



CHALLENGE

News from the Dominican Laity, Province of St. Albert the Great

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From the President

'Climate Justice' Is Hot Issue for Dominicans

Just as "climate justice" has become the No. 1 priority of the North American Dominicans for Justice, Peace, and the Care of Creation (NADJPCC), climate change has become a priority of the United Nations. On Sept. 24, a "high-level event" on global climate change was held, prior to the opening of the 62nd session of the General Assembly.

The one-day meeting, with more than 150 nations participating, was organized by Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to prepare the ground for negotiations on an agreement to succeed the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, the international accord that limits the emissions of greenhouse gases by 2012 an average of 5 percent below what they were in 1990.

The objective of the high-level event was to promote dialogue, highlight priority issues within four broad thematic areas, and mobilize support at the highest level for a strong political signal to the UN Climate Change Conference in Bali that governments are ready to accelerate work under the UN's Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Negotiations must be advanced this December in

Bali so that a comprehensive package is ready by 2009 and legally in force by 2012. The May 2007 meetings under the UNFCCC in Bonn were seen as successful, and the outcome of the G-8 and G-8 + 5 Summit in Heiligendamm the week before Sept. 24 also sent an encouraging signal, and is seen by some as making a shift in the political landscape.

Ban Ki-moon said that "the scientists have very clearly outlined the severity of the problem," and that the time to act is now. He said that a failure to act would bring "devastating" consequences, and that affordable technologies exist to address the problem promptly. Climate change is already having significant impacts in certain regions—particularly in developing countries—and on most ecosystems, and can affect developing countries' ability to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

The Dominicans of the NADJPCC, which include Laity, will make climate justice the theme of their next annual meeting, to be held July 26 – 30, 2008, in Adrian, Mich.

by Ruth Kummer, OP

As I was reading from the Book of Wisdom, 9:13-18b, in early September, I found striking thoughts related to our upcoming workshop in Michigan. "Who can know God's counsel ... mortals are timid, and unsure are our plans ... earthen shelter weighs down the mind that has many concerns. ... Or who ever knew your counsel, except you had given Wisdom and sent your holy spirit from on high?"

Indeed, one can be timid and unsure whether preparation for the Formation Workshop will help our members to be itinerant preachers in our own backyard, or a faraway place. Some very active members have moved recently from the Midwest, and only God knows how their talents will be used to further the kingdom.

The image of St Dominic, who spent time at a local inn (remember how he and the innkeeper mind-wrestled until the wee hours of the morning?) to preach the Word, is our model. Where is the inn for you? The nursery? The classroom or research lab? Or in a new, faraway place? Itinerancy takes many forms!

The "inn" for the lay leaders of St Albert the Great Province will be at St John's Retreat Center in Plymouth, Michigan (see Promoter's Column) come Nov. 1. For those who have represented their chapters as provincial delegates in the past, you will find yourself once again comfortable in the beautiful surroundings of the former seminary. New chapter leaders will quickly become comfortable, since the gatherings are always enlightening and enriching. Be open for fun, learning, and make room in your suitcase for a notebook and extra binders to fill out your luggage on the return trip.

The goal of your dedicated time

Dutch Dominicans Discuss 'Priestless' Masses

The General Curia of the Dominicans in Rome expressed surprise over a booklet published by the Order in the Netherlands recommending that the laity be allowed to celebrate Mass when no ordained priests are available, reported the *Catholic News Service (CNS)* in late September.

In a written statement, the Dominicans' Rome-based leaders said that, while they "laud the concern of our brothers" over the shortage of priests, they did not believe "the solutions that they have proposed are beneficial to the Church, nor in harmony with its tradition."

In addition, they did not think that disseminating a booklet to all 1,300 parishes in the Netherlands was an appropriate way to discuss the issue. "The booklet published by our Dutch brothers was a surprise to the General Curia of the Dominican order," the statement said.

In late August, the Dominicans in the Netherlands distributed a 38-page booklet, *Church and Ministry*, that proposed parishes in need of an ordained priest choose their own person to become the Mass presider. The parish could then present such a candidate—woman or man, homo- or heterosexual, married or single—to the local bishop to ask that he or she be ordained.

CNS reported: "[T]he booklet said if the bishop chooses not to ordain the candidate—for example, because the person cannot meet the requirements of celibacy—then the elected candidate and the congregation could still feel assured that when they come together to 'share bread and wine in prayer,' they are still receiving a real and valid Eucharist, the Dutch Dominicans' website said."

One of the four Dominican theologians who authored the booklet, Fr Andre Lascaris, confirmed that the booklet was suggesting that the elected leader would be celebrating a Mass and consecrating bread and wine for parishioners.

The "magical moment" of transubstantiation when Christ becomes present in the sacrament can also occur when people come together prayerfully, since the priest's words of the consecration "are missing in the oldest prayers" of the early Church, he told CNS by phone Sept. 19 from Huissen, Netherlands.

In the Sept. 22 issue of the *Tablet*, Lascaris wrote that in a recent two-year period in the Netherlands the number of Sunday Eucharistic celebrations fell from 2,200 to 1,900; while the number of Word and Communion Services increased from 550 to 630. "Many people do not notice the difference between such a Communion service and celebration of the Eucharist. They call both celebrations 'Mass,'" he wrote.

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800th Year Jubilee

‘Bury Me Under the Feet of My Brothers’

by Fr Michael Monshau, OP

Most people are familiar with the 800-year-old Dominican Order, one of the 10-largest religious communities in the world. But how many know much about its founder, St Dominic?

Dominicans themselves sometimes admit, with a hint of embarrassment, that they just might be able to tell more stories from the life of St Francis than from the life of their own beloved founder. More surprising still, this is probably how St Dominic would prefer it.

Consider this incident, which took place during his final illness. His friars had taken Dominic to a local Benedictine abbey, where they hoped he might rest more comfortably. Since death was approaching, the Benedictine superior intimated that he would be very pleased to bury Dominic in the abbey; the holy man would be given a prominent grave that would accommodate the numerous pilgrims who could be expected to visit his final resting place.

When he caught wind of this, however, Dominic ordered his friars to take him home to their own priory. There, after his death, they were to place his body in an unmarked grave beneath the flooring of the house. “Bury me under the feet of my brothers,” he commanded them.

What are we to think of such a strange request? As we shall see, this story tells us a great deal about Dominic, while also revealing much about how God wants us to fulfill the unique mission assigned to each of us.

Active and Contemplative

Dominic was born of wealthy parents in 1170 in Caleruega, in the north of Spain. People knew him as a most likeable but serious fellow, an outstanding student dedicated to learning.

Also apparent from his early years was his radical commitment to God and to a life based on the gospel. While studying at the university, for example, Dominic was so moved by the plight of the poor that he sold his prized possessions—expensive textbooks copied out by hand on parchment—to buy food for the needy. “I could not bear to prize dead skins when living skins were starving and in want,” he explained. On another occasion, he tried to sell himself into slavery in exchange for a prisoner of war.

Despite these youthful demonstrations of heroic activism, Dominic’s initial attraction was to the contemplative life. Following his ordination to the priesthood, when he was about 25, he moved in with a group of priests whom the bishop had gathered in the town of Osma. Like monks, but in an urban setting, the group (known as “canons”) pursued a simple, cloistered life of contemplation, liturgical prayer, and study.

Into the Fray

Had Dominic lived in more peaceful times, he might well have spent the rest of his days quietly loving God within cloister walls. But it was a turbulent era, when ignorance about the Catholic faith was creating widespread confusion and disorder in both church and society.

Dominic does not seem to have realized how desperate the Church’s needs were until almost 10 years later, when he was summoned to accompany his bishop on various diplomatic missions. The journeys took them through the region of France where the Albigensian heresy had a firm foothold.

Albigensians believed that the material world was evil and even questioned the goodness of physical life. They led many people to

worry that their enjoyment of any human pleasure might weaken their friendship with God. People became confused, and their consciences became troubled over whether it was right to enjoy a good meal, get a good night’s sleep, or marry and start a family. Many were impressed by the grimly austere lifestyle of Albigensian preachers—especially compared to the life of ease and wealth pursued by many of the Church’s clergy

Dominic himself had experienced the unsuccessful preaching of clerics who lived in comfort and who demonstrated no excitement over the gospel they were proclaiming. It disheartened him to see how many Catholics were turning against their faith because there was no one to help correct their false perceptions. Filled with compassion for them, he felt certain that authentic preaching of God’s word, along with the witness of a humble and simple lifestyle, could bring them back. He even saw this happen on one of his journeys, when he led an Albigensian innkeeper back to the faith after spending an entire night in spirited debate with him.

The Holy Preaching

Not long after this, Dominic was commissioned by the pope to be a traveling preacher. Then in 1206, during a mission in southern France, he had an intense experience of the Lord that reconfirmed his calling to preach.

Observing the dire situation of so many Christians, Dominic gradually became convinced that the church needed a new movement of preachers, a band of apostles devoted to spreading God’s word in every kind of situation. They would be spiritually and intellectually prepared for their mission—formed through a prayerful, disciplined life and assiduous theological study. Able to preach at liturgical functions and to teach philosophy and theology, the members of the Order of Preachers would be known for their trained minds and for putting their knowledge at the service

The Holy Preaching became Dominic’s passion, the absorbing task that defined and gave vibrancy to his entire life. He preached constantly, leading many people to Christ.

of all.

It was a radical idea at the time. Never before had a religious order been founded for a specific task. Previous orders had been established to provide their members with a certain way of life. For example, the Benedictines offered monastic life, and the Franciscans fostered gospel simplicity. Dominic, on the other hand, founded his order to serve the intellectual needs of the church—a task he called “the Holy Preaching.”

The Holy Preaching became Dominic’s passion, the absorbing task that defined and gave vibrancy to his entire life. He preached constantly, leading many people to Christ. And when he died in 1221, a revered and well-known figure, 300 members of his order were at work in eight countries.

Let Nothing Distract

So completely did Dominic give himself to his mission that it almost seems he disappeared into it! He left no sermons and no writings except for one brief letter. While other great leaders left

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Dominican Young Adult USA Formed and at Work

On a weekend this past summer, 20 young adults gathered at Ohio Dominican University to discuss creating Dominican Young Adults USA.

The work of this group has been to help those who are Dominican

by their formation—in Dominican high schools, colleges, universities, parishes, and other Dominican experiences—to continue their connection with the Order. It will allow them to leap

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Young Dominicans standing: Danielle Douglas, NY; Allie Jeffs, IN; Daniel Breittfeller, OH, Kimmi Ferrari, NY. Seated: Jenn Purcell, IL; Elizabeth Campi, CA

Photos and story provided by www.Domlife.org.

Background on the International DYM

The International Dominican Youth Movement (IDYM) started in Ireland in the early 1990s, when young adults were looking for small faith communities and felt the draw of the Dominican charism. By 1995, Fr Timothy Radcliffe, OP, then Master of the Order, met with the group and encouraged them to dream. In Spain in 1996, almost 300 young adults between the ages of 18 and 35 gathered under the theme, “Drinking from Our Own Well.” Representatives were present from Africa, Asia, and Latin America, in addition to Europe.

In the 1998 Chapter of the Dominican Friars in Bologna, Italy, a representative of the IDYM was invited to attend. It was at this gathering that the friars officially recognized this group as part of the Dominican Family.

Sr Pat Brady, OP (Adrian), became interested in the second gathering in Spain in 1997. It was from this energy that the Dominican High School Preaching Conference was born. In 2002, Sr Gina Fleming, OP (Amityville), and Sr Madeleine Murphy, OP (Sparkhill), collaborated to launch the first College and University “Preaching in Action” Conference. The outgrowth of both conferences is now the Dominican Young Adults USA.

Bury Me

Continued from Page 2

the imprint of their personality upon their followers and the church in general, Dominic bequeathed primarily his work—the Holy Preaching.

In this light, Dominic’s deathbed command makes perfect sense. “Bury me under the feet of my brothers” was not said out of any special eagerness to get involved in planning his burial. Rather, Dominic was communicating that nothing should be allowed to distract from the work of Holy Preaching. He didn’t want people to think of him—or of any other Dominican—when their attention could more profitably be focused on knowing, living, and spreading the gospel.

This approach has remained something of a trademark of the Dominican charism. Various noteworthy members of the order have served the church and society with distinction—among them, St Thomas Aquinas, St Catherine of Siena, and Bartolomeo de las Casas. Quite typically, though, people know a good deal about their work and relatively little about their personal lives.

Here is a lesson for all of us. It is an invitation to let nothing interfere with our own mission to know God better—to cultivate this personal friendship through prayer, Scripture, and the sacraments—and then to make God present to others through our words and deeds. This is the primary vocation of every baptized person, not just people who are engaged in formal religious ministry. As Vatican II emphasized, absolutely every Christian is called to grow in holiness and participate in the crucial mission of sharing the good news of Jesus Christ (*On the Church*, 33).

Given his single-minded emphasis on knowing and proclaiming

God, it seems as if Dominic anticipated this teaching by nearly eight centuries! His example can therefore help each of us fulfill our own calling to Holy Preaching in our own lives and circumstances, as the Spirit leads. It can inspire us to follow Christ with undistracted hearts, in the spirit of the great gospel herald who said of Jesus, “He must increase; I must decrease” (John 3:30).

Two Tombs

Recently, a Dominican priest from America was visiting Italy. During the course of his travels, he visited the shrine of the much beloved Franciscan, St Anthony, in Padua. The pilgrim was very edified to see throngs of people in the church, venerating the saint’s image with much affection and praying and singing with great feeling. He was especially impressed by a large procession that formed in Anthony’s honor—a splendid, public affair, filled with spirit and emotion.

Later that day, the same friar happened to be in Bologna, at the tomb of St Dominic. Within that church, where Dominic was finally laid to rest, only five people were present. Each was sitting alone, somewhat near the tomb, in perfect silence, studying! Those who have come to know and love Dominic can savor that scene as entirely in keeping with what he would have wanted.

Dominican Fr Michael Monshau, OP, is Prior of our Province’s house of formation in St Louis, Missouri, and teaches homiletics at Kenrick Seminary in the same city.

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From Around the Province . . .

The **St Martin de Porres** Group in Kansas City now has eight regular members—three professed, four candidates, and one inquirer, with a profession anticipated soon. The group has been meeting for three years and has been focusing on the Beatitudes (*Living the Beatitudes Today*) and justice issues (*Bringing Forth Justice*). . . . The **Blessed Sacrament** group in Farmington Hills, Mich., is currently studying the *Book of Isaiah*. . . . The **Rosary Chapter** of Grand Rapids met on Aug. 26 to celebrate the feasts of Sts Dominic and Catherine. They recited the Rosary, assisted at Mass, then many went to a fellow member's home for fine food and good fellowship. . . . Janet Cassidy, with the new **St Catherine of Siena** group in Joliet, Ill, made Temporary Profession. . . . **Queen of the Rosary** Chapter in Milwaukee is completing the study of *Praying with Thomas Aquinas*; Mary Lee Odders was elected Provincial Council Delegate. . . . **St Rose of Lima** Group in Dubuque, Iowa, has 13 active members. Members are studying *Life of the Beloved* by Henry Nouwen. Mrs Gladys Rudzinski, OP, died Aug. 22, 2007; chapter members attended her wake and funeral, and prayed the Rosary. . . . At the **Mary Magdalene** Pro-Chapter in West Lafayette, Ind., they are reading: *Lumen Gentium*, *The Jewish People and their Scriptures in the Christian Bible*, *Theology and Modern Science*, and *Fire Within*. Members continue to do reflections on a regular basis at the Wednesday morning Masses at St Thomas Aquinas, the Catholic Center at Purdue. . . . **Our Lady of the Sacred Heart** in Springfield, Ill., has 17 members and they are studying the *Gospel of Matthew*. . . . **Queen of the Holy Rosary** in St Louis is studying Fr Michael Monshau's book, *The Grace and Task of Preaching*.

Hear Our Fellow Dominicans Preach on

Have you been yearning to hear the voices of your fellow Dominicans? Yes, it's true that you can always pick up the phone. But second to that—how about hearing them preach at www.word.op.org? Sisters, friars, and even laity!

Lay Dominicans, Karen Woods of the Western Province and Norm Laurendeau of the Midwest Province, have already preached several times since the new site, *theWord*, was started this past March.

Scott Steinkerchner, OP (St Albert), who initiated the project, said, "There are several features that make the site stand out. Drawing from the richness of our entire, global Dominican family, we can offer a richness of perspectives that few other groups could hope to match, and all of them from top-notch preachers." Steinkerchner is the Internet Promoter for the Dominican Order.

Because the preaching on the site can be heard, it can reach into every household with a computer and Internet access. Think of those who don't have access to good preaching from other venues, he said. Think senior citizens, shut-ins, and the unchurched. Think of those who do not attend Mass regularly.

The creators are also using podcasting technology to attract users who are technologically at ease with iPods or similar MP3 music players. The site allows you to download the day's reflection automatically each morning and listen to it on your way to work or whenever convenient.

"For these reasons, we expect *the Word* to become the premier place for Catholics to hear daily preaching on the Internet," Steinkerchner added.

Source: www.Domlife.org

Young Adults

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onto the international scene to begin the process of membership in the International Dominican Youth Movement, whose next gathering will be in Portugal in 2009.

At the weekend event they decided to form an interim board consisting of a representative from each of four regions. Committees were set up to look at the mission/vision statements of the group; to begin formulating initial and on-going formation materials; to plan next year's gathering; and to look at the organizational structure.

Vowed members of the Order helped set the stage during for this formative next step: Mary Ellen O'Grady, OP (Sinsinawa), Executive Director of the Dominican Leadership Conference,

spoke about the common context and language of the Dominican Order. Arlene Flaherty, OP (Blauvelt), spoke on "A Call to Dominican Life and Mission: Story-telling, Beginning Family, and Paving the Pathway to Peace." Luke LaTour, OP (St Martin), emphasized the need to know who you are when you preach. On Saturday morning, Margaret Ormond, OP (Columbus), former Director of Dominican Sisters International (DSI), and Rose Ann Schlitt, OP (Adrian), Dominican Volunteers International, shared the fullness of the Order that exists in more than 100 countries. Later that afternoon, Jenn SchAAF (Columbus), Associate, reviewed the growth of the movement and recounted their participation at the representative assembly last August in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.

New Dominican Calendar for 2008 Now Available

The Lands of Dominic 2008 Wall Calendar, produced through Parable Conference, is now available. Pilgrims who have experienced the pilgrimage of Lands of Dominic illustrate this calendar with their photographs. The images are of places that shaped Dominic's life and the days highlight significant Dominican feast days and social justice dates. Consider buying a calendar or two for you and your friends as Christmas gifts. They are only \$12 each, plus shipping and handling. You may order by phone (708-366-1730) or order on the website: www.parableconference.org.

The fall issue of *The Parable: Dominican Theological Reflections for the 21st Century* is also available and focuses on reconciliation and forgiveness. The lead article is by Daniel Philpott, PhD. Consider purchasing it to use as an Advent aide for your chapter, prayer group, or for personal reflection.

Formation Workshop on Tap for Nov. 1 - 3 in Plymouth

On Nov. 1 - 4, leaders of Lay Dominican chapters of the Province of St Albert the Great will meet for a Leadership Workshop, which is required of all lay leaders, such as chapter Moderators, Formation Directors, and Religious Assistants. A major focus will be the new, unified Program of Lay Dominican Formation, which was unanimously approved April 27 in Plymouth, Mich.

"One of the sessions of the Workshop will explore how the new Formation Program might be adapted to the varying needs of our Lay Dominican communities," said Provincial Promoter Fr Jim Motl. The program will also be available, along with a number of other resources, on an electronic blackboard, through the generosity of the Aquinas Institute of Theology in St Louis. The Workshop will include instructions on how to use this website.

The Formation Committee, which started on the project last year, drew on the models of the Eastern (USA), Western (USA), and Australian Provinces, as well as on accumulated materials in the St Albert the Great Province. The project was finalized over Memorial Day weekend, 2007, in West Lafayette, Ind., by committee members: Provincial Director of Formation Dr Thomas Ryba of West Lafayette, Ind; Provincial President Ruth Kummer; Provincial Promoter Fr Jim Motl; the St Louis group's Moderator Michael Porterfield; Provincial Delegate from St. Louis, Cyndi Ricard; and Moderator of the West Lafayette group, Beatriz Cisneros.

"While there will be a focus during the Workshop on formation, there will also be sessions on how to direct groups according to *The Rule* and recently updated *Guidelines*," Fr Motl said. moderators (now called "presidents") will discuss supervising the implementation of all the new group functions. spiritual assistants (now called "religious assistants") will cover the expectations of this role in the recently updated *Handbook* and will share experiences in spiritual guidance in their groups. "And Formation Directors will focus on the new Formation Program in greater detail," he added. (See Fr Motl's column on Page 6.)

"It is the strong opinion of the Provincial Committee ... that its success depends on the involvement of every level of leadership pertaining to formation within each local community," said Fr Motl. The cost of the Leadership Workshop, including transportation to and from the Workshop, will be paid to participants from the Irvine Fund, administered by Provincial Treasurer May Lee Odders.

President Ruth

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and talent will be to model the life in the four pillars for your chapter and to facilitate the life of your chapter far into the future. I look forward to a Spirit-filled time.

Recent Visits with the Chaldeans

Recent visits with the Chaldeans in the Detroit Metro area have been an inspiration to me in spite of the language barrier. I spent a few days with a family and a native Dominican friar from Iraq. He encouraged me in my Dominican vocation of leading others to continue their formation in the Province.

Since many Chaldeans have moved away from Iraq and are resettling here, more get-togethers are needed between us, to embrace each other as brothers and sisters in Christ. It is indeed a challenge for all.

The Peruvians Affected by the Earthquake

Southern Peru is recovering from a magnitude-8 earthquake that occurred in Mid-August, killing more than 500 people, destroying 40,000 homes, and leaving more than 100,000 homeless.

Brian Pierce, OP, Promoter of the Dominican Family in Latin America and the Caribbean, wrote the following to Karen Woods, President of the Western Province, and she shares this with us:

Dear Karen,

I happen to be in the States right now. The family of one of my Dominican brothers in Lima (Alfredo) lives right in the part hardest hit. His family's house has collapsed. Alfredo has traveled to be with them and help.

I have heard from my community in Lima. They are OK. All phone lines are down in the whole country. Thanks for the prayers. I know that money will be needed in hundreds of places. The bishop of Ica (hardest-hit area, which includes Pisco and Chincha) is a Peruvian Dominican, Mons. Guido Breña, OP. I suspect we Dominicans will be collecting money to help the people of his diocese (where one of the churches in Pisco collapsed full of people— yesterday being a big feast day, the Feast of the Assumption of Mary). If your community or any others you know want to take up a collec-

tion, I will gladly see it gets to the right folks. Thanks again for your concern.

*The Peruvian Bishops' Social Commission (CEAS), CARITAS Peru, and the Dominican Family are at work to channel relief efforts on behalf of the Catholic Church. The Justice and Peace commission of the Dominican Family in Peru thinks that the best way to send money for those affected by the earthquake is through the **BANCO DE CREDITO of PERU**.*

When sending donations, please state where the donations come from (e.g., "from a Lay Dominican Fraternity in City, State USA") and, if the donors want, they can note that they prefer that the donations go to the relief work of the Diocese of Ica.

Please advise the Justice and Peace Commission of the Dominican Family in Peru of all donations sent, by sending a note to Lay Dominican Patrice Diggle. Patrice is on the Commission and speaks English, if you or anyone else has any questions. Her email is apacheego@hotmail.com.

Thanks for all the prayers and solidarity!

Brian Pierce, OP

Karen Woods sends this information:

Beneficiary's account name: **Obispado Ica**

Account No. : **380-1540-3227-1-77**

SWIFT: BCPLPEPL

Bank's address: Banco de Credito del Peru (sucursal Ica), Calle Grau 105, Ica, Peru

'Priestless' Masses

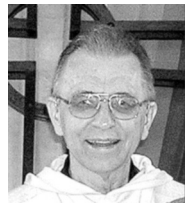
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"The booklet is not intended to be a dogmatic declaration, but rather an attempt in clear and simple language to renew a discussion on the subject. It does not claim to say anything new: It is based on statements of the Second Vatican Council and on publications of professional theologians and pastoral experts," he said.

Lascaris also said that barring the Dominicans from disseminating ideas would be "strange," as would not allowing them to talk to other people, to journalists, or even to the pope about suggestions on how to address the lack of priests available to celebrate Mass.

Promoter's Corner

by Fr Jim Motl



On November 1- 4 of this year, Lay Dominicans of Saint Albert the Great Province will sponsor a Leadership Workshop for leaders of each of the local groups in the Midwest. (In this article “group” refers to all local Lay Dominican communities including “chapters,” “pro-chapters,” and “informal groups,” including even smaller beginning groups.) A major focus of the meeting will be the new Formation Program developed last spring by a committee under the direction of Dr Thomas Ryba, theologian in residence at St Thomas Aquinas, The Catholic Center at Purdue, in West Lafayette (staffed by Dominican friars). Tom is also a member of our Lay Dominican group there named for St Mary Magdalene.

Other members of this committee are Provincial President Ruth Kummer, myself as Provincial Promoter, Michael Porterfield, who is Moderator of the St Louis group, Cyndi Ricard, Provincial Council Delegate from St Louis, and Beatriz Cisneros, Moderator of the West Lafayette group. A goal of the committee is to provide a formation program that prepares Lay Dominicans to be effective apostles in today's Church according to the vision of the Second Vatican Council. For this reason the central documents of the program are the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the *Code of Canon Law*, papal documents on the lay vocation from Pope John XXIII through Pope Benedict XVI, and a recent document by the bishops of the United States on lay ministry. The new Formation Program also includes instruction in the *Lay Dominican Rule* and the *Guidelines for the Province of Saint Albert the Great, USA*, and materials appropriate to developing Dominican spirituality. This includes units on Dominican saints and history, the Rosary, and use of the Liturgy of the Hours.

One of the sessions of the Workshop will explore how the new Formation Program might be adapted to the varying needs and personnel in our local Lay Dominican communities. This Program will be challenging for our local groups, but I am convinced that it is doable because it allows for adaptation. The Program will be readily available to all members through the generosity of the Aquinas Institute of Theology, which is giving us the use of an electronic blackboard to post the program and all its resources as well as the ability for members to communicate with one another about the program, or anything else relating to Lay Dominican life. The Workshop will include instruction on how to use this website. Since many members have access to the Internet through computers, this access should eliminate the need for expensive reproduction of materials. I know that every group has at least one person who has

The Program will be readily available to all members through the generosity of the Aquinas Institute of Theology, which is giving us the use of an electronic blackboard to post the program and all its resources ...

Internet access, so local groups should be able to arrange to obtain or print their own copies of needed materials.

While there will be a focus on formation during the Workshop, there will also be sessions on how to direct groups according to the *Rule* and the *Guidelines*, and how to deal with dysfunctional aspects of group life. On Saturday the participants will meet in separate groups for moderators, religious assistants, and formation directors. Each section will have the opportunity to study the job descriptions for officers in the *Leadership Handbook* and share experiences in carrying out their duties. “Presidents” (the term adopted by the Lay Dominican World Congress last spring for local leaders whom we have called “moderators”) will discuss supervising the implementation of all the group functions. Religious assistants will cover the expectations of this role in the *Handbook* and will share experiences in spiritual guidance in their groups. Formation directors will focus on the new Formation Program in greater detail. The goal of the Workshop is to help group leaders in key positions understand and implement, not only the new formation program, but also recent revisions of the *Lay Dominican Rule*, *The Guidelines for the Province of Saint Albert the Great*, and *A Handbook for Dominican Lay Leadership*.

My hope is that the Workshop will inspire new ideas and energy for a renewal in each of our local Lay Dominican communities. There has been for some time, I believe, a feeling throughout the Province that without some uniform direction for a formation program Lay Dominicans in the Midwest did not really know where they were going. Although the number of our groups has grown from 13 to 19 in the past five years, some of the groups have remained stable or even shrunk in size. Size is not a measure of quality, of course, but in terms of numbers of groups and num-

My hope is that the Workshop will inspire new ideas and energy for a renewal in each of our local Lay Dominican communities.

bers of members I believe that our area lags behind other parts of the country. With a more unified sense of direction the new Formation Program and the Workshop can bring, I hope that we can attract even more Catholics to the type of life envisioned for Lay Dominicans, a way of life formed and directed to proclaiming God's saving work through Jesus Christ.

There is no lack of interest in Lay Dominican life in our area, as many inquiries sent to me, to Ruth, and to others attest. Some of these inquirers are younger people. Often we have not been able to satisfactorily answer these inquiries because we did not have the materials to help new groups get started. Other times inquirers who have visited existing groups report that they are, for one reason or another, not satisfied with what they find there. This can be because they do not have a vocation to be a Lay Dominican. Sometimes, however, the reasons have to do with not finding the “pillars” of Dominican life satisfactorily evident in the group visited. It is my prayer that the new Formation Program and the Leadership Workshop can be ways to help all of our local Lay Dominican communities become vibrant examples of how to fulfill, in a Dominican way, the vocation to which the contemporary Church calls its lay members.

You can reach Fr Jim Motl at: motljr@slu.edu.

Letters to the Editor

Dear Editor,

I am disturbed about some articles which appeared in the last *Challenge*: "Preaching Was Preached at International Congress," and "On Using the Right Words, Dominican Style."

The word "preaching" is defined by the Webster Dictionary as: 1. the act of practice of one who preaches. 2. the art of delivering a sermon 3. a sermon 4. a public religious service with a sermon.

Words mean things. Some Lay Dominicans are taking the idea of preaching literally, which is in conflict with what the Church permits. The Church teaches that only ordained ministers with the faculty of preaching may preach in Church, or out in the village square. There are some ordained permanent deacons that do not have the faculty to preach.

This article does not say in so many words that Lay Dominicans may preach in or out of the Church, but in my opinion it certainly implies it. I find this a disturbing trend in the Order, and in the *Challenge*. It is in conflict with Church teaching, and is causing confusion.

The other article, "On Using the Right Words ..." is also causing confusion. When a Lay Dominican writes "OP" after their name without using Mr, Mrs, etc., it implies that the person is a priest or religious. I think that "OP" should be reserved for priests and religious only. Everyone using "OP" puts everyone on the same plane.

When we had the designation of "Third Order," we could write "TOP" after the last name, making it clear that you were a secular Dominican. What distinguishes a Lay Dominican from someone attending a Dominican Church? Are both regarded as Lay Dominicans?

The writer's name was withheld by the Editor. The answer to this letter was deferred to Fr Jim Motl, Provincial Promoter, and his response follows:

Dear Sir,

You address two issues: the use of "preaching" and the use of the initials "OP." Dominicans, clerical, religious, and lay, com-

monly use the term "preaching" to refer to their ministries. Because we belong to the Order of Preachers, we think of and call what we do in service to the Church "preaching." Dominicans who are artists, often call their artistic productions their "preaching." Dominican teachers refer to their classroom work as "preaching." Dominican pastors call their total work in their parishes their "preaching." I attended the Provincial Assembly of Friars of the Province of St Albert the Great, and there I frequently heard just such uses of the term "preaching." It's a usage in the Order that I don't think you will find much enthusiasm for changing.

The confusion that is likely to ensue is connected to a misunderstanding of what the Church allows and doesn't allow with regard to preaching. An earlier version of Canon Law prohibited lay people from speaking in church at all. The present Code of Canon Law does not bar laity from speaking in church but does restrict the preaching of homilies at Mass to ordained priests and deacons. Further clarification of that canon has defined a homily as the exposition of Sacred Scripture that occurs after the reading of the gospel. Laity are permitted at the discretion of the local bishop to speak at other times, even at Mass.

Canon Law places no restrictions on other forms of preaching other than that it be done in accord with the local bishop's will. Other forms of preaching would include preaching at Liturgy of the Hours, at devotional services, at Eucharistic services in the absence of a priest, deacon, at retreats, and outside the church building. Historically, Dominican preaching has most often been associated with these other kinds of preaching. In the early years, friars preached in open fields because they were not allowed in the churches because of opposition by local clergy. Today with the great emphasis on lay evangelization in the world there is a great deal of talk about lay preaching. Some confusion may result, but in view of the Church's current trend toward lay ministry, the confusion should be easily resolved.

The recent International Congress of Lay Dominicans confirmed what the current Master General had said with regard to the use of "OP." This designation is the appropriate one (not "TOP" or "OPL") for all who have made promises in the Dominican Order, clerical, religious, and lay. Those who use the title should indicate by use of a prefix their state in life: Fr, Deacon, Sr, Br, Mr, Mrs, or Ms. —Fr Jim Motl, OP

Consider a Year-End Contribution to Our Lay Dominican Fund Drive

by **Mary Lee Odders, OP**
Provincial Treasurer

As we receive no subsidy from the friars, we depend on your \$30 provincial dues payments and Fund Drive contributions to cover our expenses. We maintain a modest operating budget, rely entirely on the volunteer labor of our members, and continue to do our best to keep expenses in line with our income.

Our 2007 - '08 budget will be printed on the reverse side of your provincial dues notice to be mailed in January 2008. As a preview, one of our largest projected costs for the fiscal year will be \$2,500, as we host the Lay Dominican Interprovincial Council Meeting, April 10 - 13, 2008, at St John's Retreat Center, Plymouth, Michigan. While each province pays for its own travel and room and board costs, the hosting province pays the administrative costs of the meeting, including the cost of providing for a secretary, as necessary. The responsibility for hosting the meeting rotates among the provinces, and in 2008 it is our turn.

Last year's Fund Drive was dispensed with because funds were being solicited for the International Congress' indigent attendees. This year we turn to you again and ask your financial help to meet our own provincial expenses. We pledge that we

will be responsible stewards of the same.

Would you please demonstrate a Dominican spirit of community and consider making an individual or chapter donation to assist us in maintaining a quality level of service to you? Please send your check made payable to the Dominican Laity of St Albert the Great and mail to: Lay Dominican Office, PO Box 85451, Racine, WI 53408-5451.

----- **cut and return** -----

Thank you for your 2007 Fund Drive contribution! In gratitude, your name will be included in a contributors' listing featured in the next *Challenge*, unless you indicate otherwise below.

() I do NOT want my name included in the listing of contributors. I prefer to remain anonymous.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

Make check payable to: Dominican Laity of St Albert the Great.

Mail to: Lay Dominican Office, PO Box 85451, Racine, WI 53408-5451

Dominican Liturgical Calendar—Fourth Quarter, 2007

October

- 3- Bl Dominic Spadafora, priest
- 4- Holy Father Francis of Assisi, deacon (F)
- 5- Bl Raymond of Capua, priest (OM)
- 6- Bl Bartolo Longo, lay Dominican
- 7- Our Lady of the Rosary (F)
- 8- Bl Ambrose Sansedone, priest
-Bl Matthew Carreri, priest
- 9- St Louis Bertrand, priest (M)
- 11- Bl James of Ulm, religious
- 13- Bl Magdalen Panatieri, lay Dominican
- 14- Bl Marie Poussepin, lay Dominican
- 19- Bl Agnes of Langeac, lay Dominican
- 21- Bl Peter of Citta di Castello, priest
- 22- Anniversary of the Dedication of a Church (S)
- 25- Bl Peter of Geremia, priest

- 26- Bl Damian of Finale, priest
- 27- Bl Bartholomew of Vicenza, bishop
- 30- Bl Benvenuta Bojani, lay Dominican
- Bls Terence O'Brien, bishop, & Peter Higgins, priest; martyrs

November

- 1- All Saints (S)
- 2- All Souls*
- 3- St. Martin de Porres, religious (F)
- 5- Bl Simon Ballachi, religious
- 6- Bl Francis de Capillas and Bl. Alphonsus Navarette, priests, & Companions, martyrs (M)
- 7- All Saints of the Order (F)
- 8- Anniversary of all Deceased of the Order*
- 14- Bl John Liccio, priest
- Bl Lucia of Narni, religious
- 15- St Albert the Great, bishop/doctor of the

Church (S)

- 19- Bl James Benefatti, bishop
- 24- St Ignatius Delgado, bishop, St. Vincent Liem, priest, St. Dominic An-Kham, lay Dominican, and Companions, martyrs (M)
- 25- Bl Margaret of Savoy, religious

December

- 1- Bl John of Vercelli, priest
 - 8- Immaculate Conception (S)
 - 16- Bl Sebastian Maggi, priest
 - 25- Christmas (S)
- (S) Solemnity (F) Feast
(M) Memorial (OM) Optional Memorial
* Office for the Dead is prayed

Provincial Promoter: Fr Jim Motl, OP; **President:** Ruth Kummer, OP; **Vice President:** Harvey Newcomb II, OP; **Recording Secretary:** Dr Cynthia Ricard, OP; **Corresponding Secretary:** Karen F. Sabourin, OP; **Treasurer:** Mary Lee Odders, OP; **Formation Director:** Dr Thomas Ryba, OP; **Inter-Provincial Council Delegate:** Dr Norm Laurendeau, OP

Challenge Editor: Marlene Carlos Laurendeau, OP
E-mail: marlenelauren@aol.com

Our Mission

Called to a deeper relationship of love and service to God, we are members of the Dominican Order, who commit to live the Dominican charism as lay people. In collaboration with the Dominican Family, we work to promote social justice and peace in society. Supported by prayer, study, community, and ministry, we fulfill our vocation to proclaim the Gospel wherever we, as individuals, live and work.

Marlene Laurendeau, Challenge Editor
5 Mast Lane
Brunswick, ME 04011
ADDRESS SERVICE CORRECTION