



OPFAM

Dominican Family Matters

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

Woe to us if we do not preach the Gospel!

Motto for the years leading up to 800th celebration in 2016; 2010 – “The Mission of Preaching”

24th August 2010

***We pray for the formation of a compassionate, ethical government
at this critical time in Australia's history.***

Dominican Thought for the Week

“All art worthy of the name,” said Matisse late in his life, “is religious.” But he did not venture to say that he himself was so. Rather, he showed us how he existed: unfinished, incomplete, struggling to be true to his talent, often jubilant about the look of life but still uncertain as to its outcome. For anyone who believes in a Love before and beyond all our own, in a Word that bears our deepest questions and is as well their answer, in a Spirit poured out daily on this good but broken world, the authenticity of Matisse's art calls such faith to be equally true to itself.

The words of Marie-Alain Couturier, the great Dominican priest and supporter of Matisse, bear pondering: “I believe that artists have a God and that he catches up with them at the end of that road taken by all prodigal children.”

From: Leo Donovan, “Risking Everything”, Henri Matisse's truest expressions”, America Magazine August 30,2010

Congratulations on celebrating 25 years of priesthood

Fr Alex was born in Auckland New Zealand. His parents are Kath and Maurice Vickers. He has a younger brother named Scott.

Fr Alex Vickers grew up in the then-Dominican Parish of Blockhouse Bay, NZ. He entered the Order of Preachers in 1978, and made first profession on the feast of St Thomas Aquinas, 28 January 1981. Some four and a half years later, he was ordained a priest in his native New Zealand, on 24 August 1985. His first Mass was held at his home Parish. He celebrates 25 years as a priest this year.

After his ordination, Fr Alex worked in Brisbane, Dunedin, New Zealand and was Assistant Priest with Fr Joe Wilson OP at St Dominic's Parish, East Camberwell (in Melbourne). In 1989 he went to the Solomon Islands, from which many happy reports came back regarding his good work among the people. Fr Alex spent some time in 1995 on Sabbatical in St Louis in the United States. Then he worked as Chaplain in the University of Auckland, New Zealand. There he especially focused on the celebration of the liturgy and preaching. He has also been Parish Priest of Watson (in Canberra) and East Camberwell.

Fr Alex came to Adelaide in early 2008, when he was elected Prior of the community in North Adelaide. He was subsequently appointed Parish Priest. *[Per Br Paul Rowse OP]*

We wish you many blessings on this important milestone, Alex!

Order of Preachers U Tube Channel

See and hear the Master of the Order speaking about Dominican Government....

<http://www.domcentral.org/order-of-preachers-youtube-channel/#more-591>

You have a family in Pakistan!

August 16, 2010

Dear brothers [and sisters],
You have a family in Pakistan!

I am sure all of you are aware of the terrible situation we are faced with in Pakistan which has been caused by the heavy monsoon rains and floods. These monsoon rains started about two weeks ago and these have caused devastating floods all round the country. As BBC has written that "Pakistan under water". It is very true. According to the UN report 1,400 people have died and about 20 million people are directly affected by these worst floods of our history of the country. As UN puts it that \$460 million are needed in emergency aid to give some relief to these people who have been affected.

The Secretary General of the UN, Mr. Ban Ki-moon has been to Pakistan on 14-15 August. Yesterday he visited one of the flood affected area near Multan. He said, the flooding in Pakistan was the worst disaster he had ever seen, and urged foreign donors to come forward to the help of about 20 million affected people. "This has been a heart-wrenching day for me, Mr. Ban said after visiting the flood hit area near Multan. He said, "I will never forget the destruction and suffering I have witnessed today. In the past I have witnessed many natural disasters around the world, but nothing like this."

That is the situation we are faced with. No one had every witnessed such kind of destruction, misery and helplessness of the people.

Our TV news channels are full of the horrific news and stories, showing the destroyed villages and cities, people caught in flood water struggling to save their lives and people are starving to death and how some relief goods are distributed among them, mostly through the helicopters - because most of these area roads are destroyed and bridges collapsed.

The present situation of Pakistan caused by floods is the worst one in our history. It is estimated that these floods have caused more damage than all together of the earthquake in Haiti, in Pakistan in 2005 and that of the tsunami.

Our Dominican family is also affected. Parts of our houses, church buildings and church compounds have been damaged. In particular the lay Dominicans have also been severely affected by these rains. Their homes have collapsed, crops destroyed and most of their animals killed. I know 30 houses of Dominican laity have collapsed in a village near Faisalabad. There are many more which I am not aware of. They are in grave need of not only to rebuild their homes but also are in need of food, shelter, and medicine.

There is a forecast of more heavy rains and floods. That will certainly bring more misery and suffering to our people.

Please pray for us so that we may be able to face these crucial times and all those families which are affected may get some comfort and relief.

I will be happy to offer any assistance if any one of you would like to consider helping us in kind or cash for the flood victims have in Pakistan. Thanks!

Kindly remember that you have a family in Pakistan.

With regards,

Fr James Channan OP Prior Vice Provincial Ibn-e-Mariam Vice Province, Pakistan

Dear members of the Dominican Family

I would like to share with you the Joint Appeal of the Catholic Bishops of Pakistan for Disaster Relief Action. This appeal will be read today on 22nd of August, in all Catholic Churches in Pakistan. It invites all of us for our Christian response in the face of such a enormous disaster, as followers and disciples of Jesus who said, "Love one another as I have loved you" (John 15.12) This appeal will be read in all of our Dominican parishes in Pakistan and appeal made for providing relief goods, food and dry ration to the flood hit people of our country. The Dominicans are going to collect donations and distribute among the people affected by these floods. As proposed in this appeal from the Bishops we are going to observe a Day of Prayer on 24th of August, seeking God's mercy for the forgiveness of our sins and failures and that God may save us from further harm and destruction. I am pasting this appeal below for your kind information. You are welcome to share with others.

In the meantime there was meeting of the Major Superiors and House Superiors in Lahore yesterday. There were 25 of us all together from different Orders, Congregations and Societies. We decided to provide shelter, food, dry ration and medicine in 4 flood affected areas in: Multan, Jhang, Kushpur and Noshera. We will be helping Muslims, Hindus and Christians who are affected by these terrifying floods. We pool together some of our resources and give joint Christian witness and the flood afflicted know that we are with them and are part of them and we are helping them as much as we can. Our hearts and souls are with them.

On the part of the Dominicans in Pakistan, a committee of Dominican friars, Sisters and laity will be formed tomorrow for extending our solidarity and provide financial help and in food items to these people and particularly our Lay Dominicans who are affected in Warispura and Kushpur. We have already started helping a couple of lay Dominicans who have been severely affected by heavy rains and flooding. I will be visiting these lay Dominicans tomorrow in Khushpur and Warispura along with two Dominican Sisters and two Dominican friars to find out about their urgent needs and how we can support them.

I am grateful to all those Dominican friars and sisters who have sent in messages of prayers, solidarity and support from all over the globe. A few have already sent in some funds to help the victims of rains and floods. God bless them all!

Please keep us in your special prayers and support us at this difficult time. We do need them very much!

fraternally,

fr James Channan OP, Prior Vice Provincial Pakistan

To send money

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FOR CREDIT OF HABIB METROPOLITAN LIMITED., GULBERG BRANCH,
LAHORE- PAKISTAN

SWIFT CODE: MPBLPKKA025

ACCOUNT NO. 20616 – 145931 OF JAMES CHANNAN

Here is the address of the bank in Pakistan.

James Channan

Account Number: 20616- 145931

Habib Metropolitan Bank Ltd.

Gulberg Branch

85-D-1 Main Boulevard

Gulberg III

Lahore Pakistan

If you needed more information please contact Fr. James Channan:

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153 Ali Block

New Garden Town, Lahore 54600 Pakistan.

Email ad: jchannan@gmail.com

JOINT APPEAL OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF PAKISTAN FOR DISASTER RELIEF ACTION

Our country is facing the biggest natural disaster in its history. The super floods of the mighty River Indus have brought death and wide spread destruction – over 15 million people have been affected and lakhs of homes have been washed away by the raging waters. We stand in solidarity with those who have suffered in this national tragedy.

What is our Christian response in the face of such an enormous disaster? We are followers and disciples of Jesus Christ. He taught us that love is the most important commandment. *“Love one another as I have loved you”* (John 15:12). To live as a Christian means to stand up and actively promote love, mercy and compassion, especially for those who are hungry and in extreme need.

In this critical moment of national tragedy, it is our Christian duty to stand shoulder to shoulder with our Muslim and Hindu brethren and face the common calamity with courage and determination. We your religious leaders want to mobilize our limited resources in doing what we can to alleviate the sufferings of the many displaced persons.

We Bishops appeal to all our members to come forward and help the flood-hit people with cooked foods or dry rations, and also provide tents for shelter and medicines against cholera and other diseases. Our youth are urged to serve as volunteers in relief camps.

We also call for a DAY OF PRAYER ON TUESDAY, 24th AUGUST 2010 in all churches in the country. If possible a Holy Hour of Adoration could be arranged when Christians will pray earnestly that the Almighty Provider may have mercy on us, forgive us our sins and failures and save us from further harm and destruction. We also instruct the priests to recite every day the special prayer in the daily missal “in time of storms and floods”.

In this dark moment we must not lose hope but put our full trust in God who reminds us *“Do not fear, for I am with you. Do not be afraid, for I am your God”* (Isaia 41:10)

This appeal is to be read out in all the churches on Sunday, 22nd August 2010.

In the end we invoke our solemn Episcopal blessing upon our beloved motherland and wish it peace, unity and prosperity.

Your devoted Shepherds in Christ, † Lawrence Saldanha

President, Pakistan Catholic Bishops Conference & The Catholic Bishops of Pakistan

Dominican Calendar

Aug-26 Bl. James of Bevagna (1220-1301) Italian, priest, strenuous defender of orthodoxy,

Aug-28 *ST. AUGUSTINE (354-430) [F]* North African, Bishop of Hippo, renowned theologian, author of The Confessions and The City of God, author of the Rule adopted by Dominican Order, Father and Doctor of the Church.

Next OPFAM 7th September

Please send contributions – short paragraphs – about Dominican Life in your area to archives5@bigpond.com.au – OFTEN!