



ORDO PRÆDICATORUM
Curia Generalitia

13 July 2026

Prot. 45/26/328 PO

Brother Dominic ESHIKENA, OP

Prior Provincial
Province of St Joseph the Worker
in Nigeria and Ghana

*This year shall be a jubilee for you... each one shall return to his household...
For it is a jubilee, and it shall be holy to you
(Leviticus 25:10,12)*

Dear Brother Dominic and all the Brothers of the Province,

With gratitude to God, the Giver of every good gift, *Largitor omnium bonorum*, we rejoice with you as you celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Dominican presence and preaching in Nigeria. Together with you, we give thanks to the Lord for the abundant fruits of these decades: for the lives transformed by the Gospel, for the brothers who have faithfully preached the Word, and for the many vocations that have flourished in Nigeria and Ghana.

Our thoughts turn with particular gratitude to the three brothers sent by the Province of St. Albert the Great (USA): Edward Thaddeus Lawton, Arthur Kinsella, and Michael Dempsey, who first set foot in Yaba, Lagos, in 1951. Their journey was inspired by Christ's command to His disciples: "**Go** into all the world and proclaim the Good News." Yet they were able to go only because they had first answered another invitation from the Lord: "**Come**, follow me."

At first glance, *coming* and *going* appear to be movements in opposite directions. But in the mystery of the Christian vocation, they are one and the same. The God who *sends* us into the world is the very God who continually *calls* us to Himself. To hear Christ say, "*Come, follow me*," is already to begin the journey toward the world He loves. And to obey His command, "*Go and proclaim the Gospel*," is to discover that the path of mission is simply the continuation of the path of discipleship. Discipleship and apostleship are not two separate realities but two dimensions of the same vocation, both oriented toward the same person, Jesus Christ. For this reason, every true disciple is also an apostle, and every authentic follower of Christ is, by that very fact, a missionary. As sons of Saint Dominic, we know that our preaching bears fruit only insofar as it flows from a life of contemplation, from hearts that have first learned to remain with the Master before going forth to announce Him to others.

Seventy-five years later, the seed planted by those three pioneering friars has borne abundant fruit. What began as a small missionary presence has, by the grace of God, grown into the largest Dominican province in Africa! Such growth is, above all, a testament to the fidelity of God, who continues to bless the preaching of His Word through the generous lives of countless brothers who have embraced the same missionary spirit as their predecessors.

This, in the end, is what the “coming” and the “going” have always meant for the Dominican Family in Nigeria: to remain so close to Christ that we are always ready to be sent by Him, and to go so faithfully wherever He leads that we never cease to follow Him. The disciple who remains with Christ becomes the preacher who is sent to the world; and the preacher who is sent discovers Christ already waiting in every place to which the Gospel leads. *Coming* and *going* are thus not opposing movements but the single rhythm of a life shaped by Christ.

As you celebrate this Jubilee, we give thanks not only for seventy-five years of history, but also for seventy-five years of grace: of lives transformed by the Gospel, vocations generously embraced, communities built in faith, and the saving Word faithfully preached. May the same Lord who planted the first seed in Yaba in 1951 continue to make it bear abundant fruit. May He strengthen your fidelity to the charism of Saint Dominic, deepen your communion as brothers in mission, and inspire new generations of joyful preachers. And may the One who began this good work bring it to completion, granting the Province many more jubilees in which to proclaim, with renewed zeal, the joy and truth of the Gospel.

Congratulations and a Blessed Jubilee!

Your brother in St. Dominic,


Brother Gerard Francisco Timoner III, OP
Master of the Order

copy: fr. Louis Stephen Morrone, OP - Prior Provincial of St. Albert the Great Province