



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”

26th October 2010

Dominican Thought for the Week

The Scriptures are ancient, yet ever new. Dominic's mission is ancient, yet ever new. Do we dare believe in the Spirit again? Do we dare hear again the words of Peter and Paul: “Go and preach?” We must remember that the Word that has been given to us is not for us. It is for the world. We, like Jesus, are only the emissaries, poor mendicant preachers. But like Jesus in the synagogue of Nazareth, like Jesus during the Last Supper with his disciples, we know that the gift we have received gratuitously we give gratuitously. The Word, anointed by the Spirit, does not belong to us; it has become Bread of Life, Word of Life, that we break and share with the world: “Take this all of you and eat it. This is my body which is given up for you. Fr Brian Pierce OP at the General Chapter of the Order

The Preaching Ministry from October IDI, see full article on www.op.org/idi

There are many Dominican symbols: the habit, the shield, the dog at Dominic's feet with the torch in its mouth. However, there is only one distinctive mark, a sort of genetic code, for the members of the Order, for the Dominican Family. It is preaching for the salvation of humanity (Fundamental Constitution IV), the ministry of the Word, the mission of evangelisation. The General Chapter celebrated in Rome wished to remind the whole Dominican Family, nuns, friars, apostolic sisters and the Dominican laity of this sign of our identity as we approach the jubilee of 2016.

We give thanks

For the life of Marie Eblen who died recently. Marie, from Adelaide, was one of the first band who went to the Solomon Islands, as a lay nurse. We give thanks for her dedication and continued interest, and pray that God will give her joy and peace.

Lay Dominican Provincial Convention, 1-3 October 2010

The Lay Dominican Provincial Council of the Assumption Province is elected every three years by professed Chapter members from around Australia. The current Council consists of Louise Fitinghoff (President), Martin Chatfield (Treasurer), Helen Frank (Secretary), and Fr Ben Hensley (Provincial Promoter). There are currently 15 Chapters in Australia, and several groups in formation.

With each triennial change of Council there is a weekend live-in convention, usually held in NSW or Victoria. This is a valuable opportunity for the laity to come together to pray, to listen to keynote addresses, to plan and to socialise. The Convention was held this year at Holy Cross Passionist Retreat Centre, Templestowe, using The Jubilee Theme for 2010: “How can people preach unless they are sent?” (Rom 10:15): *The Mission of Preaching*. This prayerful gathering included chanted Morning and Evening Prayer of the Church, and daily Mass. Fr Laurie Foote OP gave a thought-provoking keynote lecture on “*The Difficulty of Preaching*”;

and Fr Mark O'Brien OP provided a succinct historical overview of the methods of biblical criticism in his talk, *"How to Read the Bible."* PowerPoint presentations were given by Mr Martin Chatfield OP on *"Easter in Jerusalem Today"*; and by Mrs June Ross OP on the international role of the laity. The Prior Provincial, Fr Kevin Saunders OP, concluded the convention with an excellent informal report on his attendance at the General Assembly of the Friars in Rome at which Fr. Bruno Cadore was elected the new Master of the Order.

We thank the various members of the Dominican family for their dedicated and ongoing involvement, support, and prayers. *Helen Frank OP*

Dominicans in Slovakia

Even though Dominicans arrived in what is now Slovakia in the thirteenth century, the province was established as an independent province only in 2001. During Communism it was a vicariate of the Czech Province... We are a young and still fragile entity. We have 64 brothers and out of that 10 are students, another 9 live outside Slovakia. In Slovakia we have 4 small priories and 2 houses...

What challenges do you think your Province faces in Slovakia?

I think one of the biggest challenges for us in Slovakia is to find our identity and mission.

Slovakia is a traditionally Christian country, with the majority being Catholics. We have had many vocations as a Church; the clergy are young, and the churches are full. The question is how do we Dominicans respond to the needs of the Church in Slovakia?

Firstly, the intellectual life: one of the challenges is to provide teachers in philosophy and theology. We have some brothers who are doing this already.

The second is the interaction between the Church and culture. We have a cinema and a café in one of our priories, and we show art movies. Three years ago, our cinema was awarded the best art cinema in Slovakia. Currently we have difficulty finding brothers for this special apostolate.

Thirdly we have some 300,000 people in Rosary Confraternities. We publish a monthly journal, and brothers are involved in parish preaching missions. The question is how to provide and form brothers for this kind of ministry.

Br Damian Macura at the Chapter – see October IDI for full account.

Dominicans in Nigeria

The Province of St Joseph the Worker in Nigeria and Ghana is a young Province. It became a Province in 1993, and next year it celebrates 60 years of Dominican presence in Nigeria. Ours is a youthful Province, and this is a great feature in that they have years of ministry to come in which to serve the Church as Dominicans in Africa. We have only one brother over 70, and looking into their young faces I see they have great hope and aspirations to face the challenges of the 21st century in Africa, and accomplishing the mission of the Order.

We have about 165 professed brothers, 58 students, and 12 novices in 3 priories, and 8 houses.

We have mainly parish ministries, but we also have the Dominican Institute of Philosophy and Theology in Ibadan, which is about 2 hours from Lagos. That is where we have our formation house, and we are in the process of acquiring a license to transform it into a university.

The Nigerian Church is a growing church too. The Church is strong, lively, and very community minded, and their faith is strong. African society is strongly based on family and community, and that is one factor that African society has given to the Church in Africa

What are the challenges you face as a Dominican in Nigeria today?

Let me just mention two major challenges. The first one is formation. We don't have the financial resources to accept more than 12 novices, so there is a limit to how many people we can train for the mission at any one time. As a result, even if we want to help in other countries in Africa such as Madagascar, we're not able to because we don't have the brothers to send.

Another challenge of formation is to train the brothers to be able to address Pentecostalism which is growing very strong in Nigeria. Sometimes too there are extreme Muslims who attack churches and burn them down. So we need to train Dominicans to engage in dialogue with Islam; not to fight back but to dialogue.

The second major challenge is building up the structures that will support this young Province. One of the ways we can influence our society, and even the policies of the government is through our intellectual tradition and teaching. We think that it will be challenging for our Province has to build up the Dominican University, and to train brothers who will teach in the university, but this is something

we can accomplish with the help of the Order, and the goodwill of other provinces. The University is a major project that will support the mission of the Order in Africa for many years to come *See IDI – October*
Br Charles Ukwe OP Provincial of St Joseph the Worker Province of Nigeria and Ghana

Christmas cards – it is that time of the year again!

St Lucy's School is once again offering some beautiful Christmas cards whose sale supports the school's work for children with a disability. Check out their great website:

<http://stlucys.nsw.edu.au/>

To obtain an order form for the cards – 12 for just \$15 – contact Gailene Keen gailenek@stlucys.nsw.edu.au.

Dominican Family working for justice – not an option but a Gospel imperative:

Sisters, friars, lay Dominicans, associates, colleagues, friends in the Melbourne area are invited to gather with Anne Gibbins and Rose Kinne OP to share some experiences of the *Asia-Pacific Justice, Peace and the Care of Creation conference, Sawangan, Indonesia, July, 2010*. The Dominican Family in the Sydney area will have opportunity on Sunday, 21st November, at 1.30pm at 'Rosary Lodge', Santa Sabina, The Boulevard Strathfield. Contact person: Sr Rose Mary Kinne, domadmin@opeast.org.au or 02 9744 9511

Dominican Calendar

Oct-27 Bl. Bartholomew of Vicenza (1200-1270) Italian, Bishop of Cyprus, later of Vicenza, administrator, founder of a crime-fighting group.

Oct-28 Ss. SIMON AND JUDE [F] *First century Jews, saints, apostles, American Dominicans have a special devotion to St. Jude because he continuously preserves our Houses of Study (seminaries) from desperate financial crises.*

Oct-30 Bl. Benvenuta Boiani (1254-1292) Italian, virgin, cured through the intercession of St. Dominic extreme ascetic, penitent, experienced visions and diabolic assaults, greatly devoted to Our Lady, Dominican Laity.

Bl. Terence O'Brien (1600-1651) Irish, bishop, martyr, one of 17 Irish martyrs beatified by John Paul II on 27 IX 92.

Bl. Peter Higgins (1600-1643) Irish, priest, martyr, one of 17 Irish martyrs beatified by John Paul II on 27 IX 92.

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