



OPFAM

Dominican Family Matters

*A Newsletter for the Dominican Family in Australia,
New Zealand, Solomon Islands 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;

6th December 2011

Go and tell my brothers...” (Jn 20:17): Dominican Women and Preaching

Dominican Thought for the Week

Advent – “one reason why our God takes so much time is because he is not a god. Our God is not a powerful, celestial superman, a sort of invisible President Bush on a cosmic scale, who might come from the outside. The coming of God is not like the cavalry galloping to our rescue. God comes from within, in our deepest interiority. He is, as St Augustine said, closer to us than we are to ourselves.”
Timothy Radcliffe OP

Death of a Dominican Friar in the Solomon Islands

On behalf of the Dominican Friars, I wish to convey our sincere thanks to all of you who have been journeying with us during the time of his long and painful illness and eventually his death on Nov 22nd 2011. We thank you all very much for your prayers, sympathy and condolences. You have really touched us with your support during these days of difficulties in the history of our Dominican Friars vicariate. John Tiroko was our first local Dominican Friar; and the first to leave this life and go to eternity.

We were blessed to have three bishops, namely Archbishop Adrian Smith, his auxiliary John and Bishop Bernard O’Grady OP who were at the funeral Mass and burial. We thank also Bishops Chris Cardone and Luciano Capelli who weren’t present due to their pastoral commitments but have been with us in their words, thoughts and prayers. We have had some 20 priests and many religious men and women together with a lot of our lay people who came from different ethnic backgrounds. A big lunch was served for all who came to join us on that day, 25th Nov 2011. John Tiroko is now laid in a tomb on our property here at Henderson. When you are in Honiara next time, please come over and make a visit to him.

Late John Tiroko was born on the 12th of September, 1952 so that he died at the age of 59. He made his first profession in the Order in April 22, 1976 and was ordained to the priesthood on the 3rd of January 1991. After his profession, he was assigned to different houses in the vicariate performing duties that were asked of him with great efforts and enthusiasm. One of his jobs when I first met him, when I was a novice, was coconut replanting on Loga in order to replace the older trees. His role was to arrange men to collect seedlings from the ministry of Agriculture in Gizo and to make sure that those working under him actually planted the seedlings when they were ready. At the same time he was very much involved with the young people of the diocese as well as reaching out to others. His interest for young people led him to take up studies on Youth Administration at the USP in Suva, Fiji where he successfully obtained a diploma in this area.

Late Fr. Tiroko has had a very long history in the Order; his aspiration was to become a Dominican co-operator brother. As he continued to live his life as a Dominican brother, his desire to become a priest in the Order was already developing. In 1983 he was sent to an institution in Adelaide, South Australia where he did an intensive course in English for the whole year, and it was there that he made his final profession. In 1984 he found himself studying at the then Holy Spirit Major Seminary in Port Moresby, a long process that would lead him to ordination to the priesthood. John found studies difficult but that did not stop him pursuing his desire to become a priest. In addition, his study was

interrupted with a certain difficulty he had faced, but with determination he returned to the seminary until he completed his institutional studies.

His pastoral duties included being parish priest at Moli, Wagina, Savo, Gizo and he worked briefly at Sirovanga and Nila as a deacon. He has attended several courses for his own sake and also on formation of young brothers. He was also appointed a vicariate vocations promoter which led him to visit many places in the country. While in Honiara, he worked as a chaplain to the SICHE and the KVI School. When he was seriously ill and eventually died, he was still working as a chaplain to these schools. He was also very much available to everybody who needed his pastoral services at hospitals and at homes. He never refused any work that was something to do with his priesthood although at times I knew that he was not well. In particular the Kiribati community in Honiara will miss him because he was really the one acting as their chaplain in many community activities as well as in family levels.

May he rest in Peace! *Henry Paroi OP, Vicar, Solomon Islands Vicariate*

Congratulations

To Diana Santleben OP (EA) who has received a National Volunteer Award for her advocacy for refugees. Diana was nominated for this award by Greg Combet.

500th Anniversary of the sermon of Montesinos

Sent to the Sydney Morning Herald and other publications

HOW MANY YEARS WILL IT TAKE...

It is exactly 500 years since the same question was asked in the Caribbean of Spanish colonists. In 1511, a small group of Dominican friars could no longer stand the mismatch between the Gospels they were preaching and the way their parishioners were treating the Indigenous Indians. Friar Antonio Montesinos was chosen by his religious community to confront their land-holding, slave-owning congregation with questions they were not expecting.

By what right do you keep these Indians in such cruel servitude?

By what authority have you declared such detestable wars on these people in their own land?

Are they not human beings?

Have they not rational souls?

Are you not bound to love them as yourselves?

Reflecting on our own Australian history, we put similar questions to ourselves, our compatriots, and our elected leaders who act in our name:

By what right did we claim that the land of our indigenous peoples was ours, not theirs?

By what authority do we set limits to the human rights of asylum seekers, treating them as suspected enemies?

If the rights of one person are denied, the rights of all of us are in danger. How many years will it take for answers to turn into fair policies with broad community acceptance?

Signed: Members of the Justice and Peace Group, Dominican Sisters of Eastern Australia

Celebrating Antonio de Montesinos:

Waratah, Newcastle: There will be a retreat day, focusing on Montesinos & community, with Associates at Wangi, on 18 December.

Sydney: Special Evening Prayer with Dominican Family - 18 December at 5.30pm, followed by refreshments.

ALL WELCOME

Catherine of Siena: Tears and Sweat for our Church and our World

Our visiting speaker, Sr Suzanne Noffke OP, is a Racine Dominican from the United States. She has spent more than 30 years writing and preaching on the life and works of St Catherine of Siena, Doctor of the Church. She has published English translations of all of the saint's writings, including the four volumes of her letters, as well as a comprehensive anthology of these writings. Suzanne will be speaking to school staffs in Melbourne, Sydney and Adelaide, and at a public lecture in Sydney. Her topics will be:

- “Starting afresh with Christ” – the heart of it all
- Living in a Church in heartache
- Living in a world in tension
- Preaching today – “A million voices” with “blood, sweat and tears”

Her public lecture in Sydney will take place
Aquinas Centre, Santa Sabina, 90 The Boulevard Strathfield
On Saturday 28th January from 9.30am – 4.00pm
No pre-booking necessary. Entry by donation
BYO Lunch – tea and coffee provided.

ALLWELCOME to hear this world-renowned expert on the life and theology of our sister Catherine of Siena – mystic, Doctor of the Church, theologian, diplomat, foundress, writer, pastoral worker, politician, champion of the poor and oppressed, defender of the papacy, patroness of Europe, Sydney Morning Herald ‘Woman of the Millennium’!

Dominican Calendar

Dec-8 THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY [S]. S

Dec-16 Bl. Sebastian Maggi (1414-1496) Italian, priest, celebrated preacher, reformer, confessor of Fra Girolamo Savonarola, O.P.; Fra. Girolamo was burned at the stake by order of Pope Alexander VI Borgia, 1498, for publicly criticizing the latter’s immoral life style.

Dec-22 Anniversary of the Approval of the Order of Preachers (1216). The Dominican liturgical tradition gratefully commemorates Mary’s intervention in starting and protecting the Order.

DEC-25 CHRISTMAS DAY

Jan-1 Mary, the Mother of God World Day of Peace

Jan-3 The Most Holy Name of Jesus [C]

Bl. Stephanie Quinzani (1457-1530) Italian, mystic, sister

Jan-4 St. Zedíslava Berkiana (1221-1252) Lay Dominican and wife. Bohemian, she carefully raised four children and founded 2 Dominican priories, her charities, at times miraculously confirmed, abounded for the needy, the sick, and indigent families, she died in her husband’s arms. In 1989, through her intercession, a doctor was healed from a lengthy coma by a miracle.

Jan-7 St. Raymond of Peñafort (1175-1275) [M] Spanish, priest, canonist, diplomat, Third Master of the Order, Church appointed patron of canonists, canonized in 1601.

Jan-10 Bl. Gonsalvo of Amarante (+1259) Portuguese, priest, part-time hermit, miracle worker.

Bl. Ann of the Angels.

Jan-11 Bl. Bernard Scammacca (1430-1487) [M] Sicilian, priest, penitent, mystic.
Jan-18 St. Margaret of Hungary (1242-1270) [F] for the nuns, Hungarian, royal princess, nun, mystic,
Jan-19 Bl. Andrew of Peschiera (1400-1485) Greco-Italian, priest, missionary to heretics.
Jan-22 Bl. Anthony Della Chiesa (1394-1459) Italian, priest, renowned mystic and author.
Jan-23 Bl. Henry Suso (Seuse) (+1366) German, priest, renowned mystic and author.
Jan-27 Bl. Marcolinus of Forli (1317-1397) Italian, priest, ascetic.
Jan-28 ST. THOMAS AQUINAS (1225-1274) [F] Italian, priest, renowned theologian, teacher, author of the Summa Theologiae, AKA Angelic Doctor and Common Doctor of the Church, Church appointed patron of students and Catholic schools, canonized 1323.
Jan-29 Bl. Villana de Botti (1332-1361) Italian, wife and mother, contemplative, worker among the poor, Lay Dominican.

And she laid him in a manger... (Luke 2:7)

**I lift my grateful heart to the Christ child
Who set aside the riches of heaven
To be laid in a manger, helpless and among strangers.**

**I lift my celebrating voice to the Christ child,
Thankful for the food and the colour and excitement,
And wanting the good things I enjoy to be shared fairly throughout the world.**

**I lift my heartfelt prayers to the Christ child,
From the comfort of my home this Christmas,
For the children growing up in poverty, without the education or healthcare they need.**

**I lift my hopes and fears to the Christ child,
Longing for a world in which violence is at an end,
And pleading for those who have known nothing but brutality all their lives.**

**To the Christ child of Bethlehem I pray:
Out of the injustice, out of warfare, out of fear,
Lift every human heart this Christmas. Amen. *Christian Aid***

May the Christ child greet each of us with shining light, that we may spread his warm embrace and kindle the hope of Christmas in all whose lives remain in shadow. Come and be our strength O Lord, our hope and our salvation. Amen.

NEXT OPFAM February 2012

*Please send contributions – short paragraphs – about Dominican Life in your area
to archives@opeast.org.au – OFTEN!*