf. ACG Providence (2001) nos. 461-468.

⁵⁰ Cf. ACG Rome (1983) no. 125.

very important questions arise that need clarification. *What should be the process for establishing our presence in a country?* Is it right to accept vocations and to form them outside of their home country so that – in the future – we can establish a community with these native friars? Do we need to establish a community first and only then begin to accept candidates? What is the best criterion for committing to a particular province the setting up of the first houses in a country or region where we are not present? The Chapter could reflect on this matter and offer some direction. This has consequences for the promotion of vocations and for the acceptance of candidates from these countries.

91. To encourage and promote collaboration between entities, the Chapter of Providence in 2001 offered as a general norm a special manner of *assignation* based on those already existing for the provinces in France and at our centre of studies in Washington.⁵¹ The interpretation and application⁵² of this norm required a *declaration of the Master of the Order on the rights and obligations of friars assigned in this way*.⁵³ The Chapter of Kraków should review this declaration, revise it or regulate the matter in another way. The Chapter could even study the complex subject of assignations in the *Liber Constitutionum et Ordinationum* in a comprehensive way.
92. *First assignations* continue to require a generous approach, interior liberty and great prudence. Ultimately, it is a subject that must be carefully evaluated. The reflections of fr Damian Byrne in his letter *First Assignations* of 24 May 1990⁵⁴ are still relevant. By means of canonical visitation, I have been able to verify that this continues to be a fundamental issue. It presents enormous challenges, provokes more than a few inconveniences

⁵¹ Cf. ACG Providence (2001) nos. 460, 496 & 508. Cf. also LCO 391, 6°.

⁵² Cf. LCO 291 & 420.

⁵³ *Declaratio circa LCO 391, 6°* (Rome, 24 May 2002): Prot. 50/02/225 LCO.

⁵⁴ Cf. *Analecta* 98 (1990): 108-113.

and demands generous commitment from all the friars. A word from the Chapter on this subject would help to guide provincials and the brethren.

Convents under the immediate jurisdiction of the Master of the Order

93. *The Convent of Santa Sabina – the General Curia*

The community of the Convent of Santa Sabina is formed by the friars who are members of the General Curia,⁵⁵ that is, members of the General Council, which includes the Procurator General, the Syndic of the Order, the Postulator for the Causes of Beatification and Canonization, the Promoters General, the Director of *International Dominican Information*, and other brothers who generously collaborate and serve the convent and the Order. In recent years, Dominican Sisters International (DSI), the Secretariat of the Dominican Youth Movement (IDYM) and the coordination team of Dominican Volunteers International (DVI) have established offices in the priory. These last two concerns, together with the office for the Promotion of Justice and Peace, are projects undertaken in collaboration with Dominican Sisters International.

94. Since the last General Chapter, as is the custom, there have been many changes in the composition of the community as the years of service of some of the brethren came to an end. Two friars from outside the community conducted the canonical visitation of the convent. This seems to be the place to offer a special word of gratitude to fr Innocenzo Venchi and to the Province of St Dominic in Italy, for his silent, valuable and faithful work as the Postulator General for more than four decades. His presence in the Convent of Santa Sabina has always been a source of joy and a model of fraternity.

⁵⁵ Cf. ACG Madonna dell'Arco (1974) nos. 248-252; ACG Quezon City (1977), *Relatio de statu Ordinis* I, 1.

95. *The Convent of SS Dominic and Xystus – the Angelicum*

The primary mission of the Convent of SS Dominic and Xystus is the Pontifical University of St Thomas Aquinas (the Angelicum or PUST). The community, formed principally by friars who are professors and students of the university, also includes the members of the Historical Institute of the Order. I must admit that the Angelicum regularly features in the deliberations of the General Council.

96. Despite the increasing competition between the Roman universities, the Pontifical University of St Thomas Aquinas continues to hold its ground with a good number of students. The teaching of St Thomas Aquinas, the broad spectrum of courses offered in English and a very special climate of friendship among the professors and students attract many pupils. I am a personal witness to this as a former student and professor.

97. We appreciate the work of the rector and of all the deans and officials of the Pontifical University of St Thomas Aquinas in seeking to improve the academic level of the university and extend the number and quality of the services provided. We hope that the current process to elaborate a *strategic plan* will contribute a greater dynamism to the university. In all of the faculties the interest in improving the quality of research and teaching is noted. In particular, the *Faculty of Social Sciences* has greatly improved the level and number of courses offered.

98. The *Faculty of Philosophy* organized a symposium on the role of philosophy in the Order.⁵⁶ Notwithstanding some organizational difficulties the calibre of the speakers, the number of participants and the quality of the contributions made the event worthwhile. The experience prepares us for future initiatives which can build on this one.

99. The Chapter of Providence commissioned the *Institute of*

⁵⁶ Cf. ACG Providence (2001) no. 141.

Spirituality to coordinate an effort of collaboration at various levels – regional and international – to identify the particular qualities of our Dominican Spirituality and to publish their conclusions.⁵⁷ It also entrusted the same Institute to organize an international conference on Dominican Spirituality fostering the unity and renewal of the Dominican Family.⁵⁸ Even though they have not yet been able to organize these projects, one issue of the journal *Angelicum* did collect various articles on the subject.⁵⁹ It might be appropriate to mention at this point that Dominican Sisters International (DSI) organized a symposium at the Angelicum on St Catherine of Siena at the end of April 2003. A large number of women religious attended. I am confident that the General Chapter will insist that such efforts continue. I am sure that the Institute of Spirituality in collaboration with Dominican Sisters International could offer other fine academic initiatives like those already undertaken – true projects of the Dominican Family!

100. Currently evident in the Order is a lack of friars specialized in *Canon Law*. For many years little attention was paid to this dimension of our formation – due to a fear of Canon Law? This tendency is gradually being reversed, yet a scarcity of vocations for this discipline is noted. Consequently, we also note the difficulty in replacing the professors of our faculty. How can I be objective, having benefited so much from the Angelicum? We are trying to find new professors to maintain the quality of this faculty, a quality evident in the good number of students in spite of the wide range of alternatives on offer in other Roman institutions.
101. The *Historical Institute*, beyond its periodical publications, has organized symposia and produced various volumes of a truly serious and high level of research, especially with reference to

⁵⁷ Cf. *ibid.*, no. 239.

⁵⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, no. 240.

⁵⁹ *Angelicum* 81 (2004): 478 *sqq.*

the Inquisition (in compliance with the suggestion of the General Chapter of Bologna⁶⁰).

102. *Finances and economy of the university.* There is a well-founded hope that the financial and economical bases of the university can improve. Through the International Dominican Foundation (IDF), in cooperation with the Office of Public Relations of the university, efforts are under way to raise funds that will help this process. I thank especially the provinces of the United States for their support in this area. The renovation of Largo Angelicum 1/A will soon be finished and will provide extra space for offices of the university.
103. *A sole administrator.* With the intention of promoting and improving the administration of the university and the priory, the Chapter of Caleruega in 1995⁶¹ ordained 'that the administration of the Pontifical University of St Thomas Aquinas and of the Convent of SS Dominic and Xystus, though maintaining separate accounts, have a sole administrator.' This has not been an easy decision to enact. This norm does not lend itself easily either to the statute of the university or to the *Liber Constitutionum et Ordinationum* in relation to the economic administration of the priory. The accounting system of the university and priory functions more in conformity with the requirements of Italian law and it is not clear whether or not the system is compatible with the laws of the United States in relation to fund-raising. In an effort to be faithful to the decisions of the said general chapter, I appointed a Vicar for the Economic Administration of the Convent of SS Dominic and Xystus and the Pontifical University of St Thomas Aquinas in Rome.⁶² The General Chapter must study the figure of the 'sole administrator,' revise the ordination of the Chapter of Caleruega and address the matter in light of the various levels of

⁶⁰ Cf. ACG Bologna (1996) no. 83.

⁶¹ Cf. ACG Caleruega (1995) no. 160.

⁶² Cf. LCO 400 & 401 § II.

responsibility involved (the priory, the university and the general curia).

104. *Fraternal life in the community* of the Convent of SS Dominic and Xystus. After the canonical visitation to the community in February 2003 there was a meeting with the Conventual Council in February 2004 to evaluate the situation of the conventual community. Keeping in mind the importance of the mission of the community and its particular composition (fifty-four friars of many languages and nations) I invited the priory to celebrate a conventual chapter *ad modum capituli provincialis*. In addition to the meetings of the conventual chapter ordinarily foreseen, this initiative could be repeated at least every three years, perhaps coinciding with the election of the prior. Possible steps to be taken were set out in writing: a possible procedure for the celebration of the chapter itself and other elements so that the proposal could be seriously considered. Included among other tasks entrusted to this chapter was the possibility of preparing a particular Statute to regulate various aspects of the common life and other relationships with the university, without infringing upon or confusing the respective responsibilities.⁶³ It is a fact that the community itself must be the main agent of the change and improvement required. I sincerely hope that this initiative will be seriously kept in mind. Many aspects of the common life can and must be discussed and determined at this level and without the direct intervention of the Master of the Order. Perhaps the General Chapter could offer an opinion.

105. *The 'Convictus Internationalis' of St Thomas*

This house, in which four friars are assigned, is principally for hosting seminarians and non-Dominican religious and priests who study at the Angelicum and other institutions in Rome. This is an important service for those who come to Rome to

⁶³ The university has its own Statutes, approved by the Holy See and revised according to the Constitution *Sapientia Christiana*.

study and desire to live in an international and open community with a Dominican spirit. In recent years, efforts have been made to refurbish the building. Statutes and a Rule of Life have been presented and approved by the Holy See through the Congregation for Catholic Education (for Seminaries and Educational Institutions), the dicastery responsible for these institutions.

106. *The Convent of St Stephen the Protomartyr – the École biblique in Jerusalem*

In spite of the political difficulties that certainly influence the psychological atmosphere of the École biblique et archéologique (Jerusalem), the community and the school are trying to renew themselves. The opening of the new library and the starting of a new project have given enthusiasm to the brethren and a new vitality to the École. As I mentioned above, they have started the preparation of a new edition of *The Jerusalem Bible* that will be entitled *La Bible en ses traditions*. It is an undertaking that will require at least fifteen years of work.

107. The École is not only an institute of specialized studies in biblical and archeological research. Truly a 'School,' *it offers a variety of courses and possibilities*. The presence of students working toward academic degrees in Sacred Scripture is enhanced by other students who come for a sabbatical or who spend some time dedicating themselves to biblical studies complementary to the theological formation they received in other centres. This contributes to the creation of a very special climate that I could feel during my visit. I invite provincials and regents of studies to have no fear of the political situation and to send students to the École as it has a lot to offer.

108. Like the other academic institutions under the immediate jurisdiction of the Master of the Order, *the École biblique also needs to prepare a new generation of brothers in order to renew its academic staff*. Even though some contacts have been made with

provincials about possible candidates, I would be obliged if the General Chapter could appeal to provincials, reminding them that the service of the École biblique is a mission that should be proposed to our young friars.

109. This is the appropriate occasion to remember the late *fr M-Émile Boismard* whom I was privileged to know. With enthusiasm and joy he explained to me, during my first visit to the École in March 2003, his personal plan of daily work and the time which he dedicated to it. It was a real example of a love for the Word of God! The table and chair he used for work are now empty ... let us hope that other brothers will occupy them!
110. *The Convent of St Albert the Great – the Albertinum*

Following the suggestions of the commission established by the Chapter of Providence,⁶⁴ negotiations with the Canton of Fribourg and the Episcopal Conference of Switzerland were carried forward for the 'tacit renewal' of the agreement that guarantees the presence of the Order in the Faculty of Theology of the University of Fribourg until July 2015. There is no doubt that the continued presence of the Order in the faculty will offer a unique possibility to deepen seriously our theological research and teaching. The number of Dominican professors in the world who have studied in Fribourg is impressive. The future of numerous provincial centres depends on the existence of centres of academic excellence where the Dominican intellectual tradition is assured.

111. *The desire of the Order to continue in Fribourg and to strengthen its presence in the Faculty* also requires the presence of friars who wish to specialize in complementary studies and demands the preparation of candidates in order to cover the available chairs. Once again, this implies that we depend on the spirit of service of the provinces insofar as they are asked to provide professors.

⁶⁴ Cf. ACG Providence (2001) no. 176.

112. The number of professors resident in the Albertinum, thanks to their salaries, also has an influence on the number of scholarships for Dominican students that the priory can offer.
113. *The Convent of St Mary Major – the College of Penitentiaries*
The College of Penitentiaries of St Mary Major's (the Apostolic Penitentiary entrusted to our Order by Pope St Pius V) manifests an aspect of our Dominican tradition through the compassion and mercy expressed in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The Basilica of St Mary Major's is quite close to Termini train station and is visited constantly by the faithful, and many people wish to go to confession.
114. Some years ago, it is true, there were some difficulties. Nevertheless, the effort of having guaranteed *an extraordinary service during the Jubilee of the Year 2000* has yielded its fruit. The very grace of the Jubilee, the appropriate rotation of the ordinary confessors, and the generosity of the friars who were 'extraordinary confessors' (both that year and every summer), in addition to the patience and magnanimity of the brothers of the conventual community, have contributed to creating a climate of peace and serenity.
115. *The community of the convent* is an international one and must be composed of twelve confessors. We have begun the search for three friars able to deal with varied cultural and linguistic backgrounds to re-establish the required number of brothers as soon as possible. It is with admiration that I note the dedication of these brothers to the exercise of their apostolate as well as the simplicity of their community life. This dedication and simplicity are manifest in signs of improvement in the administration of the convent which includes the maintenance of the house, the correction of some past economic omissions and other administrative aspects which though not of the utmost importance nonetheless facilitate the daily life of the community and its relationship with the whole Order.

116. *The ministry in St Mary Major's is a very delicate ministry* which demands great devotion and dedication. This apostolate also needs a very special climate in the community: a climate that especially guarantees silence, serenity and peace. I invite provinces to consider seriously this horizon of our Dominican preaching and to be generous in offering brothers for the exercise of this ministry. Perhaps it might be important to indicate the special qualities the ministry requires. Brothers are sometimes designated who would be more useful in other work, but not that of the penitentiary. The Apostolic Penitentiary has understood the commitment of the Order to ensure this service in Rome and has renewed its confidence, esteem and enthusiasm.

117. I offer my thanks to the provinces which have generously provided friars and I thank the confessors for their self-sacrificing work. Two witnesses in the process of St Dominic's canonization help me to encourage my brother penitentiaries in their ministry. Fr Rodolfo of Faenza affirms that *St Dominic 'was assiduous in preaching and hearing confessions.'* I fervently hope that whenever anyone comes to one of you seeking pardon and peace, you can testify with fr Stephen of Spain who, as a student in the University of Bologna, confessed his sins to St Dominic 'and it seemed to him that he loved him.'

118. *The House of St Augustine of Hippo (Addis Ababa)*

In response to the petition of the Episcopal Conference of Ethiopia presented by the Archbishop of Addis Ababa, the Order has embarked on a new presence in Addis Ababa, principally with a view to establishing a Catholic University in the city. In October 2003 a convention was signed with the President of the Episcopal Conference on the responsibilities of the Order to begin the establishment of the university. A first community of four friars has been founded under the patronage of St Augustine. After having consulted various provinces, the

Province of the Philippines offered very well prepared and competent brothers for this new mission. They are awaiting the arrival of one more brother. For various reasons it was decided that the community would be under the immediate jurisdiction of the Master of the Order in this first stage of the Order's presence in Ethiopia.

119. Even though *the project of the university is barely in its initial stage*, and not without difficulties, it needs the support of the whole Order. Ethiopia is one of the poorest countries in Africa and possesses a rich and ancient Christian tradition. There is also a notable expansion of Islam in the country. This opens up a favourable environment for ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue. *Deo volente* Addis Ababa will be the capital of the African Union. The presence of the Order in Ethiopia is basically 'establish a house, learn and teach,' following the intuition of St Dominic. I thank the Province of the Philippines which has vast experience in academic institutions for its generosity in offering friars for this project.

VII. ECONOMICS

120. As early as 1999 fr Timothy nourished the desire to write a letter to the Order on poverty. Thinking about the challenges that the world and the Church present to us, I have to say that our hallmark at the beginning of this new millennium must be the personal and common life of poverty, as St Dominic dreamed.
121. Referring to this subject, the prologue to the document *De politica oeconomica* of the General Chapter of Bologna⁶⁵ comes to mind. This is not the place to mention the constant appeal of modern global trends: secularism, individualism, the excessive accumulation of wealth without necessity, the tendency towards 'self-sufficiency,' and therefore to a certain progressive isolation

⁶⁵ Cf. ACG Bologna (1998) no. 204.

(provoked also by modern means of communication), differences between rich and poor entities, between rich and poor communities within an entity, and finally, differences between brothers in spite of being 'poor' by profession. These differences manifest at various levels a certain inability to own things in common and live the vow of poverty with a communitarian dimension. However, one cannot 'generalize' too much in this regard. The General Chapter of Providence, referring to community life and not to economic matters, spoke to us about *the temptations against the common life and some manifestations of violence in the heart of our communities*.⁶⁶ I believe that these elements must also be considered when we evaluate and examine our religious life, especially with respect to the vow of poverty, and the use of goods, facilities and money. With these considerations in mind, I now present some aspects of the economic situation of the Order.⁶⁷

122. Fortunately, the Order has been able to survive *the world economic crisis of recent years*. The point of return was the year 2003 which, after a period of deficits, closed with a surplus.
123. Since the year 2002 the overall contribution of provinces to the Order has not been increased. Their contributions account for 70% of the budget, while the other 30% comes from financial investments. With the budget, we meet not only the operating expenses of the curia, but also the grants to various entities of the Order in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Eastern Europe. Some other projects are also funded: the Pontifical University of St Thomas Aquinas, the Leonine Commission, the Historical Institute, Dominicans for Justice and Peace in Geneva, various publications (*IDI, Analecta, Dominican History Newsletter, Monumenta Ordinis Fratrum Praedicatorum, Dissertationes Historicae*). Also included is the ordinary budget of the new

⁶⁶ Cf. ACG Providence (2001) nos. 265 & 267.

⁶⁷ For further information, cf. *Report of the Syndic of the Order*. Documents sent to the Chapter [Code B.13].

community in Ethiopia and approximately 20% of the expenses of the General Chapter.

124. The contribution of the provinces to the curia is determined on the basis of the reports that the syndics of the provinces submit in response to the economic questionnaire which is sent to them. Formation expenses and assistance to other entities of the Order are exempt from these taxes. We must recognize that the quality of the economic reports of the provinces varies greatly. In fact, some provinces have not sent a report for many years (the lack of response from several entities to questionnaires sent by the curia in plenty of time with regard to this and other matters merits separate consideration⁶⁸). *The selection and preparation of provincial syndics must be taken seriously if we want to promote good administration in the various entities of the Order.*
125. The curia administers the so-called *Special Funds*. The *Solidarity Fund* was established in the time of fr Damian Byrne to assist formation in parts of the Order in particular need. This fund suffered substantial decrease during the economic crisis of the last two years. Given that quite a few entities of the Order depend significantly on this fund, we have continued to assist them, although to a lesser extent. It is now necessary to increase the fund with new contributions.
126. Nor was the *Angelicum Fund* free from the effects of the crisis. Between the years 2001 and 2003 it diminished noticeably. In this case, the decrease was not attributable exclusively to the economic crisis. The reduction of the capital was also due to a large sum being used as 'matching funds' for a donation from Mr William Simon towards the restoration of the building at Largo Angelicum 1/A, the improvement of the accommodation of invited professors, the library and – finally – towards the creation of a scholarship fund.

⁶⁸ For example, the questionnaires sent by the Commission on the Co-operator Brother and the Commission on Solemn Profession: Active and Passive Voice.

127. The Order has many other financial needs that cannot be covered by the Solidarity Fund. This is why the *St Dominic Fund* was created with initial capital offered by an anonymous donor. The fund has increased, mainly through donations from the monasteries of the Order (which are always very generous). The studentate in South Africa, the Province of Perú which asked for assistance to complete the house for the postulants and to repair a conventual church after a strong earthquake, the Higher Institute of St Thomas in Kiev and a congregation of Dominican Sisters in Bolivia have benefited from this fund.
128. The *Fund for the Nuns* was established principally from some of the proceeds from the sales of monasteries which have closed or from sums of money which come from the sale of other properties belonging to various monasteries or from other donations to the Master from the monasteries (donations specifically given for this fund or that have no destination specified by the donating monastery). Part of the fund is used for the founding of new monasteries which are emerging (for example, in India and Vietnam). Other monasteries which appeal for help (Africa, Latin America, Eastern Europe, etc.) are also given assistance.
129. The International Dominican Foundation (IDF) was established in January 2001 with the goal of coordinating fund-raising efforts in the United States and Europe.⁶⁹ Currently, there are five priority projects in need of financial assistance: the Pontifical University of St Thomas Aquinas (Rome), the École biblique (Jerusalem), the Dominican Institute of Eastern Studies (IDEO) (Cairo), Project *Renaissance* – the international community in Brussels, and the Higher Institute of St Thomas (Kiev). The services of a professional company have been contracted to assist the Order in this endeavour.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Cf. ACG Providence (2001) nos. 388-392.

⁷⁰ Community Counselling Services (CCS).

VIII. *LIBER CONSTITUTIONUM ET ORDINATIONUM*

130. Without a doubt, one of the principle functions of the General Chapter is that of legislating for the whole Order (in general or particular, through ordinations and/or constitutions according to our tradition).
131. The fruit of a process extending over many years and especially of the General Chapter of River Forest in 1968,⁷¹ the *Liber Constitutionum et Ordinationum* is now thirty-six years old. Through the subsequent eleven successive general chapters, the changes in the *Liber Constitutionum et Ordinationum* have been made according to our tradition. Some letters and commentaries of friars, expert in the subject, have indicated some 'inconsistencies' in the current text of the *Liber Constitutionum et Ordinationum*. Moreover, changes are made according to the needs of the mission of the Order, sometimes with no possibility of making a 'total' or 'global' revision of the text.
132. With the General Chapter of Diffinitors approaching, and to facilitate its work (no commission can replace the constitutional and essential work that is proper to the general chapter) a small 'technical' commission was instituted⁷² to revise the text and to identify any discrepancy between the various norms. The commission has produced a simple report with some suggestions. This report is also part of the preparatory documents⁷³ and I refer you to it.
133. The General Chapter in Bologna in 1998 *ordained* that a new edition of the *Liber Constitutionum et Ordinationum*⁷⁴ be prepared,

⁷¹ Cf. Document of 1 November 1968 of fr Aniceto Fernández, O.P., presenting the official edition of the new *Liber Constitutionum et Ordinationum*. This important document was also published in the official editions of 1984 and 1986.

⁷² The members of this commission were as follows: fr Joseph Nguyen Thang (Procurator General), fr Dietmar T. Schon et fr Konstantin M. Adam (Priors Provincial), fr Mark De Caluwe and fr Philippe Toxé (*periti*).

⁷³ *Compte rendu de la commission technique sur le LCO* (Rome, Santa Sabina, 2004): Documents sent to the Chapter [Code D.2].

⁷⁴ Cf. ACG Bologna (1998) no. 203.

and declared that its title be *Liber Constitutionum et Ordinationum Fratrum Ordinis Praedicatorum*.⁷⁵ This does not indicate any change in the text of our Constitutions. On the contrary, this conforms more to the Dominican tradition from the first printed edition of our Constitutions in 1505 to the 1954 edition inclusive. Curiously, this custom was interrupted in 1968.⁷⁶

134. Among its functions,⁷⁷ particularly its legislative functions,⁷⁸ the General Chapter must review the ordinations made by the General Chapter in Oakland in 1989 for their possible definitive insertion in the *Liber Constitutionum et Ordinationum*.⁷⁹
135. If the capitulars should so choose, a new edition of the *Liber Constitutionum et Ordinationum* could be published after the Chapter in Kraków. I think that it would have to be edited with the letter of presentation of fr Aniceto Fernández (Master of the Order, 1962-1974) which accompanied the first edition of 1969, and the official editions of 1969, 1984 and 1986.⁸⁰

IX. CONCLUSION

136. This is certainly not the place to present in general terms the situation of the world to which we have been sent to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ *in medio Ecclesiae*. I hope this *relatio* does not bring us to a 'centripetal' vision of the Order only, looking at the Order or at ourselves to find out 'how we are' and 'how we can improve' (as a person might look in a mirror and draw conclusions about his appearance). I hope this *relatio* will promote the timely renewal of the capitulars and all the friars in a 'centrifugal' movement, enabling us to discover with ever

⁷⁵ Cf. *Ibid.*, no. 291.

⁷⁶ *Constitutiones Fratrum Ordinis Praedicatorum*, ed. V. Bandello (1505) and ed. A. Cloche (1690); *Constitutiones Fratrum S. Ordinis Praedicatorum*, ed. A. V. Jandel (1867 et 1872), ed. J. M. Larroca (1886), and ed. S. M. Gillet (1932 & 1954). *Liber Constitutionum et Ordinationum Ordinis Fratrum Praedicatorum*, ed. A. Fernández (1969) and ed. D. Byrne (1984 & 1986).

⁷⁷ Cf. LCO 405.

⁷⁸ Cf. LCO 275 § I, 1-2; 276 § I; 277 & 283.

⁷⁹ Cf. LCO 285 § I.

⁸⁰ Unfortunately, this letter of presentation was omitted from the most recent edition of LCO (1998).

greater clarity 'why we are!' When fr Vincent de Couesnongle or fr Damian Byrne visited the priories in mission territories, many friars from various countries, rightly told them of their struggles and their longing for their own countries, families and friends. Faithful to St Dominic, these two great Masters of the Order usually insisted on the importance of the *terminus ad quem* of our mission over the *terminus a quo*!

137. Indeed, it is more important to look at the world and *discover what the contemporary world needs from us*. As I come to the end of this *relatio*, episodes of unheard of violence take place and are revealed each and every day. During the world wars, it was said, 'The world is at war.' It was true, Europe was the principal arena. But now, I ask myself, and I ask my brothers and sisters, *so now the world is not at war?* How can we be preachers of the Gospel of Peace in this world and through our communities?
138. I do not want to set in opposition the two views, 'centripetal' and 'centrifugal.' Both are important and exist in a constant tension. *Very often in Dominican life we live with certain tensions*. But, this is not in itself something bad and it would be wrong to oppose them in a polemical way that would leave us exhausted and deny us the fruits of grace and truth! The ropes that keep up a tent in a field are in tension! The cables that sustain a high transmission or reception antenna are also in tension! The elements of our daily Dominican life truly make us face tensions that we should not and cannot ignore. On the contrary! These elements are inseparable, wellbalanced and mutually enriching and together constitute the very life of the Order: an apostolic life in the full sense, in which preaching and teaching must flow from an abundance of contemplation.⁸¹
139. To comprehend more deeply the beauty of this Dominican

⁸¹ Cf. LCO 1 §IV *in fine*.

landscape, various provinces of the Order, through their respective publishing houses have accepted an invitation to publish in one volume the most significant messages addressed to the Dominican Family by the last four Masters of the Order. The book has been published under the title *Laudare – Benedicere – Praedicare: Words of Grace and Truth (1962-2001)*.⁸² Along these same lines, on the occasion of the 800th anniversary of the first journey of St Dominic to Denmark, my brothers of the General Council and I have offered to all the sons and daughters of St Dominic *some points on Dominican itinerancy*, echoing the invitation of Our Father, 'Let us walk with joy and think of Our Saviour.'⁸³

140. Yet another significant anniversary is approaching: *the eighth centenary of the foundation of the Monastery of Prouilhe*, cradle of the *Sacra Praedicatio* at the time of the foundation of our Order. We must celebrate this occasion with joy and hope! As the General Chapter of Providence expressed so clearly: 'The mission of Dominicans to hand on the fruits of contemplation by preaching and teaching cannot be properly lived without due reference to this originating source. The rivers of living water need the deep, hidden spring if they are to continue to communicate God's life to a world thirsting for Truth.'⁸⁴
141. As we all did on joining and making profession in the Order of Preachers, I ask once more the mercy of God and that of the brethren. I confidently put my hands in the hands of my brother capitulars and ask you to confirm us all in our life and mission.
142. Let us be joyful, let us work to reach perfection, let us encourage

⁸² In order of publication: *Editorial San Esteban* of the Spanish Province (Spanish); *Les Éditions du Cerf* of the French Province (French); *Edizioni Studio Domenicano* of the Province of San Domenico in Italia (Italian) and *Dominican Publications* of the Irish Province (English).

⁸³ Letter of fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, O.P., to the Order in *IDI* no. 413.

⁸⁴ Cf. *ACG Providence* (2001) no. 300.

each other and let us live in harmony and in peace. Then, the God of love and peace will be with us. May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit remain with us (cf. 2 Cor 13:11-13).

Fraternally in Saint Dominic,
fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, O.P.
Master of the Order

Rome, 22 July 2004

Memory of St Mary Magdalene, Apostle to the Apostles

Prot. 50/04/895 Kraków 2004

APPENDIX II

PROCLAIMING THE GOSPEL IN THE ORDER OF PREACHERS

fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, O.P.

Master of the Order

The Order of Preachers (the Dominicans) 'was specifically instituted, from its beginning, for preaching and the salvation of souls.'⁶⁵ For that reason, we, the sons and daughters of St Dominic, dedicate ourselves in a new way to the universal Church, devoting ourselves entirely to the complete evangelization of the Word of God⁶⁶ to all men and women, groups and peoples, believers and non-believers and especially the poor.⁶⁷ We are conscious that history and the present world are the place where salvation is enacted. For that reason, attentive to the dynamism of modern society, we insist on the necessity of establishing our preaching on the developments and realities that men and women daily bring to the Christian faith. Reading the Acts of the most recent general chapters, we can indicate the new 'Areopagus' or 'frontiers' to which we are called, the priorities of the Order, and how we can characterize our proclamation of the Gospel.

I. THE MISSION OF THE ORDER FROM ITS ORIGINS: 'A MISSION WITHOUT FRONTIERS'

The emphasis on the missionary and evangelizing character of the Church in Vatican Council II and in *Evangelii Nuntiandi* – which fr Damian Byrne called the '*Magna Carta* of the preacher'⁶⁸ – makes the fundamental project of Dominic particularly clear. It is the responsibility of the whole Dominican Family, 'men and women together in mission,'⁶⁹ to realize that project and to set in motion the

⁶⁵ Prologue to the Primitive Constitutions OP.

⁶⁶ Cf. LCO 1 § I & III.

⁶⁷ Cf. LCO 98.

⁶⁸ Damian Byrne, O.P., 'Together in Mission' in *IDI* (1990) no. 283, 165.

⁶⁹ Cf. ACG Bologna (1998) no. 34.

specific mission of the Order in the world. Various features have characterized the Dominican mission from its beginning.

For instance, the mission of the Order was and must continue to be a mission that goes beyond frontiers.⁹⁰ This mission is situated at what fr Pierre Claverie, O.P., (the Bishop of Oran in Algeria who was assassinated in 1996) called the 'lignes de fracture' of humanity which today traverse our globalized world, so frequently marked by injustice and the violence of racial, social and religious conflicts.⁹¹

This mission demanded and demands of the Dominican community the attitude and practice of itinerancy, mobility, and continuous movement towards the new frontiers to which the priorities of our mission draw us.

II. THE FRONTIERS ON WHICH WE ARE CALLED TO EVANGELIZE

1) The frontier between life and death:

the great challenge of justice and peace in the world

The most dramatic and urgent problems that confront contemporary men and women are historical in origin. They arise from the social, political and economic systems, structures and practices that have left a great number of people between life and death. Therefore, the dedication to justice and peace – analysis, reflection and actions of solidarity – is a criterion for the validation of any Dominican mission, and must characterize every area and method of preaching. The example of Bartolomé de las Casas, Antonio de Montesinos and Pedro de Córdoba in Latin America, and that of Domingo de Salazar in the East and of fr Louis Joseph Lebret in our own time are illuminating.

2) The frontier between humanity and inhumanity:

the great challenge of those who are excluded from society

The marginalizing structure of today's society produces an ever-

⁹⁰ Cf. ACG Avila (1986) no. 22 & ACG Bologna (1998) no. 33.

⁹¹ Cf. *ibid.*

increasing number of marginalized men and women, who come close to the frontier of an inhuman or subhuman life. Among those excluded can be found many peoples that suffer material poverty and a cultural, social, economic and political exclusion. Victims of 'apartheid' still exist today in various forms: emigrants, dissidents, workers, women, the sick, the young and the old. These are obvious signs of the absence of the Kingdom of God, and as such, are a challenge that must take priority in our reflection, study and evangelization. The mission of the Dominican community is to inaugurate and demonstrate a new model of communion and participation among all men and women.

3) The Christian frontier:
the challenge of world religions

World religions share with us the experience of God. However, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism and Islam are situated beyond the frontier of the Christian experience of God. Some of these religious traditions exert a strong influence on contemporary men and women. Dialogue with other religions challenges the traditional conceptions of the evangelizing mission of the Church as well as false attitudes and models of evangelization. The dialogue must be analytical and self-critical and presupposes an attentive attitude and a presence adapted to the surrounding culture, without hint of colonialism, imperialism or fanaticism. Dominic's ideal was to be in mission beyond the frontiers of established Christianity, among the Cumans (this was his dream). The founding of convents in cities and the presence of the friars in universities for inter-cultural and inter-religious dialogue make a priority of this challenge within Dominican evangelization.

4) The frontier of religious experience:
the challenge of secular ideologies

Contemporary men and women suffer intensely in a paradoxical

situation: there is a lack of religion and yet a yearning for the spiritual. To some extent secular ideologies explain this lacuna and challenge long-established models of communicating Christ's message. Many of the questions provoked by contemporary thought remain unanswered. Present in all of them is the question concerning man and his future and the urgent question about truth. Atheism, disbelief, secularization, indifference and laicism are questions closely allied to these ideologies. Dialogue with these very subjects can provide an important corrective for the varied presentations of religious and Christian events and, at the same time, indicate an area that is a priority in Dominican evangelization. An important lesson from the origins of Dominican history has been the capacity of the Order to establish a dialogue between Christ's message and classical and emerging cultures. For example, St Dominic, who incorporated study in the founding of the Order, St Thomas Aquinas in the 13th century, the Dominican professors and theologians of the 16th century, the Dominican theologians at Vatican Council II. Theology has been creative and prophetic in the Dominican Family in so far as it allowed itself to be clarified by compatible elements of culture. It has been life-giving in the measure that it has taken as its point of departure the pressing *quaestiones disputatae* of each period in history.⁹²

- 5) The frontier of the Church:
the challenge of non-Catholic denominations and other religious movements

The plurality of Christian denominations is a scandal for believers and non-believers. The riches concealed in the various Christian traditions are an invitation to ecumenical dialogue and reconciliation. Faithful to its tradition, the theological reflection of the Order addresses this challenge. With different implications, the frontier of the Church also extends to the phenomenon of new religious alternatives. In certain countries and regions of the world,

⁹² Cf. ACG Providence (2001) no. 111.

the growing presence of these 'movements' constitutes a challenge for evangelization. Simple denunciation and anathemas are insufficient. The first ideal of Dominic was to be in mission beyond the frontiers of 'Christianity.' Restricted by the immediate needs of the Church he carried out his mission in the frontiers of the Church among heretics from whom he acquired and adopted models of the evangelical and apostolic life and with whom he persevered in dialogue. He challenged them with the witness of his fidelity and communion with the Church.

III. PRIORITIES OF THE ORDER THAT CORRESPOND TO THESE FRONTIERS

The Order of Preachers, which participates in the apostolic life of the Church, must always be in mission and must situate itself on the frontiers. The highest priority of all for us is preaching, 'dedicating ourselves entirely to the complete evangelization of the Word of God.'⁹³ To attain this, the Order has in recent years reaffirmed four priorities.⁹⁴ These priorities cannot be separated from each other nor can one be emphasized to the detriment of the others. On the contrary, they complement each other. Each of the four priorities responds in a different way to the more pressing needs of people today with regard to preaching the Word of God.⁹⁵ Nor are there priorities new. They belong entirely to the charism and tradition of the Order: in the life of Saint Dominic, in the life of the brothers of the 13th century, in the life of the brothers of the 16th century who arrived in Latin America and the Far East, and in the modern era. The fruit of our original grace⁹⁶ the four priorities are catechesis of a dechristianized world, evangelization in the context of diverse cultures, justice and peace, and communication through the mass media.

⁹³ Honorius III, *Ad omnes praelatos Ecclesiae* (die 3 februarii 1221). Cf. LCO 1 § III.

⁹⁴ Cf. ACG Quezon City (1977) no. 15; ACG Walberberg (1980) no. 17.b; ACG Rome (1983) no. 28; ACG Avila (1986) nos. 22 & 28; ACG Oakland (1989) nos. 68-69; ACG Mexico (1992) no. 51; ACG Caleruega (1995) nos. 20-39.

⁹⁵ Cf. ACG Oakland (1989) no. 68.3.

⁹⁶ Cf. ACG Walberberg (1980) no. 17; Oakland (1989) no. 68.4.

Catechesis of a dechristianized world: the world of those who grew up within the context of a Christian tradition, but who are now distant or completely removed from that tradition, indifferent or hostile to the visible community of believers. This catechesis must be Paschal, inviting people to personal conversion and effecting the transformation of the world. It should also promote lay ministries.

Evangelization in the context of diverse cultures: towards a philosophical and theological investigation of the cultures, intellectual systems, social movements and religious traditions active beyond the context of historical Christianity. The Order is called to help create a new way of being Christian on the various continents. Communities must identify with the local people in a positive attitude of dialogue and respect for their cultural values.

Justice and Peace: critical analysis of the origins, forms and structures of injustice in contemporary societies and evangelical endeavours for the complete liberation and advancement of men and women. To be prophetic signs in the world, actions for justice and peace must be integrated into projects of local, provincial or regional communities, be based in social analysis and biblical and theological sources, and support the brothers and sisters who, at the risk of their lives, are involved in organizations and associations which promote human dignity.

Human communication through the mass media in the preaching of the Word of God. The media have shown us quite clearly 'the drama of our times': the division between human culture and the message of the Gospel, between the human word and the word of faith (*Evangelii Nuntiandi* 20). Today the media is the privileged instrument to provide an explicit message and well-informed influence in order to promote the proclamation of the whole Gospel. The media are in fact deeply involved in the world and each person in the world conveys life or death. The vocation of the Order therefore calls us to be preachers, that is, communicators with the following characteristics: conviction, new vision and liberty.

IV. CHARACTERISTICS OF PREACHING AND ATTITUDES OF THE PREACHER

Evangelization on these frontiers and in accord with these priorities has certain characteristics and requires various individual and common dispositions:⁹⁷

Theological Preaching

This implies a perfect openness to the whole truth, wherever it is to be found.⁹⁸ It demands profound reflection and a disposition towards dialogue (ecumenical, inter-religious and cultural).⁹⁹ Our preaching has always been rooted in a profound and scientific study of theology. 'Our study must be directed principally, ardently and diligently to this: that we can be useful to the souls of our neighbours.'¹⁰⁰ Therefore, our study is intimately related to the Order's apostolic mission of preaching. To dedicate ourselves to study is to respond to a call to 'cultivate the human search for the truth.'¹⁰¹ St Dominic encouraged his friars to be useful to souls through intellectual compassion, to share with them the *miser cordia veritatis*, the mercy of the truth.¹⁰² The crises of today's world, the scandal of growing poverty and injustice, the clash of different cultures and contact with dechristianized peoples are a challenge for us. Our practice of theological reflection must prepare us to penetrate deeply into the significance of these subjects in the mystery of Divine Providence. Contemplation and theological reflection give us the capacity to discover the best ways to preach the Gospel. This is the path to be followed so that we preach what is doctrinally true as distinct from an abstract and intellectual exposition of a particular system.

⁹⁷ Cf. ACG Mexico (1992) no. 51.

⁹⁸ Cf. ACG Bologna (1998) no. 33.

⁹⁹ Cf. ACG Caleruega (1995) no. 20.10-13.

¹⁰⁰ Prologue to the Primitive Constitutions. Cf. LCO 77 § I.

¹⁰¹ Cf. LCO 77 § II.

¹⁰² Cf. ACG Providence (2001) nos. 104-117

Compassionate Preaching

This demands an attitude of profound compassion for others, especially for those who are 'distant.' Only compassion can cure our blindness and enable us to read the signs of the times. Compassion endows our preaching with humility and this humility disposes us to listen and speak, to receive and give, to allow ourselves to be influenced and to influence others, and to be evangelized and to evangelize others. Such compassion and humility come exclusively from a profound union with God in Christ. We are united to God when we imitate the compassion and humble service of Christ. Compassion and humility are the source from which comes the understanding of the signs of the times which pervades our prayer and contemplation. This is how we contemplate God who has revealed himself to us through Sacred Scripture and who reveals his will through the signs of the times.

Inculturated and Incarnated Preaching

This demands a profound sensitivity to the different visions of reality that other religions, cultures and philosophies possess. Such inculturated and incarnated preaching implies learning how to hope, discern, adapt, share, accept and help to purify and elevate that which we find in these religions, cultures and philosophies.

Prophetic Preaching

It is the proclamation not of our own knowledge but of the living and life-giving Word of God. It is a complete proclamation of the Gospel which contains the words of eternal life. It is impossible to omit serious analysis of the 'signs of the times' which proceeds from supernatural principles and is illuminated through prayer. To read the signs of the times, we must diligently attend to the cry of the poor, the oppressed, the tortured and the excluded, and all those who suffer persecution on account of race, religion or the condemnation of injustice. God speaks to us through their cries and

through the silent voice of those who live in indifference, loneliness and despair.

Preaching in poverty

Poverty is not simply a form of self-denial. It is also a witness and appropriate means to enhance the credibility of our preaching. It is a sign of the authenticity and sincerity of our preaching. We live in a world where the division between the rich and the poor is increasing – as much between rich and poor nations as between groups and people. Moreover, the poor now have a better knowledge of the national and international structures that are the cause of their servility and poverty. Our preaching will not be credible if in a world such as this we show ourselves to be more attached to the rich than to the poor.¹⁰³

Itinerant Preaching

We are men and women on a journey.¹⁰⁴ Itinerancy is above all, a concept that implies a disposition to make a journey and to travel. However, our preaching demands of us a social, cultural, ideological and economic itinerancy. This is an aspect of Dominican spirituality that must shape the whole of our lives and that must be nourished with various biblical experiences of the Old Testament as well as those of Jesus, the Way, whom Dominic longed to follow as a true evangelical son.

Preaching as Community

Our preaching is not the solitary effort of isolated individuals. Therefore, it demands a disposition to collaborate, to work with others and to support their efforts with keen interest, vivacity and useful assistance. These attitudes are rooted in the essential elements of our Dominican life: the common life, contemplative prayer,

¹⁰³ Cf. ACG Caleruega (1995) no. 20.8.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, no. 20.9.

assiduous study, a fraternal community and consecration through the vows. The communion and universality of the Order also shape its government in which the ordered and involved participation of all parts of the Order predominates to enable the Order attain its proper end. The government of the Order is communitarian in its conduct and is ideally suited to the promotion of the Order and its frequent renewal.¹⁰⁵

Shared Preaching: The Dominican Family

The Order was born as a Family.¹⁰⁶ Friars, contemplative nuns, sisters, members of secular institutes, members of lay and clerical fraternities and other groups associated in some way with the Order¹⁰⁷ (e.g., International Dominican Youth Movement¹⁰⁸ and Dominican Volunteers International¹⁰⁹) are all inspired by the charism of Dominic. This charism is one and indivisible: the grace of preaching.¹¹⁰ This preaching is shared with our brothers and sisters in the Order who through their baptism live the same common priesthood and are consecrated through religious profession and their participation in the same mission.¹¹¹ Our general identity is fully revealed through our joint collaboration. This collaboration includes praying together, making plans and taking decisions, and completing projects as a result of a mutual cooperation founded on equality. These projects include widely different spheres such as ministries of prayer, teaching, preaching, pastoral animation, justice and peace, the mass media, research and publications, as well as formation and the promotion of vocations.¹¹²

¹⁰⁵ Cf. ACG Avila (1986) no. 22 II, 6. Cf. LCO 1 § VII.

¹⁰⁶ Damian Byrne, O.P., 'Together in collaboration' in *IDI* (1991) no. 289, 82. Cf. ACG Tallaght (1971) no. 122; ACG Quezon City (1977) nos. 64 & 65; ACG Mexico (1992) no. 116; ACG Bologna (1998) no. 148.3.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. ACG Roma (1983) nos. 284 & 285; ACG Avila (1986) no. 85 b.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. ACG Bologna (1998) nos 160 & 165; ACG Providence (2001) nos. 447-449.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. ACG Bologna (1998) nos. 166-170; ACG Providence (2001) nos. 450 & 451.

¹¹⁰ Cf. ACG Providence (2001) no. 415.

¹¹¹ Cf. ACG Bologna (1998) no. 33.

¹¹² Cf. *ibid.*, no. 34.

CONCLUSION

These frontiers, priorities and characteristics of our proclamation of the Gospel are not 'new commitments' added to others like a 'categorical imperative' or 'new way' that excludes those of the past. On the contrary, they indicate a path of joy and freedom and represent the vocation of many men and women who have given and continue to give their lives making their own the words of the Apostle: 'Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel!' (1 Corinthians 9:16)

Rome, 7 November 2002

Feast of All the Saints of the Order of Preachers

APPENDIX III

OBEDIENCE UNTIL DEATH: FREEDOM COMMITTED TO MISSION

Sr Mayte Merino, O.P.

Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of St Dominic

When the Master of the Order invited me to address the Chapter on 'obedience until death,' he wanted my reflections to provide an opportunity to contemplate the meaning of our vow of obedience and to offer practical inspiration for our community life.

Of course, the question is what can be said about obedience that we haven't already heard? In addition, how can we focus on the subject of 'obedience until death' at a moment in history when death, as well as everything else that suggests 'effort' and 'renunciation' is ardently rejected? We all accept the theory but when it comes to putting it into practice, we all have a thousand and one reasons to adapt and soften it. Whether or not the theory is unreal is a question for the philosophers. However, the question is certainly important given the fact that the documents emerging from our common reflections have scarcely any impact.

I have to admit that in preparing and reflecting on this address, I occasionally thought that my presentation might be too hardhitting. Of course, there is always the consolation that Jesus found himself in the same situation after one of his speeches at Capernaum, as St John tells us: 'Many of his disciples, when they heard it, said, "This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?"' (Jn 6:60). Nonetheless this is the situation, and I don't think that we who call ourselves the Order of Truth can water down situations to suit our personal tastes or to make them more palatable. Some may remark that we always have recourse to dispensation! However, allow me to invite you to have recourse not only to dispensation, but also to your good sense of

humour and to that zest for life that we all possess. Obedience must be taken seriously! Obviously, not in sadness or sorrow, and certainly not as a form of senseless subjugation, suffering or death, or with a negative ascetical attitude, but with the understanding that one can discover in obedience all the life, light and love it embraces.

The arrangement of this address is quite standard and in no way original. First of all, we will examine carefully the meaning behind the expression 'obedience until death.' Then we will pass on to the person of Jesus as a model of obedience and we will conclude by considering ourselves as imitators of the obedience of Christ.

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF OBEDIENCE UNTIL DEATH?

Until when do we promise obedience or how far should our obedience go?

The first question we have to ask ourselves concerns the meaning of these words. Do we mean to say that we promise obedience for the rest of our lives, understanding the expression 'until death' in a temporal sense only? Or, rather, do we want to say that we promise to live a life of obedience, with all the range of meanings and values our existence entails, thus enabling the word 'death' to acquire greater meaning and intensity?

To make profession until death is to give a permanent reality to our consecration. It does not mean declaring our desire to reach the end of life, but to state what we shall always be from now on. After death nothing in life can be changed or revoked. Death, as a reality, unites the person's past, present, and future: past and future, because our life finishes with death. There is no longer a future and the past is complete. We only have the present, a present that will be eternal. Therefore, to make profession until death is to consecrate everything that we have been, to seal our future, and to know that we will live in the eternal present of obedience.

To promise obedience until death is not restricted merely to the temporal. It invokes death itself as a witness to our lives of

consecrated commitment, and seals our lives in an absolute way. There is no turning back. After the moment of profession, all that remains is for us to live constantly in obedience. This cannot be made refer only to the period of time that precedes physical death. Obedience has its origin and end elsewhere. My life is really no longer my own but belongs to another. It is an eternal gift because of its transcendence.

We cannot forget that we make profession within the celebration of the Eucharist, just before the presentation of the gifts, and, indeed, it is near the altar that we make profession. This is not intended to make the celebration more beautiful or touching. All of this is very significant: we are made victims who are united to Christ for the salvation of the world. On the day of profession we die – be it a sacramental or spiritual death or whatever else one chooses to call it. On the day of our profession we are completely united to the death of Christ and we put on for the first time a new and perfect form of being which involves complete surrender. No part of our soul belongs to us any more. We have surrendered everything so that anything might be asked of us, even death itself. Therefore, although time is involved, to speak of obedience until death is not simply a question of time. It is also a question of intensity and meaning, of how far we will go in our life of obedience.

Obedience, Death & Sin

To unite obedience and death in a single sentence is a dangerous combination and is not easy to accept because of their relationship with sin: a fact that is often repeated in Sacred Scripture is that because of man's disobedience, sin and death entered the world.

In the human person there is a desire to transcend his limits and frontiers, and to rise above himself. It is a legitimate, internal and universal desire. The temptation lies in how this desire is fulfilled. Either by accepting in obedience a freely given gift and eating of the tree of life at the centre of the garden (that is, nourishing ourselves

on God as the centre of our existence and source of our life), or by personal endeavour and self-exaltation, disobedience to God's command and eating of the tree of good and evil.

The human person is called to live and exist in obedience to God, the giver of life. But man allowed himself to be deceived by the notion that such obedience poses a limit to his freedom. This notion is founded on a distorted image of God as envious of his creature. It is also based on a distorted image of the creature, tempted to self-affirmation beyond his own capabilities.

This is the cause of sin in the world. Sin separates man from God, from his neighbour and from nature. As a result, everything is burdensome. To find and make contact with God is arduous. To encounter others is arduous (those who live in community can tell us that!). To produce fruit and life from the earth is arduous.

In death we experience in a dreadful way this separation which sin creates. Death separates us from our loved ones and from the earth (when, paradoxically, we actually return to the dust of earth) and takes us to a place where God is said to be but of which we still have our doubts. As someone dying once said: 'I am going to the Father's house but there is no place like home!'

The reality described in the Book of Genesis is present in our lives. We are strongly tempted to see our obedience and our death as something 'negative' and requiring enormous sacrifice.

Perhaps some of you are asking yourselves what is the point of this discussion on original sin in relation to making a vow of obedience until death. The link lies in our Dominican charism 'to preach for the salvation of all,' since our preaching consists not only in proclamation, but also involves making our lives a place of salvation for humanity. We have consecrated ourselves to Christ so that the life given by Christ might flow through us to humanity and to the world. According to St Paul (Col 1:24) Christ, the new Adam, invites us to complete in our flesh what is lacking in the suffering of

Christ. If disobedience introduced sin and death, then our obedience until death can become a way of salvation not only for ourselves but also for our brothers and sisters.

In other words, we must accept the demands of the vocation and mission to which we have been called. Our life is dedicated to the salvation of humanity and we must accept this responsibility. We cannot simply tend to our own salvation. We must remember that through us others are to be saved.

Speaking about the vow of obedience, the Constitutions of the Order indicate that by means of this vow we imitate in a special manner Christ who was always subject to the will of the Father for the life of the world.

Even if it has often been said and acknowledged before, we must now identify obedience until death in the person of Jesus as the primary lens through which we focus on our vow of obedience and on the profound significance of uniting obedience and death in our profession.

What did it mean for Jesus to obey until death?

The Incarnation – freedom committed to mission

For Jesus to live was to obey: 'My food is to do the will of him who sent me, and to accomplish his work' (Jn 4:34). It was an obedience expressed throughout his life and which led him from the incarnation to the cross.

One of the key elements of our spirituality, the Incarnation, is often considered only in the light of the magical charm of Christmas. However, the full significance of the Incarnation is found in the Letter to the Philippians 2:5-7a, when St Paul states: 'Have this mind among yourselves, which was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant.'

If the sin of Adam and Eve was the desire to become like God

by their own efforts, without relying on the presence of the Lord, Christ did the very opposite. He who was himself God did not retain his divinity but stripped himself of his divine nature, emptying himself of his glory and divinity to become the servant of his own creation. He emptied himself of the glory that was his as a divine being, in order to communicate that glory to humanity. It was not a self-emptying aimed simply at an abandonment of divine glory. It was a self-emptying or 'death' designed to give life to humanity.

This manner of obedience is not a specific action during the life of Jesus but an attitude that extends throughout his existence: 'my food is to do the will of the Father.' For this reason he accepts the complex and limited reality of man. In other words, he surrenders his freedom, his divine and human existence, for the salvation of man. For Jesus, to obey is not to renounce his will but to submit his freedom and will to the purpose and mission of the Father. I would like to emphasize this aspect because it is fundamental for obedience in our way of life: for Jesus, obedience is not a renunciation of his freedom, but a submission and commitment of that freedom to the will of the Father.

The self-emptying of Jesus is made out of love for the Father and obedience to him. Jesus constantly contemplates the Father and this divine contemplation is the unique source of his life. When we say that God is love, we mean that God constantly gives of himself because that is what love is, to give oneself and to empty oneself. Jesus is made incarnate out of love and in loving, in giving of himself, and obeying the will of the Father who is the centre of his existence and the love of his life. Everything that follows is simply a consequence of his first response of obedience.

Let us turn once more to Adam who hid himself from God, far from his sight and from the sight of Eve, his equal. Adam's nakedness was shameful. Jesus, however, stripped of his divinity, constantly desires to be seen by his Father. He knows no love other than that of his Father and so to do his Father's will is his food and sustains

him in his mission. He does not hide from the presence of his Father but constantly seeks out that presence as the Gospel reveals when it refers to the times when Jesus went off to pray.

An obedience transformed into history

This first act of obedience, the Incarnation, was transformed into history, taking flesh and blood in the life of Jesus. If in his Incarnation he emptied himself of his divinity, then during his life he emptied himself of his humanity in a total self-giving to the point of being called a 'servant.' 'For the Son of man also came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many' (Mk 10:45).

In other words, Jesus lives selflessly. God the Father is the centre of his existence. Since he desires to fulfill the will of his Father he gives himself to humanity to the very end. 'I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father' (Jn 14:31). In this way Jesus reveals how God wants to be served and obeyed: through a self-emptying service of humanity.

Jesus, love incarnate, knows no other way of living than to give himself. He knows no other way of living because there truly is no other way of living. In loving us, he offers us a different model for our existence, a beautiful model which no one could ever have taught to us, because only loving eyes see beauty and goodness in the beloved. This ideal shows us that true life consists in letting our brothers and sisters possess us. This is truly beautiful and is the originality of the Gospel and of the message brought to us by Jesus, whose own life was encircled by love.

The crowds sought Jesus out and gave him no rest. He did not endure this reluctantly or sadly. Rather, he always placed the needs of others before his own, feeling compassion for those who were like sheep without a shepherd (Mt 9:36).

Jesus reveals to us that we can only live by serving others and giving ourselves to them, by giving our best to others and allowing

ourselves to be completely possessed by them in love. The obedience of Jesus is the very antithesis of the disobedience of Adam, as St Paul repeatedly indicates: 'For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by one man's obedience many will be made righteous' (Rom 5:19).

Final spoliation on the Cross

For Jesus, to live was to obey, and death was encountered as one of the acts of life. For that precise reason, for Jesus, to die was to obey. Death did not surprise Jesus. It was a very real possibility during his public ministry, as his preaching and comments to the apostles reveal. He was conscious that he would encounter a violent death, and he accepted this possibility as part of his life. He accepted death actively not passively, because it was totally implied in his mission. Obedience for him was not the passive acceptance of something that lay before him. Rather he acted with initiative and energy in order to obey the Father.

This acceptance is made clear at the Last Supper when Jesus celebrated his death sacramentally. At the Last Supper the significance of his life and death and his own understanding of both are made clear to us. It is at this point that he tells us the purpose and reason of his death. His death is like no other and, aware of the salvific meaning of his existence, he therefore deliberately gives himself in obedience to his Father.

This is not simply a manifestation of spiritual love because the gestures performed by Jesus during the Last Supper were made real on the Cross. They are not just romantic gestures but actions full of drama, actions that were not completely clear to the disciples at the time but were a symbol of his approaching death. Obedience is not just a beautiful word! To promise obedience is not a romantic gesture! The experience of Jesus makes clear to us what Fr Felicísimo Martínez, O.P., describes as 'the human cost of pain and renunciation which fidelity to obedience implies.'

An episode that speaks to us of the human and existential meaning of the obedience of Jesus is the prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, not because his prayer expresses his anguish in the face of death or because it is an experience of abandonment by his Father and disciples, but because the drama of his existence is present at this moment. This is the drama of an obedience which leads him to be the victim for the salvation of humanity. It is for this reason that he, the Holy One, must be handed over to the power of suffering, sin and evil in order to make all things new.

Here, obedience is transformed into a true agony, into a total abandonment to the will of the Father and into an absolute trust that the power of God will triumphantly lead him out of his difficulties, and so Jesus does not consider his difficulties to be without purpose but accepts them according to God's will. The obedience of Jesus was not an external act aimed at saving himself. Rather his obedience made God's ways his ways!

The death of Jesus is an act of obedience, not of personal consistency. He allows his Father to have the final word even if that word is unspoken. This act of obedience stems from a choice made in freedom. Jesus does not 'put up with' his death but willingly accepts it. His identity does not matter. His dignity as God is of no importance. All the good deeds accomplished for men are of no concern. The only matter of importance is to obey his Father because that obedience is a manifestation of the love he professes for God.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR US TO OBEY UNTIL DEATH?

Obedience 'without form'

The first act of obedience we made was to answer the vocation that one day made itself heard in our hearts. The significance of this first act of obedience influences the rest of our lives because by saying

'yes' to the Lord, we declared that we were handing over our life to live in obedience.

As this first act of obedience has still not been introduced into a 'mould,' that is to say, into a concrete charism and concrete lifestyle, it is sometimes considered to be obedience 'without form.' 'The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters' (Gen 1:2). These words from Genesis can help us to understand the character of this 'without-form' of the first 'yes' we gave to the Lord in our life. It is the 'without-form' that precedes creation, where the Spirit of God, the creative power of God, begins to rise from the depths of the person. From the initial confusion and darkness, that 'yes' is transformed into a concrete historical and temporal way of life and is introduced into history in order to achieve salvation for ourselves and for all humanity.

The first act of obedience is not therefore a clearly defined event in our lives as religious. It is not an actual 'yes' to future events or responsibilities. It is a willingness to put our own life at the service of others, to forsake our own world, its needs and certainties, our personal dreams, ideas and ideals and to live in constant detachment. It involves a willingness to live and participate in the creation of a new world endowed with trees of life and death, a willingness to conform ourselves to the Incarnate God who has given himself into the hands of humanity.

Therefore, it is a new approach to life and a new way of living before God and man. It is to live in nakedness before God and others, neither hiding ourselves when God calls nor feeling afraid before the eyes of our brothers and sisters on account of our nakedness. The one who is obedient is always found and has nothing to hide or conceal. He accepts what happens in his life because it is there that God's creative hands become visible. Obedience is the radical way of life of those consecrated to God which enables us to walk the path which Adam once walked, but

now we walk that path in union with Christ.

Through this first act of obedience we are called to a new way of life. If death opens the way to new life, obedience opens the way to death, not destroying but renewing life through the outpouring of the Spirit upon our existence once again.

God takes us to himself and sends us out renewed and consumed by his vigilant love. From his beautifying gaze we will not try to hide our nakedness or weakness, because we know that each day this gaze renews us. To obey until death is to allow obedience become an eschatological time and space where something new appears. This obedience introduces us into the life of Christ and totally identifies us with that life.

Freedom committed to mission

We have already pointed out how, in the Incarnation, Christ committed his divine being to the mission entrusted to him, divesting himself of that which belonged to him by nature. To obey is to divest ourselves, after the example of Christ, of our natural prerogative and power to direct and determine the course of our life. Firm in the belief that human life must be understood as a divine plan and aware that we are called and sent, we do not build by ourselves but by the power of the Spirit of God that has been poured out upon us.

Our freedom is expressed when we give ourselves to the Supreme Good, convinced that God fulfills our freedom and that freedom is not a human achievement but a gift through which we fulfill ourselves and commit ourselves to the Lord's service. Thus we allow God to save us and we become the means of salvation for others.

We allow God to save us when we learn that we can trust God and that his will is not a sacrifice but a gift that enriches and frees us. The serpent's temptation continues to make itself heard when we think that living in obedience thwarts our potential and imposes limits upon us.

To divest and empty ourselves of what we are is a dynamic discipline of the Kingdom that Christ, the Son of God, was obliged to live to its radical conclusion. Our religious profession, the vow of obedience made on the day of profession, is the entrance to that dynamic self-emptying. In consecrating ourselves to God we accept with all its consequences the reality that we are creatures in need of God and we joyfully and courageously accept our human reality with its power and weakness, its eternity and finitude, its life and death.

Our entire humanity is surrendered to the Lord in obedience. This is not simply an action performed at a particular moment but a constant conversion towards service. Dominican life and humanity consist in service. We are the servants of humanity when we preach, teach, pray, study, heal, reflect, advise, cook, clean, wash, shop, laugh, sleep, spend time with our brothers and sisters, argue with them, look at television or simply sit down. This is all part of service because we have consecrated ourselves to serve and to bring Christ's salvation to the world. Not only is our public life an instrument of salvation, so also is our private life. To empty ourselves is to know that we are not the centre of our existence. Only the Lord and his concerns are important to us and we try to live in this way with deep and evangelical joy.

Christ saved us by his obedience to his Father and we are called to follow the Lord in this saving work through our Dominican charism. Honorius III declared that our Order was instituted for preaching and the salvation of souls. Called to participate in the saving work of Jesus, we have sometimes seen this responsibility in terms of a series of positive actions that help liberate humanity from sin and unjust structures or that foster human development as a way to salvation. However, we have often overlooked our own life of total consecration as a place and opportunity for the salvation of humanity. A lack of belief in this derives from a lack of belief in the power of prayer and intercession, because the most beautiful of prayers embraces our entire existence!

Neither fear of punishment nor a desire for reward sustains our obedience. Rather it is sustained by love: we obey for love. We make of obedience a positive virtue far removed from the ascetism and negativity by which the vow was gradually impoverished. Like Jesus, we do not surrender our freedom like mindless puppets. We invest and commit all our freedom to the fulfillment of the will of the Father and we do so because we have been touched in the depths of our heart by the love of God. Therefore, our will and desire are to do what God wants us to accomplish through the instruments we have as an Order: our Rule, Constitutions, superiors and community.

OBEDIENCE MADE HISTORY

Obedience as creativity and discernment

How does the liberty which we deny ourselves and exercise for the salvation of humanity take shape and become an historical reality? In the first place, we need to emphasize that obedience need not be categorized primarily in legal, moral or ascetical terms. This would destroy our obedience as a vow and rob it of its evangelical quality. It would not even be Dominican obedience because for us the law of dispensation indicates that our mission goes beyond the law. Obedience must be accompanied by awareness because to live in obedience is to live with passionate attention to the will of the Father. Obedience is not simply an effort to fulfill the will of God. It is an attempt to live the will of God with passion.

To speak about obedience and discernment implies a great deal and brings us back to the subject of self-emptying and detachment from our own preferences, ideas and dreams, so as to adhere to the dreams of the Lord. This self-emptying aims to preclude consideration of ourselves as the centre of the world and to help us follow the same path as the Lord, and so open up the way of salvation.

God also acts in history. That is why one of the tasks of obedience is to know how to read the famous 'signs of the times.' Obedience is not something that binds us to the past. We do not obey in order to maintain structures. We do not obey the letter of the law but the life of the Spirit. If, as we have said, obedience has to be a manifestation of God's love for us, it must translate into creativity and innovation. Obedience is creative because it knows how to read God's will in life and history, and it is there that our mission as people consecrated to God is fulfilled.

The Chapter is a moment to respond in common obedience to this will of God without, however, forgetting to look at the world and its realities (making concrete the mystery of the Incarnation, an important mystery in the charism of the Order,) so that we do not run the risk of responding to questions nobody is asking! So what are the questions that arise in the human heart?

The gift of salvation is a gift offered to humanity not in order to nourish minds eager for knowledge. Perhaps today Dominicans need to leave their libraries more often and take a good look at the world, not so as to return to the library and write excellent books and articles, but to listen to the voice of the Lord and to allow ourselves to be asked for help, and to study not 'dead skins,' but to study life, learning from life itself and applying what we learn to life! However, in order to give life to our brothers and sisters we have first to die to ourselves.

Obedience to what the Lord wants and to 'how' he wants it

Our human existence must be understood as a life explained by the transcendent plan of God. This touches the deepest part of our existence because we will try not only to do what God wants, but to do it 'as' God wants it done. Jesus had to act as his Father wanted him to act.

We often have great ideals but they are not always fulfilled in

our daily lives. On the other hand, we sometimes believe our qualities might be better employed elsewhere.

The ordinary and the mundane were more common in the life of Christ than the extraordinary: thirty years of hidden life as opposed to three years of public life. We must not forget that those unknown and hidden years also contributed to God's salvation of humanity. His most extraordinary and public years were not, humanly speaking, a well-designed plan, the fruit of long and careful reflection, but were rather the fruit of complete dependency on God's desires concerning the ordinary and mundane.

To obey and to fulfill our mission 'as' the Lord wants involves obedience to the ordinary events of daily life which, when all is said and done, occupy the greater part of our life. Faithfully fulfilling our duties and obligations with humility and simplicity is the most beautiful way to act as servants. It is a 'daily yes to the everyday demands of love made by the Father.'

Through the mundane our life is situated between endurance of this daily routine (not as punishment but as God's plan) and total commitment to God's plan for our life and the lives of our brothers and sisters. To know how to find our way in the midst of this daily routine is an arduous task. To do this we need the help of the Spirit. Our daily schedule, work, the same way of praying and contact with the same people can sometimes become for us a straitjacket, or even blind us to beauty, salvation, the love of God which renews itself every day, and the power of God which makes all things new.

Obedience which abandons itself into the hands of our brothers and sisters

This is perhaps one of the most controversial points about our obedience – having to place our lives in the hands of our brothers and sisters – because sometimes this means a true death to our illusions. Our obedience to God involves obedience to our superior and community. This means to face reality openly and honestly,

although at certain times the only answer obedience receives from God is a deep and deadly silence. This is a silence, however, which, when seen with the eyes of faith, can be a prelude to a new creation. Here obedience becomes a real school of self-emptying.

If we do not believe that God can really make new even the most incomprehensible realities of our life, then our obedience makes no sense and it is not authentic because we want to continue being in control of our lives. This is not to obey until death but is to relive the situation of Adam and Eve. We often impose limits and conditions on our obedience, and only when our negotiations with our superior or community seem reasonable to us do we accept them. Is this the way to obey as Jesus obeyed, unto the cross?

Obedience to the community and superior often requires a great deal of freedom in order to accept a project that is different from our own without feeling humiliated or offended. A great degree of freedom is required here because, when promising obedience until death, we do not promise to negotiate with our superior, or to make it impossible for him or the community to make decisions, or to deal with issues in such a way that things are eventually done the way I want them done, (because I can manipulate situations so that there is no other alternative). Obedience requires a great degree of freedom because the first thing from which we need to free ourselves is precisely ourselves! Only then can we place ourselves in the hands of our brothers and sisters, although sometimes we can compare them to Balaam's donkey since even through the donkey the Lord was able to reveal his will!

OBEDIENCE LIVED UNTIL DEATH

A life that does not belong to me

Sometimes, moving on and new responsibilities are like a death for us as people consecrated to God, because we must leave behind

projects we have started, loved ones and well-known places that are part of our lives. Moving on detaches us from ourselves and from the lives of others, not with the same intensity as death yet sometimes packing our bags is a true agony, not simply because we must decide what to take with us, but also because we must decide what to leave behind.

Moving on appears to us like a death because it clearly shows us that 'nothing belongs to us.' That which we thought was ours does not belong to us. When we leave, things continue and are organized in a new way. Others come after us and do things their way in the mission in which we had worked so hard. Nothing belongs to us and so we must let go. We are able to let go, not by an exercise of asceticism, but out of love. It is an act of love because when we accept an assignation we cannot look back but must set our sights on the new place, position or responsibility that needs the life we can offer. The life of others can be fostered through our death and our death presupposes acceptance of assignations and responsibilities.

Sometimes the criterion of effectiveness is important to us. When this criterion imposes itself, the cross disappears. From a rational point of view this is somewhat strange. However, let us not forget that behind the apparent 'inefficiency' of the cross the whole mystery of the salvation of humanity lies hidden. The only criteria that must be present in our exercise of obedience are love and the lives of the new people to whom we are sent.

Obedience out of humility

In our life we need to take heed of the words of Jesus as given to us by Luke: 'Will any one of you, who has a servant ploughing or keeping sheep, say to him when he has come in from the field, "Come at once and sit down at table"? Will he not rather say to him, "Prepare supper for me, and gird yourself and serve me, till I eat and drink; and afterward you shall eat and drink"? Does he thank

the servant because he did what was commanded? So you also, when you have done all that is commanded you, say, "We are unworthy servants; we have only done what was our duty." (Lk 17:7-10).

In other words, should we expect rewards, congratulations or prizes for our obedience and our service in the Church and the Order? We must liberate ourselves from ourselves (it seems that the subject of freedom is quite prevalent today). We must free ourselves from personal advantages that might be acquired by our service and strive instead to live totally for the life and well-being of our brothers and sisters.

It is not only a question of giving our life but of giving it with simplicity, knowing that nothing belongs to us, neither the effort nor its fruit. Everything must be given up for the good of our brothers and sisters, for the salvation and liberation of humanity. I repeat: nothing is ours, neither the effort nor its fruit! Everything belongs to the Lord and to the humanity to whom we have committed ourselves through our consecration. Obedience therefore makes us radically poor to the point that we have to extend our hands to the Lord asking him for the charity of the Kingdom, because we have nothing to give him. We have given up absolutely everything.

To die in obedience

Obedience, as we have said above, separates us from loved ones, from familiar places and times, but it can never separate us from the fundamental purpose of our life: God! The separation and division of obedience will be felt more acutely the day we die. But at the same time death places us, in a definitive way, at the very source of our life: our life is from God and for God and not for our own ideals as the vow of obedience teaches us throughout life.

Our Dominican consecration and charism introduce us radically into God's great plan of salvation for humanity and direct our entire

life towards this plan. The same consecration and charism provide us with constant guidance and direction which even at the hour of death do not change. On the contrary, they become more real because they guide and direct us to our definitive end. When we die, we make life's last great act of obedience, the last and most beautiful act of obedience we can ever make.

Death must find us fulfilled and at peace. At peace, because obedience as a state and way of life has taught us to be creatures and to be satisfied with what we are. If the One, who is my love and my Lord, believes it time to take me to him, there must be no rebellion, only gratitude and confidence on account of the love experienced during my life.

There must be confidence because love, not the world, is the final master of our life: confidence that God had a plan for our life with which we have wholeheartedly cooperated. Hopefully we can say like Jesus at the time of his death: everything is fulfilled and what you asked of me has been achieved. Since we have given ourselves with confidence to the divine will during life, we can also give ourselves to that will at the hour of death to fulfill everything that God wants or has ever wanted from us. There is a well-known saying, full of wisdom, which says that the tree falls on the side towards which it leans. To which side does the tree of our life lean, to our side or to the side of the Lord?

At the hour of death our whole heart and being can tremble. But I invite you to have hope, my brothers and sisters, because in our trembling we can make present and present to the Lord the repugnant injustice suffered by so many men and women who die alone, in poverty or in the most dehumanizing violence.

We are called to perform a service for the benefit of all. This makes our life and death irreplaceable because our souls have been marked by those who took hold of us, clung to us, touched us, embraced us, caressed us and even, in some cases, mistreated us.

The effects of these relationships are offered to God in our person at the hour of our death. That is why even our death does not belong to us. We have given it to others because we have given our whole life to others with no part of life reserved for ourselves.

If our obedience, as a way of salvation, has not been an observance of rules and regulations but a union with every form of oppression in order to bring redemption and a union with the pain and suffering of humanity in order to bring consolation and light, and if our obedience has created mercy in our heart, united us together and become a sign of Christ's love and obedience, of his self-emptying and self-denial which surrendered everything to us, then we can emerge triumphant from our struggles and address death with the words spoken by Jesus to the soldiers in the Garden of Gethsemane: 'Whom do you seek? I am he' (Jn 18:7, 8).

CONCLUSION

I do not want my reflections to be too dark and sombre. If we speak of obedience until death we cannot fail to mention the light which brings all that I have mentioned to human existence and to our own life as consecrated men and women. Obedience is like our Dominican habit, black and white. I have described the 'black' sufficiently and have only touched upon the 'white' but I still want to insist on this aspect.

To be obedient until death is to live obediently as if risen from the dead. To live obediently in this way is to live gently at peace with the world, humanity and the reality of life. Facing this reality responsibly and with the sure knowledge that the senseless and absurd do not have the last word. Our God is a God of life, the giver of all life. He has repudiated the extinction of life and the destructive power of death.

Life is far stronger than death so we can die without fear. The liberating power of God is far stronger than sin and oppression, and

so we can obey without fear, knowing that nothing can limit our freedom because our freedom is in God's hands. He gives life to our freedom.

We are obedient until death so that life may burst forth with all its strength and power, and with the Spirit that brought about the resurrection of Christ.

APPENDIX IV
THE DYING THAT IS MISSION
fr Chrys McVey, O.P.
Socius for the Apostolic Life
Promoter General of the Dominican Family

INTRODUCTION

Santa Sabina, the international home of the Order, sits atop the Aventine, where in Roman times there was, nearby, a temple of Minerva, goddess of wisdom and of the arts and sciences. 'The Aventine was also an artists' quarter, like the Left Bank in Paris or London's Soho and [many playwrights, actors, and poets] lived there. A self-help corporation of artists who lived and worked on the Aventine afforded a degree of mutual protection in what were, then as now, precarious professions. This was also a part of the city that attracted social misfits and victims of exclusion: foreigners, widows, and prostitutes.'

I can think of no better description for a Dominican than as someone in a 'precarious profession,' one who is a 'social misfit,' and someone who has made himself a 'victim of exclusion.' For these are all part of *The Dying that is Mission*.

A PRECARIOUS PROFESSION

The Latin word, *precarious*, the root of the word, 'prayer,' refers to something 'obtained by begging.' Our word, 'precarious,' from the same Latin root – since it suggests dependence on the will of another person – has the added note of insecurity and risk. What we religious do, at our 'profession,' is openly declare that this is the kind of life we want to lead: dependent, insecure, and at risk.

Our brother, Claude Geffré, has defined Christianity as 'a

religion of otherness,' and he sees today's challenge of religious pluralism as inviting us 'to return to the heart of the Christian paradox as the religion of the Incarnation and the religion of the kenosis of God.' This is a challenge that invites us to return to ourselves, to our true identity as people for others. It is a challenge that is stimulating, provocative, and demanding. Most significant is how this emphasis on the 'otherness' of Christianity, even before affecting our theology and how we think about mission, can – and indeed, must – affect the way we relate to others.

Taking cultural and religious pluralism seriously may be the most important issue at the beginning of this century. I have been fascinated, in recent years, with the thinking of the Jewish philosopher, Emmanuel Levinas, who turned philosophy upside down by his insistence that it is ethics, not metaphysics, that is the 'first philosophy,' so that being in relationship is much more important than simply being. Levinas is fond of quoting the novice, Aloysha Karamazov, in Dostoevsky's novel: 'We are all responsible for everyone else – but I am more responsible than all the others.'

This is a revolutionary thought to live by, for we are then endlessly obligated to the other, endlessly responsible for the other. And the good, in the form of fraternity and discourse, takes precedence over the true. To be oneself is to be for others.

This 'being for others' is what we Dominicans are supposed to be good at doing. Dominic was inspired to respond to real needs. He was a great 'weeper' and his tears and groanings over what would happen to sinners were so loud that he kept the brothers awake at night. Described as a man of great compassion, Dominic wept – and the Order was born! Honorius III, acknowledging our origins, declared the Order established 'to be useful' to others. For us, then, there is this demanding criterion: everything is for the sake of these others; everything is for the sake of the mission.

Our vows free us precisely for this task. We are free to cross

over into the world of the other, free to cross boundaries, free to go beyond our own inherited faith and enter into the mystery that is the very heart of faith. 'It is,' as one brother said during a recent visitation, 'a wonderful time to be a Dominican.' If, as the Swiss theologian, Charles Journet, once said, it is the task of the theologian to do away with anything which would diminish the mystery, then, in this time of easy answers to complex questions, we seekers after truth and preservers of the mystery are right where we should be.

Just sixty years ago, before being killed by the Nazis on the eve of liberation, the Lutheran pastor and theologian, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, wrote about 'being driven right back to the beginnings of our understanding. Reconciliation and redemption, regeneration and the Holy Spirit, love of our enemies, cross and resurrection, life in Christ and Christian discipleship – all these things are so difficult and so remote that we hardly venture any more to speak of them. In the traditional words and acts we suspect there might be something quite new and revolutionary, though we cannot as yet grasp or express it... Our earlier words are therefore bound to lose their force and cease, and our being Christians today will be limited to two things: prayer and righteous action... All Christian thinking, speaking, and organizing must be born anew out of this prayer and action.'

To speak, as Bonhoeffer does, about 'something quite new and revolutionary,' though not yet clearly grasped or expressed, and about 'being born anew out of [this] prayer and action,' is to use language that we, as Dominicans, know quite well. We speak about 'attentiveness' and 'conversion,' and about 'prayer and action' as the heart of what it means to be religious. What has changed is our awareness of the tentativeness of it all. And tentativeness is, for most of us, a very awkward integrating principle. It is precarious to abandon truths that have worked in the past for new truths that are being born now out of prayer and righteous action, but which remain untried and risky.

The Oakland Chapter (1989) drew several consequences from what it means to live in this tension. 'Like Dominic, we are not afraid to listen to God's Word as it unfolds in today's changing world. We are called by our preaching to aid in the building of a culture of truth and relationship to replace a culture of lies... to discern what is dying and what is coming to life, what is salvation and what is not, what is truth and what is illusion or lie.' The chapter 'accepts the consequences of living dialogically in a pluriform world...' and recognizes study of this world to be of utmost necessity: 'It is a world that invites us...'

THE PRICE ONE PAYS

For an American, these words about truth, illusion and lies are particularly apt now, when, as in George Orwell's great prophetic work, *Nineteen Eighty-four*, three slogans dominate society: 'war is peace, freedom is slavery, and ignorance is truth.'

We Dominicans have many examples of the price one pays for speaking the truth. We have the example of our three American sisters, Carol Gilbert, Ardeth Platte and Jackie Hudson, now serving harsh three-year prison terms for their symbolic attack on nuclear missile silos in the United States, whose action the Master described in a letter to them as 'powerful preaching.' We have the witness of our brother, Pierre Claverie, assassinated in Algeria for his commitment to dialogue between Christians and Muslims, who saw his ministry carried out 'on the lines of brokenness' in our world, a world divided into North and South, rich and poor, Muslim and Christian. We have the example of brothers and sisters living, at great risk, in disputed territory in Colombia, of sisters in the hills of East Timor, in a place where no one else wants to go. We have the example of the Sisters of Bethany giving asylum to a Kurdish family in Waldniel, Germany, thus alienating neighbours and clergy, and jeopardizing state aid for the children's villages they run. And several years ago, our brothers in Bordeaux gave

asylum to illegal aliens in their church, causing some disruption in the services. This prompted one of the bishops to complain: 'People go to church to pray, not to put their lives at risk!' A strange remark coming from a bishop, who should know well that we Christians go to church precisely to put our lives at risk – otherwise the Eucharist makes no sense at all.

This is our life too, but it is a life, as Yves Congar wrote, that 'necessarily tears us apart. This is its pain and the source of its fertility. For the Word of God, whose life the apostles share, reaches out to all that is farthest from God and embraces it... The life of God is stretched open to find a space for all that we are: he becomes like us in all things but sin. He takes upon himself our doubts and fears; he enters into our experience of absurdity, that wilderness in which all meaning is lost. So for us to live the apostolic life fully is to find that we too are torn open, stretched out. To be a preacher... is to bear within our lives that distance between the life of God and that which is furthest away, alienated and hurt... We have no word which offers meaning to people's lives, unless we have been touched by their doubts and glimpsed the abyss.' Timothy, in his letter on community, quotes these lines of Congar's, and adds, 'The apostolic life does not offer us a balanced and healthy "lifestyle," with good career prospects. It unbalances us, tips us into that which is most other. If we share the life of the Word of God in this way, then we are hollowed out, opened up, so that there is the space and silence for a new word to be born, as if for the first time.'

Later in the letter, he quotes Meister Eckhart: 'Stand firm, and do not waver from your emptiness.' It is this kind of tension that the apostolic life invites us to live. 'We have promised,' writes Timothy, 'to build our lives with our brothers and sisters. For us henceforth to be human, to be ourselves, is to be one of the preaching brethren, we have no other life-story. Here is our home and we can have no other. But the impetus of the apostolic life propels us into different worlds.'

SOCIAL MISFITS

Pierre Claverie reminds us that it is up to us to choose the world we live in. It might be truer to say we have about as much choice as Jesus did. Jesus is led by the Spirit to Nazareth where he had been brought up, he enters the synagogue..., he stands up to read and they hand him the book of the prophet Isaiah. Jesus unrolled the scroll and found the place where it is written: The Spirit of the Lord is upon me...to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives and new sight to the blind; to free the oppressed and announce the Lord's year of mercy (Lk 4:16-20). Jesus begins his ministry with a clear statement of what he is about: This scripture has come true today before your very eyes (Lk 4:21). (This is a passage that is often used at professions and ordinations, but in a cruel irony, we often choose the words without the deeds.)

Jesus is guided by the Spirit; what he is sent to do is defined by others; and his mission is carried out in powerlessness.

Guided by the Spirit, Jesus makes his own the mission begun by the Spirit – the same Spirit that hovered over the waters of chaos, the same Spirit who is the way God chose to be present to all men and women at the beginning, and whose mission Jesus is sent to complete. The Spirit who is surprising, unpredictable, and subversive. The poor, the captive, the blind, the oppressed, these are the ones who define Jesus' mission in the agenda set out for him by the Spirit. Their needs determine Jesus' response and take over his life: '... he and his disciples couldn't even find time to eat,' so that 'when his family heard what was happening, they tried to take him home with them. "He's out of his mind," they said' (Mk 3:20-21). Jesus was a misfit, acting abnormally, and a cause of embarrassment for his family because his understanding of family was much wider than theirs: 'Anyone who does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother' (Mt 12.50).

Jesus becomes Saviour out of compassion, by embodying the

hurts of all those others: 'He himself bore out infirmities and took upon himself our diseases' (Mt 8:17). This is so prominent in Jesus' ministry that the work he hands on to us has this same characteristic of *paraklesis*, of 'comforting appeal.' I have often thought that the best description of mission is found not in the commissioning passages at the end of the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, about 'going into the whole world to preach and baptize all nations...' but rather in a passage like 2 Corinthians 1:5-7, 'All praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the source of every mercy and the God who comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When others are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us. You can be sure that the more we suffer for Christ, the more God will shower us with his comfort through Christ. So when we are weighed down with troubles, it is for your benefit and salvation!' So must we embody the hurts of others.

There is a story told, I think by Charles Péguy, about a man who went to heaven and was asked by the examining angel, 'Where are your wounds?' 'Wounds?' the man said. 'I don't have any wounds.' And the angel replied wearily, 'Was there nothing worth fighting for?' Our wounds, what we suffer for others, make us who we are. They identify us, in the same way the apostles were able to identify Jesus after the Resurrection, when he showed them his wounds (Jn 20:20). Paul describes his mission to the Corinthians in just this way: 'When I first came to you, I did not use lofty words and brilliant ideas to tell you God's message. For I decided to concentrate only on Jesus Christ and his death on the cross. I came to you in weakness – timid and trembling' (1 Cor 2:1-3).

POWERLESS MISSION

The way of Jesus, the way of Paul, is to carry out the mission in powerlessness. St John Chrysostom, in his commentary on 1 Corinthians, writes that 'it might be possible for a man to love

without risking danger, but that is not the case with us.' Love is dangerous and we are never quite sure what we are getting into. The holy and beloved Bishop Paul Andreotti of Pakistan, in a retreat to the friars a year or two before he himself died, said, 'I believe what Jesus is offering us here is a way of dying.'

Yet we are surrounded by so many attempts to deny the reality of dying – which is why TV advertisements are so inauthentic: perfectly white teeth, beautiful hair, sleek bodies, attractive young people, on a yacht, on a clear blue sea, in a perfect world. The reality is the connection between real love and dying. The late Herbert McCabe said it best: 'If you don't love, you're dead. If you do, you're killed.' If we are looking for anything other than a way of dying, then we are in the wrong business. If we do not embrace powerlessness, like Jesus, we are not following the Spirit's agenda but rather our own.

Why is this so important? It is important because the experience of powerlessness is so pervasive, the 'lines of brokenness' so wide, the powerful so few and the powerless so many. It is important because it is in this world of the powerless that we choose to live. It is important because we have to be attentive to this world so that our choosing is conscious and deliberate. One writer wonders about the 'time relation' of events. 'While Jews were being murdered in Treblinka, the overwhelming plurality of human beings, two miles away on Polish farms, 5000 miles away in New York, were sleeping or eating or going to a film or making love or worrying about going to the dentist. This,' he writes, 'is where my imagination balks. The two orders of simultaneous experience is so hideous a paradox... Are there different species of time in the same world, "good times" and enveloping folds of inhuman time in which men fall into the slow hands of living damnation?'

I would guess most people, in the midst of war – in bloody clashes between Muslim and Christian in Nigeria and Indonesia, in ethnic cleansing and famine in Sudan, amid chaos in Iraq – most

people experience something like 'different species of time': life still goes on. But there are not, in fact, two species of time. It is the same world. I remember reading, years ago, the words of Albert Camus to the French Dominicans after World War II. They made sense to me then and seem terribly apt today: 'There is in this world beauty and there are the humiliated. We must strive, hard as it is, not to be unfaithful, neither to the one nor to the other.' We must strive, hard as it is, to live in this powerless tension.

John Baptist Metz, in a beautiful little book on poverty, describes powerlessness as the language of solidarity. It is the way we say 'Yes' to the poor, but we have also to say 'No' to the temptation to recapture power through word, sacrament, money, or position. He writes, 'Satan wants us strong. Power he understands. It is powerlessness he fears.'

There is this precise difference between power and powerlessness that distinguishes the disciples of a rabbi from the disciples of Jesus. The rabbi sat in the synagogue, disciples came to him, took notes and sought to repeat everything the rabbi taught. Jesus was different. He did not sit in a synagogue but took to the roads; disciples did not come to him, he sought them out; and his disciples were not asked to repeat what he said but to do what he did. The rabbis gave their disciples notebooks; Jesus gives his disciples a basin and a towel—and a command: 'If I, your master and lord, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other's feet. I have given you an example. Do as I have done to you' (Jn 13:14-15).

This washing of the feet by the one who is both lord of the feast and servant is, as Herbert McCabe has written 'a symbol of a new kind of relationship amongst men and women, a relationship neither of dominance nor subservience but of equality in love, a relationship in which we are equal in love to each other... This new kind of relationship finds echo in the Gospel of Luke, where those ready and waiting for the return of the master find, to their surprise, that 'he himself will seat them, put on an apron, and serve them as

they sit and eat!' (Lk 12:37).

There is a story told by a young mother which captures for me the essence of this powerless ministry. She had a handicapped son and confessed to having been over-protective of him. One day, she let him go to the store by himself. When he was late returning, his mother grew concerned and went out on the street to wait for him. Finally she saw him limping up the street. She rushed toward him and said, 'Where have you been?' He replied, 'I was coming home and I met Carol. She dropped her doll and it broke.' And the mother blurted out, 'And you had to stop and help her pick it up!' 'No, mother,' he said, 'I had to stop and help her cry.'

Confronted by others' pain and suffering, we often do not have the right words. We do not know the right thing to do. We have no tools to repair damage, we are not technicians who can put things right. But we can always speak out of what we do not have: we can speak to the powerless out of our own powerlessness. If we do not waver from our emptiness, then we can always help people cry. Like the sinful woman we can always wash the feet of the other with our tears (Lk 7:38). And discover, to our surprise, that we ourselves are being waited upon.

That this image is central to early Christian understanding is witnessed by many stories from the 4th century. When the anchorites in the desert criticized the new coenobitic communities, their response to the hermits was this: 'If you live alone all by yourself in the desert – whose feet will you wash?'

VICTIMS OF EXCLUSION

This going out to others who are victims of exclusion, the poor, the captive, the blind, the oppressed, defines mission. It defined the mission of Jesus and it defines the mission he gives his disciples. It is a 'sending' and a taking to the road, without purse or bag or sandals. 'Do not stop at the homes of those you know,' Jesus tells the

disciples (Lk 10:4). There are several interesting things about this: Jesus invites them to a life of itinerancy, to a life of urgency ('keep moving') and to a life of dependency on the goodness of others, strangers, whom they 'do [not] know.'

To be sent on mission – as every Dominican is – is to be made vulnerable and dependent. But this is the only proper response for a Dominican man or woman in a world which produces the homeless and the hurting and the stranger. To take to the road again – as chapter after chapter has reminded us – is to live on Pierre Claverie's 'lines of brokenness' and to share the fate of those who have been made homeless. It means sharing their fate of being made homeless because of the stands we take against prevailing opinion.

The scripture scholar, Walter Brueggemann, speaks about the 'monopoly of imagination,' a phrase which suggests that 'some body or force in society has both the sole voice in determining how things are experienced, and the right and legitimacy to supply the lens through which life is properly viewed or experienced. No one is permitted to have an image outside this approved set of imaginations or images.' To stand against such powerful monopolies is to align ourselves with the Gospel-vision that Dominic made his own. (One writer believed that Dominic sent his brothers to the cities, not only to study, but because it was there that the newly disenfranchised victims of an emerging mercantile economy were to be found: Dominicans were to be 'brothers,' friars, to them.) To take such a stand is to be ourselves made vulnerable and marginal but it is there that our preaching is also made credible.

How strangers, widows and orphans were treated was always, according to the books of the Law and the Prophets, the criterion for good action. Thus Leviticus, 'When a stranger sojourns with you in the land, you shall not do him wrong. [He] shall be to you as a native among you, and you shall love him as yourself' (Lev 19:33-34). And Exodus gives as the reason for not oppressing the stranger this: 'You know the heart of a stranger, for you were strangers in the land

of Egypt' (Ex 23:9). Just as this appeal in Exodus is to a shared experience as providing a common ground, so is St Paul's vision of strangers becoming community rooted in the experience of what God was doing in Jesus: 'In Christ, God was making friends with the world... and entrusted to us the task of making friends' (2 Cor 5:19).

But to be hospitable, to welcome strangers as guests, they have to be seen as 'like us' in needs, experiences and expectations. 'It was not sufficient,' writes Christine Pohl, 'that strangers be vulnerable; hosts had to identify with their experiences of vulnerability and suffering before they welcomed them.' The Greek word used in the New Testament for hospitality or welcome (*proslambanomai*), 'take, receive, possess,' indicates that we must also 'take them with us' and 'introduce them warmly into our fellowship.' What this 'taking to oneself' involves can be seen in the word Paul uses in Romans 12:13, where hospitality is *philoxenia* – 'loving the stranger.' This is, in fact, the original name of the famous Rublev icon of the three angels, which we know as 'the Trinity.' The three figures are seated round a table with an empty place set for the guest/stranger. It is good for us to link the two words, 'hospitality' and 'Trinity,' because it is in the Trinity itself that we find the model and motive for loving the stranger.

'Christianity,' as Gregory of Nyssa teaches, 'is the imitation of God's nature,' and this idea is common to Aquinas, who teaches that 'we are made, not in the image of the Second Person, as many think, but in the image of the whole Trinity.' The Trinity is a mystery of relationship. We are not made for isolation but for interdependence and relatedness – it is built in, part of our genetic code! And the summit of this relationship is when we reach out to touch each other in mutual healing.

'Jesus felt compassion for [the leper], stretched out his hand, touched him and said... Be clean' (Mt 8:3). Compassion, a feeling for the other, reaching out, stretching, touching and healing: these

seem to be necessary components of the Gospel paradigm for relationship. In the Gospels, Jesus is always reaching out to those on the fringes, reaching out to the pagan and the ritually unclean, touching them – and becoming himself unclean. In writing about this openness to someone who is other than oneself, and to what other religious traditions have to say, the theologian, Erik Borgman, in a recent article, sees this openness as luring people towards ‘the venture of non-identity.’ ‘It invites men and women, like Jesus, to become the “icon of the invisible God” (Col 1:15), not by accepting its preaching and the proclamation of him as the ultimate and complete truth, but by reflecting him in their own history and bringing it together with those from elsewhere who do the same thing. Thus,’ he writes, ‘in Jesus the Christ a new community comes into being which time and again digs up old and new treasures from the fullness of God which he discloses in and through them. Before it can be a theology of God’s presence, Christian theology is a theology of the lack of God. It is precisely in the pain of this lack that God’s presence and nearness is revealed.’ (I was enchanted by discovering something the poet, Emily Dickinson, wrote over 150 years ago: ‘We both believe and disbelieve a hundred times an hour, which keeps believing nimble.’)

This passage from Borgman expresses well the challenge of religious pluralism, as seen by Bonhoeffer and Geffré, where we are ‘driven right back to the beginning of our understanding,’ and to some of the implications in our description of Christianity as ‘a religion of otherness’ and the ‘heart of the Christian paradox’ as ‘Incarnation’ and ‘the kenosis of God.’

OUTSIDE THE CAMP

Embracing the other, especially the victims of exclusion, ‘making friends with the world,’ is not an easy task. Where is this world we are to make friends with? I think it significant for us Dominicans, entrusted with a universal mission of preaching, to remember that

Jesus began his ministry in 'Galilee of the Nations,' Galilee of the foreigners, half-Gentile in population, half-pagan in cult, populated by people considered suspect by the institution in Jerusalem: 'Can anything good come from Nazareth?' (Jn 1:46). Yet, after the Resurrection, Jesus tells his disciples, 'I will go ahead of you to Galilee' (Mt 26:32). Even more intriguing is Jesus' message to the women: 'Go and tell my brothers to set out for Galilee; there they will see me!' (Mt 28:10).

Where do we experience God's presence and nearness? In Exodus, it is written that 'anyone who wished to consult the Lord would go to the meeting tent, outside the camp' (Ex 33:7). 'Outside the camp,' among all those 'others' relegated to a place outside the camp, is where we meet a God who cannot be controlled. Outside the camp we meet the ultimate Other who is different, and discover all the others.

It is outside the camp, in all the Galilees that surround us, that we discover what mission is. To be in mission is to live outside the camp and to discover with others what God is really about. But this knowledge comes at a price. The image of going outside the camp to meet God is found again at the end of the Bible. In the Letter to the Hebrews: 'Jesus suffered outside the gate to make his people holy by his blood. Let us go to him then, outside the camp, and bear the abuse he suffered' (Heb 13:12-13). Mission is about dying, but dying to sanctify others.

Where are we, as an Order? In Jerusalem, or Rome? Or 'outside the camp?' Or to put it more starkly: Where do we want to be? Someone remarked that we make our vows to the Master of the Order for the mission of the Order – and spend the rest of our lives carrying out the mission of the province! There is some truth in this, seen in the difficulty, sometimes, of the Master of the Order having to beg provincials for brothers for the works general chapters have confided to him. It is even truer if we have not identified the Galilees within the confines of a province.

Just as having an extra-territorial 'mission' is essential for a province's vitality, so too is identifying 'mission territory' within the province itself, and freeing brothers for this work. Vincent de Couesnongle described Dominic's desire to 'go to the Cumans' as a reaching out to those who will make or unmake tomorrow's world. What it means for us is to carry on the work of St Dominic, 'or in other words to allow him to be still present in the world as it exists. But how can we live up to this ideal if in our heart of hearts, our Cumans are not alive, if they died within us before coming to birth?' Then he writes: 'I am going to the Cumans! If that cry of brother Dominic [were] alive in us, if it tormented us all the time, would not our communities, and our life with God for other people be totally different from what they are now?'

I would like to end with something I read as a novice – many, many years ago – and which I just rediscovered. It is something the French Dominican, Humbert Clérissac, in exile in England in the early part of the 20th century, wrote just before he died. 'He deplored the frightening possibility of "dying without having done anything for the Order. To bring others to understand and love its luminous spirit, the eternal youth of its doctrinal tradition, its exquisite large-mindedness, its sublime idealism – would not one willingly die to make that known and loved!'"

Would one willingly die to make that known and loved?

30th July 2004

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