



# OPFAM

Dominican Family Matters: 15-02-2017

*Contemplate the Gospel of Humanity  
then preach the Humanity of the Gospel*

A Newsletter for the Dominican Family in Australia, New Zealand, Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea

## Dominican Art Exhibition

Over 800 years, many Dominicans (nuns, sisters, friars and members of the laity) have been involved in the Arts. To mark the 800th anniversary of the approval of the Order of Preachers - various artists from around the world were invited to hang a piece of their work at Santa Sabina in Rome from late 2016 through to early 2017.

Some of these artists, such as Fr Kim En Joong OP, are now beginning to be discovered in Australia. The Korean born Dominican who lives in Paris, has won many awards for his work which are to be found in many churches, cathedrals, monasteries, and galleries in Europe. Early in 2017 an exhibition of his work will be held in the Vatican. His work has, till now, never been exhibited anywhere in Australia.

**During February 2017, various groups of Australian Dominican Sisters and Friars have agreed to sponsor with ATF Press an event similar to that held at Santa Sabina, Rome.**

In five cities around Australia, works by six contemporary Dominican artists will be on exhibition in venues closely associated with the pastoral and educational activity of Sisters and Friars in Australia. The artists are: Sheila Flynn OP (Australia, South Africa), Mary Horn OP (New Zealand), Kim En Joong OP (France, Switzerland and Korea), Maurice Keating OP (Australia), Cristobal Torres OP (USA), and Rosemary Yelland OP (Australia). Some of these artists were involved in the Dominican Art Exhibition held in Rome.

- Adelaide:** Saturday 18 and Sunday 19 February, 2pm to 6 pm,  
Cabra Dominican College, Cumberland Park, Adelaide
- Melbourne:** Wednesday 22 and Thursday 23 February, 12 noon to 7 pm,  
Parish Centre St Dominic's Parish, Camberwell, Melbourne
- Canberra:** Saturday 25 and Sunday 26 February, 11 am till 5 pm,  
Australian Catholic University, Canberra
- Sydney:** Tuesday 28 February and Wednesday 1 March, 12 noon to 6 pm ,  
Santa Sabina College, Strathfield, Sydney
- Brisbane:** Saturday 4 March 12 to 6pm and Sunday 5 March 9.30 am till 1.00 pm,  
San Sisto College, Carina, Brisbane

Some of the original works by these artists will be on display and will be for sale. Other pieces not for sale will be available in high resolution quality prints and these may be purchased at each venue. Also on sale at each venue will be books and cards featuring art work by these artists.

**For further information about the Dominican Art Exhibition, please ring the curator, Mr Hilary Regan of ATF Press, on 0411876099.**

**A Final Celebration –Honiara, Solomon Islands** about as far as you can get from Rome and Fanjeaux! The Sisters are members of the Congregation of Dominican Sisters of Eastern Australia and the Solomon Islands, and the friars are members of Assumption Province. Archbishop Christopher Cardone OP is archbishop of Honiara.



Henderson and Bonina (PNG). They met together for two days at Henderson, Honiara (SI) for positive discussions and addressed questions about how to strengthen the Melanesian/Micronesian cultures of Respect and Peace in working together as brothers and sisters in the Solomon Islands and PNG. The theme was that we are all sent to preach the Gospel, and we wish to search and find ways to work as a pastoral team. Archbishop Christopher Cardone OP also came to talk to the group and encouraged the friars and sisters to be more pastoral, to see and meet needs as they arise in our communities, schools and parishes.

Together sisters and friars celebrated the closing of the Jubilee Year with a Thanksgiving Mass on 5th January, 2017. Archbishop Chris celebrated the Mass, assisted by Archbishop Emeritus Adrian Smith SM, Priests and Religious from the Diocese. The Salesians, The Daughters of Mary Immaculate and the Marist Sisters attended, along with families and friends from Honiara. Archbishop Chris talked about St Dominic, our Founder, and encouraged the Dominicans to continue on the MISSION – to spread the Good News to all.

## [The Congress that brought the 800 years celebrations to a close, and joyfully took up a refreshed call to contemplate the Gospel of Humanity and respond with the Humanity of the Gospel.](#)

The Gathering brought together 612 nuns, sisters, priests, brothers and lay Dominicans, members of secular institutes, priestly confraternities, Dominican Youth Movement, from forty countries around the world to the Angelicum, Rome. Australia had what proved to be a large representation: six sisters from Sydney (EA), Sr Bernadette Kiley from Holy Cross Congregation, Adelaide, who is the representative for the Asia-Pacific region on Dominican Sisters International, Mrs June Ross, Lay Dominican and Fr Kevin Saunders, former Provincial of Assumption Province. We thought often of those at home who would have so benefited from the blessings that were richly bestowed on all of us at this time, and with whom we would have loved to share this amazing experience of a living, breathing Order of Preachers, men and women working together, meeting the urgent call from God on behalf of suffering people. We were among passionate friends, old and new!

Each day began with Morning Prayer in a different language, followed by an often powerful and moving keynote presentation, usually involving an expression of mission, preaching the Gospel in context. What is the different story we have to preach?

“We need counter narratives, and good practices of reciprocal hospitality, that show that with patience, hard work, faith and hope, it is possible to create a culture of dialogue and encounter. It is possible to establish sound human relationships among people who are different; it is possible to build up healthy, intercultural and interreligious communities.”

Workshops in the key languages followed and deepened the discussion about preaching justice, especially for so many in an age of migration and violence – contemplating the Word, contemplating the people and preaching a different story, using their language, their signs and symbols....

After the Workshops each day, for over an hour, we were treated to the creative side of our charism. Magnificent choirs, choral groups, piano, dance and drama performances, usually commissioned by a province or congregation for the 800 years celebrations and involving the work of very gifted Dominicans. We were given a contemplative experience that transcended language differences, and gave us so much to think about.

The creative side was brought to an end when we were called back to the lecture theatre to focus on realities, broadcast through live streaming each afternoon. These are still available on <http://www.op.org/en/congress/videostreaming>. If you watch nothing else, take time to listen to **Panel Day 3 – Sr Luma begins around 1.10.0** – just slide your bar along... and she is followed by Sr Faustina... These women personified our call to listen for the cries of God’s people and respond with the Gospel message. I think others would agree that the prolonged, deafening applause and standing ovation received by these women echoed a message that no one will ever forget.

Each day ended with a walking pilgrimage – to Santa Sabina, to Santa Maria Sopra Minerva, to the Great Synagogue and finally to St John Lateran for the closing liturgy with Pope Francis. 2500 tickets were issued. If you watched the live stream, you may have come to the conclusion that only Dominican friars were present! Be assured we were all there and remembered you all. Unfortunately Pope Francis was for us a tiny pin prick on the back wall!! We read about his address when we came home! It seems that Fr Bruno addressed the Pope at the end of the Mass, and the final words of Pope Francis to the Order were ‘have courage’.

Despite the fact that the fountains in Rome were frozen over and the weather often made its mark on us, it did not rain, and there was great warmth in the evident affection and companionship and interest, even when we could not share language – except when we had to return our translating machines!! Thereby hangs another story, and brings us back to some of the less pleasurable human realities! And so begins year 801! Thank you God for the men and women who were brave enough to mount this Congress, you have left us with much nourishment as we continue our Dominican way.

**Congress on Mission:** A report by Duncan MacLaren, known to many Australians when he worked at ACU for six years. Former Director of Caritas International. Member of the Glasgow chapter of Lay Dominicans

I was asked to attend the Congress on Mission and to contribute by reflecting on what I had heard as a Lay Dominican at the Congress on the last day. This is what I said:-

“My friend and mentor, Timothy Radcliffe, once wrote “To be a Dominican is to find that you belong with us. You are at home”. Wherever I have travelled in the world and met with Dominicans, whether lay men and women, sisters, nuns or friars, I have felt at home and the same has happened here in the Angelicum. That feeling of belonging is composed of several elements.

One, the warmth of the welcome. When I was introduced to her for the first time, Sr Anne from Trinidad gave me an embrace and a kiss. The warmth has been repeated by meeting old friends and many new ones. We recognise in that human encounter within the ambit of St Dominic’s family not just a feeling of friendship but the knowledge that we have all embarked on a mission to preach the Good News, whether by word, gesture or the way we treat one another. I have heard that must be repeated to the Other as part of the preaching. A second element is the laughter. My experience is that Dominican gatherings don’t stay solemn for long. That laughter expresses our joy at being together and being alive but it is, for us, also, a sign of God’s presence in the world. Pope Francis took this theme up when, talking to seminarians and novices in Rome, he told them that, if they were sad in their vocation, then *arrivederci – goodbye*. You have no place as a servant of the Church because “there is no sadness in holiness”. We were all touched by the work of Sr Luma and her co-workers in Iraq who have brought laughter into the lives of children who have known little else but war, fear and sadness and we should remember that in our less challenging missions too.

Third, if I am honest and ask ‘what have I heard from Lay Dominicans at this Congress’, I would say I have heard a great deal for Lay Dominicans to act upon but not actually heard much from them. They, along with the young people from the Dominican Youth Movement and our lay contemplatives in the Secular Institutes, have been absent from the panels and contributions yet what stories they have to tell, what preaching in the marketplace they undertake and what contributions they can give as members of the Dominican Family! We perhaps need reminded of the words of Brother Damien Byrne, the Master before Brothers Timothy, Carlos and Bruno who wrote in 1990 in his letter “In Mission Together” that “we no longer see ourselves as first, second or third Order. We are Dominicans”. How we emphasise that is for the plan of mission following the Congress.

Fourth, in terms of themes, I have heard a strong message about those sacred conversations around inter-religious dialogue, especially with Muslims while recognising how that can be difficult in the context of murderous groups such as Boko Haram and Da’esh. However, we Europeans especially, must remember how we treated the Muslims as infidels and happily killed them during the Crusades; we must “put on truth” about decolonisation by the British, Portuguese, French and Spanish. This has led often to dehumanising poverty, the continuation of dependency on the former colonial powers to their benefit, the creation by the colonisers of states from peoples of differing ethnic groups, religions and cultures which have resulted in terrible wars and the continued crucifixion of the Palestinian people ; we must refresh our memory of the recent illegal war in Iraq, the *déba*cle in Libya, the dithering over Syria, all of which has cost millions of lives and the ruination of these countries.

The answer to the questions yesterday from two young Dominicans, one brother and one layman, about how they could help in the contexts of such suffering lies not so much in volunteering, in my view, but by speaking truth to power – their governments, the UN and civil society bodies – and being advocates of truth about migrants, war and discrimination. Our Dominican presence on the ground where the suffering is gives us credibility as advocates for change. In terms of ‘truth’, the Oxford Dictionary has included the phrase ‘post-truth’ from the Brexit and Trump campaigns in the latest version. Had Aquinas been here, he would have choked over his partridge. There is no such thing as ‘post-truth’. What came out most clearly in the campaigns I mentioned was lies – that is, the opposite of truth. I have heard at this Congress a desire to be more active in preaching on justice and peace issues and using the language of truth, not deceit”.

Thinking afterwards about the richness of the Congress where liturgy, discussion on relevant themes and art – song, theatre and dance – were intertwined, it still seemed strongly to me that the lay voice in the Order has to be strengthened so that the Mission we were discussing has a conduit into workplaces, pubs, politics and the marketplace in general. This website will help.

If you wish to respond, please contact me, Duncan MacLaren, on [dmdonncha085@gmail.com](mailto:dmdonncha085@gmail.com).

### Some Recent Deaths

*We offer our sympathy to their communities give thanks to God for the witness of their long, dedicated lives, and pray that they are now experiencing the fullness of God's love.*

**Sister Joan (M. Benedict) Purcell** (EA) died on 23<sup>rd</sup> December in Melbourne, a Dominican for sixty-seven years. “While she chose not to teach in the classroom, Joan spent many years working in the local community, teaching catechetics and adult faith formation and reaching out to parish families, with great care and skill. We remember Joan with affection as strong in mind and generous of heart, with strong but practical faith, a no-nonsense person. May she rest in peace.” *Dominican Sisters of Eastern Australia and the Solomon Islands*.

**Sister Marie (M. Bernard) Walsh** (HC) died on 11<sup>th</sup> February aged 95 years. “We remember Marie as a leading educator in our Dominican tradition whose creativity and vision were an inspiration to both her staff and students. In her long retirement years Marie was an energetic advocate for refugees and asylum seekers and many others who were enriched by her practical compassion. Now she knows the fullness of life in our loving God.” *Dominican Sisters of Holy Cross Congregation*.

### Congratulations to all those Dominicans in our midst for whom the holiday period held special significance

Sr Philippa Fennell – Diamond Jubilee of Profession

Sr Pam Davis – Diamond Jubilee of Profession

Sr Jill Shirvington – Golden Jubilee of Profession

Fr Tom Cassidy - Golden Jubilee of Ordination

Fr Pancras Jordan – Silver Jubilee of Ordination

Sr Maria Sikua – Final Profession as a Dominican Sister

Fr Anthony Walsh – election as Provincial of Assumption Province

Fr Kevin Toomey – elected Prior of St Dominic’s Melbourne

Sr Diana Santleben - Newcastle Citizen of the Year, for services to Refugees.

Ms Mary Jaquier -Trustee of Dominican Education Australia, Order of Australia Medal for services to Catholic Education in South Australia

*Loving and joy-filled good wishes to each of you!*

Some past pilgrims will be interested to know that Sr Ann Dominique has become the new Prioress of the Community at Prouilhe France, after the sad death of Sr M. Jean Baptiste. It was a thrill to meet Srs M. Genevieve and Josephina from the community at the Congress in Rome.

### **Oldest Dominican?**

Sister Marie Bernadette from the Dominican Monastery in Dax France recently experienced her **110<sup>th</sup>** birthday, and on 18<sup>th</sup> April she will celebrate the **90<sup>th</sup>** anniversary of her Religious Profession!

Please send any contributions to  
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