



DOMINICAN

Central

NEWS from the PROVINCE OF ST. ALBERT THE GREAT

WINTER 2005

From the Provincial

DEAR FRIENDS
OF THE FRIARS,



As American Catholics we are aware of the rich contribution that each new wave of immigrants has brought not only to our country, but also to our church. First the Irish and French, and then the Germans, later the Poles, Bohemians, and Italians, each in their way added to the customs and traditions that are so much a part of our lives. From the beginning, our Dominican friars were there to welcome the new arrivals, to help them become established in an alien land, and to strengthen and nurture their Catholic faith.

That tradition continues even to this day. No longer are the newcomers from Western, Eastern, or Southern Europe. Now they come from Asia, Africa, and Latin America. But the Dominican friars are still there to greet them. This is especially the case for those coming here from Mexico, Central America, and South America. At St Pius Parish and Visitation Parish in Chicago, at St. Dominic Parish in Denver, and at Holy Rosary Parish in Minneapolis, the Dominican friars are powerful witnesses to the Catholic culture that Latinos hold dear and to the deep faith they carry in their hearts.

In all four of these parishes there is a genuine commitment to Hispanic ministry. This involves so much more than the mere decision to celebrate Eucharist in Spanish. It means learning about the customs, values, and perspectives of the Hispanic people. It calls for actively engaging the culture of the people themselves. Finally, it demands that, like Saint Paul, who became a

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Hispanics are a blessing at St. Pius

SINCE THE 1960s, Hispanics have been the fastest-growing ethnic group in the United States. Because the vast majority of these immigrants are Catholic, our church faces major challenges to incorporate them. Since 1971, they account for 71 percent of national Catholic growth, currently constituting more than one third of all Catholics in the U.S. At this rate, by the year 2050, 86 percent of the American Catholics will be Hispanic. Between 1990 and 2000, the number of Hispanics living in the Chicago archdiocese jumped to 60 percent, to 1.2 million people, making them more than half the Catholics in the archdiocese.

The Catholic Church has been slow to respond to this burgeoning population. Pastoral staffs often refuse to learn Spanish; pastors resist scheduling a Mass in Spanish; dioceses devote disproportionately small amounts of resources to Hispanic ministry; and parishioners barely welcome their newest members from the south.

The influx of Hispanics is, in fact, a great blessing. Parishes that do open their doors find themselves quickly swamped with new parishioners, bringing a new set of needs and a different response to established rules, customs, and traditions.

But more important, Hispanics enrich our church with their profound faith, which is neither legalistic nor isolated from the secular world. For them, Our Lady of Guadalupe is their protector, representing the feminine face of God. They treasure their families, sacrificing greatly to serve them and they extend that care to their *compadres* (friends who become godparents to their children). The bigger the family, the better; the larger the fiesta, the more



joyous the celebration. Even employers greatly appreciate Hispanic workers' honesty and work ethics.

Fr. Charles Dahm, O.P., is the pastor of St. Pius Parish in Chicago

A warm welcome

In 1963, St. Pius V Church in Chicago, a Dominican parish since 1929, was the first among 13 parishes in the Pilsen neighborhood to celebrate Mass in Spanish. Since then, the parish has become increasingly Hispanic, and the immigrant Mexican community has responded enthusiastically to the warm welcome and broad range of

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A mural painted across from the church stands tribute to parish members of St. Pius

services offered at the parish.

Hispanics are attracted to Jesus because he, like them, was an innocent victim of injustice. Experienced in poverty, Hispanics naturally embrace the God-like virtues of compassion, generosity, and hospitality for the less fortunate, and they expect their church to struggle for justice, succor the poor, feed the hungry, welcome the immigrant, and defend the defenseless.

Responding to neighborhood needs

Because of this priority, St. Pius V Parish responded by offer-

ing many programs, including a soup kitchen, shelters for the homeless, a secondhand clothing store, an affordable housing program, day-care centers, and more. It trains and organizes parishioners to act on their faith, defend their rights, and end discrimination. To address long-term problems of transition, the parish instituted a panoply of programs ranging from marriage counseling to parenting classes, from violence prevention to youth empowerment, from legal aid to educational guidance, from community organizing to economic development.

The parish offers family counseling and counts on seven full-time staff members. They work especially with women and children victims of domestic violence but also offer assistance to their male abusers. There is a youth center with an after-school program (basically an anti-drop-out and gang prevention program) where neighborhood youth receive tutoring, art and music classes, dance lessons, sports, and computer and life-skills training. There are also

programs designed to reach out to present gang members. Although St. Pius V conducts its services mostly in Spanish, it also offers English classes on most evenings.

St. Pius V is proactive in responding to neighborhood needs of housing, cleanup, and security against area gang activity. They helped form the Resurrection Project, a community-based corporation that promotes social and economic advancements through educational organizing and community development. The Resurrection Project has built and sold more than 145 affordable new homes to residents. It also remodeled and now manages 165 reasonably priced rental apartments for low-income families, generating more than \$50 million of new investment in the community.

Undoubtedly, the non-Hispanics at St. Pius V Parish have also been transformed by this new culture, which enriches the way we believe, hope, and love in community.

—Fr. Charles Dahm, O.P.

Fr. Charles Dahm, O.P.'s book, Parish Ministry in a Hispanic Community (Paulist Press) was highlighted in our Summer issue.

From the Provincial (continued from page 1)

Greek to save Greeks and a Jew to save Jews, our brothers strive to actively embrace the world of their people so that the Good News of Jesus might be authentically preached in a way that their listeners might actually hear it as life-giving and grace-filled.

This ministry to Hispanic people corresponds to the broader mission of the province to preach, teach, and promote justice and peace. Our friars in Hispanic ministry not only carry out the mission of preaching and teaching that is so often identified with the Order, they work with local governments and civic agencies to provide their people with safer housing, better health, and greater opportunities for education and employment. In this our friars strive to make present the example of Jesus, who sought to make whole and healthy the entire person, body, mind, and soul. In their preaching, teaching, and justice ministry to the Hispanic community, our brothers are truly grateful for your support, your prayers, and your financial help, as am I.

In Saint Dominic,
Michael Mascari, O.P.
Prior Provincial

Your donations...

help Fr. Jose Santiago, O.P. to continue his ministry at Holy Rosary Church in Minneapolis. Thank you!

1. Adopt a preacher in seminary education
2. Fund a Come & See Vocation Weekend
3. Support a retired friar
4. Help our Bolivian missions
5. Remember us in your will



Please send your donation today in the envelope enclosed.

Contact:
Dominican Central
Director, Mission Advancement
1909 South Ashland Avenue
Chicago, IL 60608-2994

MISSION STATEMENT

THE DOMINICAN FRIARS
OF THE PROVINCE OF ST. ALBERT THE GREAT
COMMUNICATE THE WORD OF GOD THROUGH
PREACHING, THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION,
AND THE PROMOTION OF JUSTICE AND PEACE.

THIS MISSION IN THE BODY OF CHRIST DEMANDS
A VOWED COMMUNITY LIFE, LITURGICAL PRAYER,
AND LIFELONG STUDY.

A Novice . . . again!

SIX MONTHS AGO, I became a novice . . . after being professed for more than 40 years. A novitiate consists of a certain mixture of excitement and dread. As a novice, one begins a new and exciting life. And at the same time, he prays that it is not a grand mistake. The excitement of a journey is coupled with the anxiety of its successful completion.

So it has been for me these past few months of working in a mixed parish—Anglo and Hispanic. I have never worked in a parish before, and so to juggle this adjustment with that of learning a new culture and a new language has been both exciting and fearful. The adventure of developing a new language at 63 is daunting. However, to understand a new phrase, to utter a complete sentence, to have someone correct a small error, and especially when someone understands what I am trying to say brings a delightful satisfaction and a surge of hope that make it more than worthwhile. The encouragement of the people and their identification with my struggle as I identify with theirs brings a sense of mutual affection and genuine community. We are in the same boat.

In many ways, this novice is slowly learning again that the small things are the important things: a welcoming smile, a kind word, a sense of availability, a quick “yes,” a willingness to respond as best one can. The devotion of the Hispanic people, their utter trust in God, their value of and commitment to their family, their delight in a fiesta, their love of singing, and their “making do” with little make them indeed a “master” for this “novice.”;

It is too soon for me to speak about ministering in the Hispanic community, but rather of my initial experience.



The challenge comes from the need of the church and the province as the Lord presents his people to us. My challenge is to go back 43 years in order to see if the spirit of adventure might still burn within. And to one who does have that spirit and is called to Hispanic ministry, I can only say what I tell myself: Enjoy the people, be available, and don't give up in those moments of dread when you don't understand the language and wonder whether you ever will.

As in the novitiate and life itself, so too in a new and challenging ministry, there are moments of excitement and dread, but the excitement that accompanies a new adventure far outweighs the humdrum of the “same old,” and the renewed simplicity of the gospel is a more than sufficient blessing.

—Fr. Edward M. Ruane, O.P.

Blessings for an unborn child are requested of Fr. Ed Ruane, O.P. after Mass.

FROM THE VICAR FOR MISSION DEVELOPMENT

DevelOPment News

MORE THAN 30 years ago, I was teaching catechism to a group of small children, when a little girl asked me, “Where do Dominicans come from?” When I asked her why she had such a question, she explained to me that she had never seen “little Dominicans, only big ones.” Over the years I have heard different versions of the same question but not always in the same simple and clear words of this small child.

In all the parishes, schools, and other works that Dominicans do, people are meeting members of the community that have finished their training and are in a sense the finished product. But to be an effective Dominican there must be a time of training for the many challenges that preaching demands of the preacher.

The required period of study, prayer, and community is a great investment of time, money, and energy on the part

of all who are involved in the process. There is a well-made investment because the community has learned through centuries of experience that good training leads to good pastoral service, and good preaching brings people closer to God. In order to do this there must be sound preparation in doctrine, well-developed communications skills, and a deep sense of spirituality. All three of these elements must come together in the training of a good preacher.

The “big” Dominicans who serve you now and will continue to serve you come from our formation programs that take place in our novitiate in Denver, our House of Studies in Saint Louis, and our formation houses in Bolivia. For it to be a success we need the prayerful and financial support of our friends. In your estate planning, please consider a gift to support “little” Dominicans so that the preaching may continue to bring all people to God's love.

—Br. Edward van Merrienboer, O.P.
Vicar for Mission Development





Discovering future preachers

“JUST WHAT DO vocation promoters do?” I am frequently asked. The question generally doesn’t make me nervous except when it is coming from my provincial! The daily work of a vocation office is essentially, threefold: *creating* interest, *cultivating* interest, and *closing* on that interest.

CREATING INTEREST in religious life does *not* mean creating a vocation. That’s the work of the Holy Spirit! What it does mean is making Dominican religious life visible as an option for the living out of one’s baptismal vocation, both in terms of our unique mission as an Order of Preachers and the structure of our vowed life that allows us the greatest freedom to fulfill that mission. Creating interest is about inviting potential prospects to come to know us through practical media such as our website, *Dominican Central* newsletter, and printed information packets as well as through opportunities to meet with the promoter of vocations.

These opportunities present themselves not only through e-mail and the telephone, but also in visits to our priories, our Houses of Studies in St. Louis, or at organizational meetings such as regional vocation fairs, youth retreats, college campus ministry events, and local and



Brother Joseph, from our Denver Novitiate, speaks to a college student who is interested in Dominican life.

national meetings of campus ministers, who often are the first to hear of a student’s vocational interest. Thus, the promoter of vocations will often attend conferences that support the faith of young people and promote a climate for vocational discernment, for example: the National Catholic Student Coalition (NCSC), the Fellowship of Catholic University Students (FOCUS), and the Catholic Campus Ministry Association (CCMA).



Novice Brothers (from left) Cassian and Anthony set up the vocations display at the FOCUS Conference.

CULTIVATING INTEREST that surfaces through e-mail (our highest source of contacts), referrals from fellow friars or campus ministers (second highest source), or phone calls and letters to the office, is a matter of prompt response to inquiries as well as being attentive to the unique journey of the person discerning. Nurturing or nourishing anything starts with respectful and consistent attention and presence. Just as you can’t pressure a seed to grow without causing damage, you should not pressure a vocation. You can and should give it all the “light, food, and water” it will need as well as be present and available. In cultivating interest in the Order, one is introducing the life in a more direct way, such as our Fall and Spring *Come & See* vocation weekends. On these retreat weekends, prospective candidates directly experience the Order through a 64-hour immersion into our Dominican life, routine, and ritual. They learn first-hand what religious life is like from friars 23 to 83 years of age.

CLOSING on someone’s vocational interest in religious life after it has been created and cultivated is a matter of helping a candidate come to an informed decision regarding entrance into the Order. In vocational discernment, a common temptation is to perform an endless circle of mental gymnastics, avoiding the call to action. But rather one must intentionally involve the heart: discerning that gut feeling that *this is where I need to go if I am to know anything more*. There is never 100 percent certainty, nor are we ever given the full picture of where God is leading us. One has to take a calculated risk, which is a combination of good information and solid intuition. Following the Holy Spirit, one surrenders to taking the next step, which feels like God’s call at this point, the one that brings the most peace.

—Fr. Andrew-Carl Wisdom, O.P.
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Our rights and responsibilities

IN HIS *Letter from the Birmingham Jail*, Martin Luther King, Jr. lamented the Birmingham area clergy's lack of response to the struggle for civil rights. By doing this, King touched on a foundational principle of work for social justice: responsibility.

Working for social justice involves working for rights. Thomas Aquinas defines justice as "giving each person their due." The basic umbrella is human rights, but under that are such issues as prisoner rights, immigrant rights, elderly rights, and rights of the unborn, among many others. While talking about rights, though, there must be a focus on our own responsibility.

Rights cannot be talked about without responsibility. At the end of *Julius Caesar*, Cassius says, "The fault, dear Brutus, is not in the stars, but in ourselves." A fundamental question that must be asked is: What have we done to deny others their rights? Then, that must move

us to reflect on the question: What more can we do to ensure people have the rights they deserve?

The gospel challenges us every day. Jesus never says that discipleship is easy. He uses his preaching and ministry to challenge his disciples to do something and to not be satisfied with the status quo.

We can look around us, see injustice, and say to ourselves, "That is not my problem." But if we reflect on the words and the actions of Jesus, it is our problem. The easy thing to do is to let someone else take responsibility. But what can we do in the struggle for justice for all?

The fault may not necessarily lie with us, but the path toward a solution can certainly be in our hands.

—Fr. Dennis Woerter, O.P.
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Praying with the daily and Sunday Lectionary

PRAYING WITH the scripture readings from the daily and Sunday Lectionary for Mass is a great way to anchor one's prayer life—as brothers and sisters in every branch of the Dominican family can testify. Praying in advance with the Sunday readings also helps those who desire to hear and engage Sunday preaching more deeply.

When significant numbers of people in a parish or congregation prepare for Sunday by praying with the lectionary texts, the preaching experience just gets better and better.

If you would like to pray in this way, where can you find the daily and Sunday readings for Mass? Here are four suggestions:

1. Go online to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' webpage at www.nccbuscc.org/nab. Here you will find the daily and Sunday readings and also the entire text of the *New American Bible*.

2. If you prefer to subscribe to a pocket-sized monthly missalette of daily and Sunday scripture readings, a great number of Dominicans subscribe to *Living with Christ*, available in English or French. American subscribers receive a *New American Bible* edition. A bigger than pocket-sized, large-print version also is available.

To subscribe, go to www.novalis.ca and type "Living with Christ" into the search window, or call 800-387-7164.

3. A growing number of Dominicans also subscribe to *Magnificat*, another pocket-sized daily and Sunday prayer book available in English, Spanish, or French.

MagnifiKid is a missalette subscription service for children aged 7 to 12. Visit www.magnificat.net or call 877-632-9657.

4. A one-volume *Vatican II Sunday Missal: Millennium Edition* is available from the Daughters of St. Paul at www.pauline.org/store/moreinfo/sundaymissal.html, or call 800-836-9723.

If you have found other lectionary websites or subscription services to be helpful, I would like to hear from you. I can be reached at heilleg@slu.edu, or call me at Aquinas Institute of Theology at 314-977-7229.

—Fr. Gregory Heille, O.P.
heilleg@slu.edu

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New Vicar Provincial elected in Bolivia

THIS PAST JANUARY at the House of Studies in Cochabamba, Bolivia, Fr. Angel Jorge Salidas Pedraza, O.P. was elected and confirmed as the new Vicar Provincial of the Vicariate of Bolivia of the Province of St. Albert the Great. He begins a four-year term. Fr. Jorge, as he is most commonly known, is the second native Bolivian elected as Vicar of Bolivia; he replaces Fr. Hipolito

Michel Plata, O.P., who has held this position for the past eight years. Before his election, Fr. Jorge was the director and pastor of the Shrine of Our Lady of Cotoca in Bolivia.

“I am very impressed with Jorge,” stated Fr. Michael Mascari, O.P., Provincial. “In the few days that he has been Vicar, he has already shown that he will be a strong, compassionate, and vigorous leader for our Bolivian brothers. The Holy Spirit was clearly present in his election.” Fr. Mascari traveled to Bolivia for the election along with Frs. Jose Santiago,

O.P. and Brian Walker, O.P.

There was also an election held for the new Vicariate Council. The newly elected are Fathers Julio Velasco, Jhony

“I am very impressed with Jorge. He has already shown that he will be a strong, compassionate, and vigorous leader for our Bolivian brothers.”



Fr. Angel Jorge Saldias, O.P. (standing) is the second native Bolivian to be elected Vicar Provincial.

Lujan, Juan Carlos Molina, and Felix Serrudo. These friars will assist the Vicar in his new role. Currently there are six communities of friars with more than 26 professed Dominicans and five pre-novices present in Bolivia.

—Lucy Sanchez

Animated film wins award

THERE’S A CROWD of people now,” Fr. Al Lopez, O.P. said to me as we walked up to the Lark Theater, “It’s got to be close to show time.” I nodded. We had come early to the screening of my film, *The Tortilla Moon*, and had gone for a walk around the San Francisco Bay Area neighborhood where it was about to be shown in the Eighth International Latino Film Festival. It was good to see a crowd as we came back to the theater because showing it to a large audience meant that the film would get a



“Tortilla Moon” is a short animated film about faith and hope.

chance to preach its message of nonviolent faith and hope in the face of war.

We waited until they let us inside, then took seats off to the right of the stage. As they lowered the lights, the festival director herself took the stage to introduce the films showing that evening. I had met the director just minutes before in the lobby and had told her I was there for the screening of my film. She was extremely personable and warm, a delight to meet. “We have one of the Jury Award films tonight and the filmmaker is with us,” she said. I looked around to see who that might be. I was interested to see if another filmmaker was attending the screening besides me.

“John Reid Perkins-Buzo, would you mind standing up?” Amazing! It was me she was talking about! “He is the director of *The Tortilla Moon*, the first film we will see tonight.” There was a round of applause as I stood up, then as quickly took my seat. When the film screened a few moments later, it seemed as if I was seeing it for the first time, the film I had dreamed about and sweated over for two years, winning the Animated Short Film Jury Award nomination. All that work was worth the goal of preaching through the most effective medium of all time, the medium of film.

Preaching in the media is one of the top four priorities of the Order of Preachers, enshrined in our Constitutions (n.104) and ordained in many of the General Chapters of the past 28 years, including the most recent in Krakow (n.50). It’s up to us to make these priorities real—this is the mission of the Order.

—Br. John Reid Perkins-Buzo, O.P.

Dominicans at Purdue spend Christmas holiday in

WITHIN HOURS of my arrival at the Saint Thomas Aquinas Center at Purdue University in Indiana, I learned I would be going to Haiti with Fr. Jim Barnett and a group of students over the Christmas break.

My initial enthusiasm changed to concern, then trepidation, then, if not outright fear, certainly growing alarm as I read the travel warnings of the U.S. State Department and accounts of violence in Haiti that included the September beheadings of four policemen. The students seemed not in the least concerned.

However, once we arrived in Baudin, a small village outside of Port-au-Prince, all my fears and concerns disappeared. Here were a people living in what we'd consider great poverty, and yet they seemed filled with great hope!

We had a task during this trip. Six months prior, another group from St. Tom's had installed simple water purification systems in nearly 200 homes. We were to see if they were being used properly and if the people had experienced any diminution in diarrhea. In almost every case the answers were yes, yes, and yes. One could see firsthand the

faith and hope of these wonderful people. St. Tom's has brought health care, education, and clean water to this village, and it seems to have made a difference in the lives of this community.

It was difficult for me to leave Baudin. I felt like I wanted to do more than merely be pres-

ent. I wanted to learn more from them, to experience more of this joy that marks their hours.

We spent our last day in Haiti at an in-patient clinic for children run by Mother Theresa's Missionaries of Charity. We were given a briefing on what to expect. It was wholly inadequate. You enter a ward full of tiny cribs filled with tiny arms attached to tiny angels reaching up to you.

Because we were going to be there five hours, I planned to spend one hour with five different children. Little Gibea had something very different in mind. When I picked him up he seemed too weak to do anything but hold on. As we spent more time together, Gibea became more expressive.

At some point that morning his father came. Of

course I immediately tried to hand Gibea to him, but the child wouldn't let me go. Dad let me know it was OK. So his father and I stood very close together, and I held Gibea, and for that short time he had two dads. After an hour, Gibea leaned over and gave me a big kiss on the cheek, and then he planted one on his dad. As I blinked to clear my vision, I saw a smile on that child for the first time.

I look back on all those initial fears and concerns and I can hardly recall them. What stands out most about my trip to Haiti are the people—the faith, hope, and love they expressed to those who come to help them in small ways is evident. I do not fully understand what is going on in Haiti, but the Holy Spirit is clearly working in extraordinary ways.

—Br. Patrick Baikauskas, O.P.

Friars in Print

FR. MATTHEW POWELL, O.P. wrote the short stories "The Dog Who Came to the Stable," which appeared in the December 2004 issue of *Sainte Anne De Beaupre Magazine*, and "Room for Forgiveness," which appeared in the January 2005 issue of *The Messenger of the Sacred Heart*.

FR. PAUL COLLOTON, O.P. published an article titled "Liturgical Catechesis," which appeared in World Library Publications' *AIM*.

BR. JOHN REID PERKINS-BUZO, O.P. wrote "The Aesthetics of Interactive Art," which appears in the March 2005 issue of the *International Digital and Media Arts Journal*.

FR. ANDREW-CARL WISDOM, O.P. wrote an article, "Why Every Generation Matters in Preaching!" which was published in the Fall 2004 issue of *Touchstone*.



Little Gibea clings to Br. Patrick Baikauskas, O.P. during his visit

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Fenwick Students Converge at the Capitol

NINETEEN STUDENTS from Fr. Thomas Saucier, O.P.'s government and society class joined him at the Presidential Inauguration this past January. Along with attending the inauguration of President George W. Bush, the students were privileged to meet with U.S. Senators Barack Obama, John Kerry, and Edward Kennedy. Senator Obama had just stepped out of the confirmation hearings of Condoleezza Rice and answered our questions about his priorities and spent some time with us.

Senators Kerry and Kennedy were especially gracious to meet with us, considering the class was outside their constituency, but a Fenwick father arranged the meeting. Senator Kennedy met with us in the rotunda of the Russell Office Building and brought his two Portuguese Water Dogs, who were very excited to meet us. The students toured the extremely moving U.S. Holocaust Museum

with the help of another Fenwick dad; Arlington Cemetery, viewing the Kennedy graves and the changing of the guard; the U.S. Capitol; President George Washington's home, Mount Vernon; the war monuments dedicated to World War II, Korea, and Vietnam; and the presidential monuments to Jefferson, Lincoln, and Franklin

D. Roosevelt. It was cold and snowy but everyone survived.

The trip was a once-in-a-lifetime experience for many of the students as they witnessed both democracy and history in action. The group consisted of both Republicans and Democrats, and it was certainly a hands-on experience of the democratic process as they witnessed the swearing-in ceremony

and visited many of the sights where the democratic process takes shape. Everyone concluded that it was a worthwhile trip.



Fr. Thomas Saucier, O.P. (from left) and class met with Senator Barack Obama, newly elected to the U.S. Senate from Illinois.



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Winter 2005 Newsletter
Please take one!