

# CENTRAL PROVINCE



## INITIATE FORMATION

### 1. INTRODUCTION

# **“HE SET HIS FACE TO GO TO JERUSALEM.” Luke 9: 51)**

Congratulations to you as you set out on your journey as a future Dominican. Congratulations are in order when you successfully end your journey but, also, when you begin. Without a start the race cannot be won. “Let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross.” (Heb. 12: 2)

Our journey, our race, is a life project; one that continues all our life. Keep in mind that where we are in the race is not as important as the fact that we are in the race. One day we can say with Paul, “I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.” (2 Tim. 4: 7) Our journey into the Dominican Life can and will be a very enriching journey, filled with prayer, study, community and mission. Enjoy it.

## **INTRODUCTION**

An introduction is always the way to begin a friendship when two or more meet. It is especially important when the Initiate and the Formation Director meet in the beginning of their training. The Initiate desires to know and understand just exactly what the Lay Dominican Order is all about; the Formation Director is anxious to learn who this new Initiate is. What are the hopes, expectations, and needs of the Initiate?

The **Initiate** wonders:

- Can a lay person really be a member of an Order?
- Tell me about the Dominican Order and St. Dominic.
- What are the mottos and symbols of the Order?
- What are the phases and times of Formation
- What happens at a Chapter Meeting?
- And?

The **Formation Director** wonders (non-obtrusively):

- Tell me about yourself.
- What parish are you in and what activities do you participate in?
- Tell me about your prayer life.
- How did you find out about us?
- What has attracted you to the Dominicans?
- What do you expect to get out of a Dominican vocation?
- Any questions or concerns?

***VERITAS***

***CONTEMPLARI ET ALIIS CONTEMPLATA***



# RESOURCES

**NOTE:** Make up a Chapter Brochure for the Initiate/Inquirer containing a synopsis of Dominicana. See 'Inquirer' section on top of 'Provincial Formation' page on website (laydominicancentral.org) for sample 'Brochure 1 & 2' and adapt for your Chapter/Group.

- "Can Dominicans Really Be Lay People?" by Vivian Gilbreth  
**[SEE ATTACHED FOR COPY TO READ]**
- An excellent source for the Formation Director is Dominicana: a Guidebook for Inquirers This book is available from the Western Province for about \$16.
- Here is an excellent website with a page devoted to the Laity:  
<http://www.domlife.org> - click on 'Laity'
- The introduction in the book Praying with Dominic has a brief biography of St. Dominic.
- Dominican Mottos and Symbols by Suzanne Noffke OP, 2008  
[www.racinedominicans.org](http://www.racinedominicans.org)
- Discuss the Four Pillars of the Dominican Order: Prayer; Study; Community; and Mission
- Consult the Rule for the phases of formation: Initiate (6 months); Candidacy I (1 year); Candidacy II (3 years): Final Profession.



***Vivian Gilbreth:***

***Can Dominicans Really Be Lay People?***

Since the vocation to follow the charism of a saint is not the same as a vocation to a state of life, association with a religious order does not preclude authentic lay life.

---

Ms. Gilbreth, resident of Irving, Texas, makes her living in the business world. Since 1976 she has been a very active member of the Dominican Laity, locally and nationally. She is also a consultant to the Justice and Peace Office of the diocese of Dallas.

---

An exciting age challenges us by a new human consciousness in secular society and in the church to articulate new identities and relationships. The emergence of the laity in contemporary Catholicism is part of a global movement -- an eruption of common, ordinary people as shapers of history. Lay persons are emerging within Christianity as determining Christian history and articulating Christian spiritual experience on an unprecedented scale.

Precisely what, however, is the unique value of the lay vocation in the church, and how does Vatican II describe it? How does belonging to the Dominican order develop the lay vocation described by Vatican II?

Vatican II's *Constitution on the Church* says the special role of the laity is characterized precisely by their secular nature and by their apostolate within the ordinary circumstances of life:

The laity are given this special vocation: to make the Church present and fruitful in those places and circumstances where it is only through them that she can become the salt of the earth. Thus, every layperson, through those gifts given to him or her, is at once the witness and the living instrument of the mission of the Church itself.<sup>(1)</sup>

Thus, the laity's proclamation of Christ by word and the testimony of life "acquires a specific property and peculiar efficacy because it is accomplished in the ordinary circumstances of the world" (CC 35). All Christians are "in but not of the world," and yet the laity are in a unique position to "contribute to the sanctification of the world as from within, like leaven" (CC 31). "This is the special work and responsibility of lay people that no one else can ever properly supply for them . . . many cannot hear the Gospel and come to acknowledge Christ except through the laypeople they associate with."<sup>(2)</sup>

In their commemoration of the fifteenth anniversary of the *Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity*, the U.S. Catholic bishops noted that the laity feel themselves "called to exercise the same mature interdependence and practical self-direction which characterize them in other areas of life" and that "adulthood implies knowledge, experience and awareness, freedom and responsibility, and adult mutuality in relationships."<sup>(3)</sup> The laity's secular way of being in the world complements

the religious and clerical states; and "adult mutuality in relationships" with clergy and religious, when it happens, benefits the whole church.

One reason for the lack of adult maturity in the laity has been the absence of a sufficiently developed lay spirituality in the church. A spirituality focused on the sanctification of the secular order is just as important as one focused on the institutional church. Most people need a spirituality that makes a prayer of their daily experience, that recognizes what they do as valuable to the creation of the reign of God, and that allows them to reflect on the meaning of what they do every day.<sup>(4)</sup>

Unfortunately, many people who have taken to heart the message of the gospel and the spirit of Vatican II and who desire a more intense following of Christ find that the spiritual, intellectual, and apostolic life in many parishes does not encourage these needs and aspirations, and so they become frustrated in the call to maturity and coresponsibility in the church. Some find in the lay branches of religious orders the encouragement and method needed for spiritual, intellectual, and apostolic growth. They find rich resources of the heritage of the church and of community not available on the parish level. They find in the orders a focus and discipline for spiritual growth, a unified vision in the order's charism, and a structured identity with a spiritual family in a living tradition in the church. Thus nourished, they can then become more effective in the parish and in the church at large, exercising the "prophetic role which is given to the laity."<sup>(5)</sup>

### **CALL TO FOLLOW A CHARISM**

Some may object that belonging to a religious order actually draws lay persons away from their authentic vocation described by Vatican II. Does it not make lay people into "mini religious"? The answer lies in the difference between post-Tridentine and post-Vatican II concepts of the laity. To many people in the post-Tridentine church, it seems the religious state was perceived as the highest calling, and only priests and religious were called to seriously pursue holiness and the apostolate. The contemplative or apostolic life was not for the laity, whose job was to raise families and money. The next best thing the laity could do was join a "third order" and approximate the religious state, including a spirituality for religious, which, although inappropriate for laity, was the only choice. The adaptation of this spirituality to lay life was awkward but functional; and although many lay persons achieved sanctity by that means, it nevertheless supplied for a missing theology and spirituality of the laity, which is only now beginning to develop from a new appreciation of the lay vocation.

An important distinction must be made between the vocation to a life-style (marriage, single, religious) and the vocation to a particular charism within the church (a deep identity with the spirit and charism of an order). One can receive, for example, the grace of the Dominican vocation without being called to religious life or the priesthood; but neither does one have to be a Dominican to be a priest or religious. They are separate vocations. There are two distinct calls: one to a way of life, and one to a particular spiritual family or charism. Both religious and laity receive these two calls in their respective lives. The grace and strength of the Dominican vocation is just as real for lay persons as for religious, and they are graced with the same Dominican charism within their lay state of life. The careful process of vocation discernment and formation is just as essential for secular as for religious Dominicans. Lay Dominicans make

profession to the master of the order, and the graces of commitment by profession and of the contemplative and apostolic life are as powerfully real for Dominican laity as for Dominican religious. There are even specific charisms within the lay Dominican vocation, such as lay contemplatives and lay preachers. The living out of the Dominican charism is not limited to institutional religious life; the Dominican life is no less fully lived as a *lay secular experience*. The elements of prayer, study, preaching, and community life are real and effective in lay Dominican life, even though these elements are lived out in the context of secular, rather than religious, institutions.

For Dominican lay people, the proclamation of the gospel is manifest in both ecclesial and non-ecclesial circumstances, but mostly in the "ordinary circumstances" and structures of society which constitute secular existence in the world. Preaching the truth of the gospel by the witness of one's life and by word happens constantly for committed lay Dominicans in the business and professional world, and in social, family, political, ecumenical, and leisure groups. It is in these places that the laity physically and spiritually feed the hungry, clothe the naked, strengthen the weak, bandage the wounded, cure the sick, raise the dead, seek the lost, and preach the good news. The former master of the order, Father de Couesnongle, said: "Dominican laity are not members of a pious movement, purely spiritual. Their vocation is an essentially apostolic vocation, like that of the brothers and sisters . . . and real cooperation needs to be established between the religious and laity of the Order by some structural participation in apostolic activities, in co-responsibility . . . [for] Dominican life is either apostolic or it is non-existent." [\(6\)](#) With special emphasis on preaching, the apostolic life is the charism of Dominic. It is this apostolic life that is being rediscovered and lived anew by Dominic's family, and is the perennial source of attraction for Dominican laity who have "fallen in love with the idea of the Order" (Tugwell).

Dominic was given the "office of the Word." The Dominican approach to the apostolic life is reflected in the elements of the charism which all branches of the order share: the love for truth and its serious study, especially in Scripture; the pursuit of the contemplative life from which the Word is born in the soul; loyalty to the church and the vicar of Christ; the joyfulness of faith and creative openness to the Holy Spirit; and community life bonded by the shared charism and overflowing in the preaching of the word of God. These elements of the charism are shared equally by the Dominican laity who live and express them in the secular state of their Dominican vocation and find in them the effective means for all the people of God to grow in holiness and love.

## **THE DOMINICAN LAY RULE**

Dominic founded his order in response to the need of the people of God to hear the word preached. The thirteenth century saw the rise both of the mendicant orders and of a lay apostolic spirituality based on Christ's apostolic commission to his seventy-two disciples: a return to gospel poverty and an urgent need to proclaim with power the gospel demands for conversion (Luke 10:1-20). The religious aspirations of the people needed to be met within the church, and the gospel needed to be proclaimed intelligently and sensitively. A conflict arose, however, which pivoted on the right of lay people to preach. The issue of lay preaching was in effect squelched, but the movement toward a radical, evangelical life-style persisted. The apostolic life,

rediscovered in the Gospels, offered an alternative to monastic spirituality; and many lay people inspired by the gospel ideal sought support and encouragement from the innovative friars who based their whole life on it. The prudence and interest of the friars were able to channel these lay people's energy into an order of penance where their zeal received spiritual direction and some formation.

In 1285 the master of the Dominican order assured the laity's association with the order under the friars' jurisdiction in the formulation of the first lay rule. However, in response to the general lack of education and the dangers of heresy inherent in the times, this rule in effect reinstated the monastic ideal of holiness as the norm for the lay branch of the order. The inestimable value of monastic practices for spiritual development cannot be questioned; but because of its somewhat different focus, the monastic ideal was not adequate for a lay apostolic spirituality. The lay branch was considered a true branch of the order, united to its life and mission; but, with notable exceptions such as Catherine of Siena, the lay branch's full intellectual and apostolic potential was not realized because of the problems of the period.

In 1923 the rule was modified to conform to the 1918 Code of Canon Law. The language changed, but the essentially monastic spirituality remained; again, the rule was written entirely by the friars for lay members. Paternalism was strengthened, and the ideal became that of the Tridentine religious congregation -- not that of Dominic, Catherine, and the apostolic life. With the exception of some illustrious groups, such as the New York Dominican tertiaries under Fr. Francis Wendell, O.P., the next fifty years held essentially no change; and, although many lay Dominicans achieved sanctity under this rule, the lack of a developed lay spirituality can nevertheless be seen throughout the rule's history.

In 1967 the rule was revised once more with input from the laity and was put on an experimental basis for six-year intervals. In 1980 the first U.S. National Dominican Laity Council was held in Oakland, California, at St. Albert's Priory, where representatives from all four U.S. provinces discussed the rule in light of the needs of our times and what was happening in various parts of the country. It was agreed that there is indeed "new wine" but we need "new wineskins."

## **DESIRES OF DOMINICAN LAITY**

The period since the 1980 meeting of the Dominican Laity Council in Oakland has been one of effort to rediscover the essentials of the Dominican charism for contemporary needs and observe the signs of the times in order to discern the most effective forms the "new wineskins" might take. In the lay branch of the order, the instruments for renewal do exist, not as built-in elements of the rule, as in the friars' constitutions, but in the documents of Vatican II, in the experimental 1976 rule, in the friars' constitutions, in the Acts of the General Chapters of 1968 to the present, in the continuing statements of the masters of the order, and in the needs of the people themselves.

As the Dominican Laity Council has listened and observed, one of the most revealing factors has been the characteristics of many lay Dominicans in the U.S. which reflect the maturing laity in the church at large.



1. They are looking for real community of faith and sharing. They come from a secular world where this is happening in many groups, such as prayer groups, study, catechetical, hospital, university, or political groups, where they have experienced true friendship and genuine warmth in the presence of Christ in each other. They are willing to risk the intimacy of sharing themselves and prayer together at a deep human level, and they are looking for strong forms of community in the order. The Dominican family attracts them in concept, but so far only rarely in its present reality.
2. They hunger for study, especially for Scripture. The sound study of Scripture is one of the surest tests of our credibility as Dominicans, and they know that renewal in the church and the order comes from study of Scripture, study of the signs of the times, study of the founder, and openness to the Spirit. Karl Barth says theology is done with the Bible in one hand and the newspaper in the other. These people are very aware of this, as they seek to find gospel answers to the urgent problems of contemporary society.
3. They express deep interest in prayer: contemplative, communal, liturgical, and what former Master de Couesnongle calls the "prayer of the streets and the newspapers." Their prayer is less devotional and more scriptural.
4. They seek simplicity of life-style. They are attracted by that voluntary poverty of the gospel -- that of "no walking staff, traveling bag, or sandals." Poverty and preaching are inseparable. Poverty gives clout to the message and is a terrible sign of authenticity.
5. They desire a rediscovery of the true meaning of Catholic tradition in the church and in the order. They find in the essentials of Catholicism the rich heritage of faith and practice of centuries of spiritual wisdom, the eternal beauty which St. Augustine praises as "ever ancient, ever new." Their attempt to rediscover and restore essential Catholic tradition must not, however, be confused with the champions of a frantic orthodoxy or "the single-minded mania of the self-professed 'Traditionalists' who wish to restore the status quo ante 1960."<sup>(7)</sup> Rather, they wish to rediscover the essentials of the gospel, of the heritage of the church, and of St. Dominic and his apostolic mission, and to manifest that mission to the contemporary world.
6. The General Chapter of Quezon City urged the universal order to find new places and new ways of preaching. This challenge of new ways and places of preaching has a direct relevance for Dominican laity who live in a society that has for the most part either rejected institutional religion or is grasping at fundamentalism. At the Dominican Family Symposium in Bologna, the master of the order was insistent that only candidates committed to the apostolate be accepted as lay Dominicans. The need to go beyond the traditional parish and classroom is evident, and many lay Dominicans are already involved in often surprising lay preaching apostolates within the very circumstances of their lives.

Vatican II says that "among the tasks of this apostolate [that is, renewal of the temporal order], Christian social action is pre-eminent. The Council desires to see it extended today to every sector of life, not forgetting the cultural" (DAL 7). The laity are called to evangelize secular culture from within it. In 1976 Pope Paul VI, in *Evangelization in the Modern World*, made it clear that evangelization is not limited to formal preaching or ecclesial ministries, but identifies the scope of evangelization with the transformation of humanity: "It is a question not only of preaching the Gospel in ever wider geographic areas or to ever greater numbers of people, but also of affecting and as it were upsetting, through the power of the Gospel, humankind's criteria

of judgment, determining values, points of interest, lines of thought, sources of inspiration and models of life, which are in contrast with the word of God and the plan of salvation."(8)

## **WHERE DOMINICAN LAITY MINISTER**

Some lay Dominicans are, or have been, on the "fringes" of the institutional church and are part of an emerging new Catholic "intelligentsia" who are unknown or invisible to the institutional church leadership, but whose influence in the secular world is strongly Catholic in substance if not in explicit definition. Tugwell reminds us that Dominic was "passionately devoted to the Church and to the truth of the Gospel, but also sensitive to the real values which could be found in movements on or beyond the fringe of the official Church."(9)

Lay Dominicans are involved in cultural-transformation ministries, such as artists, writers, and scholars at secular as well as Catholic universities; medical professionals who have direct Catholic influence on medical ethical values; Catholic lawyers working for the poor and minorities; ministry to victims of violence; ministers in the gay community, especially to those struggling with self-acceptance and the church's teachings; builders of grassroots justice-and-peace communities; political educators among minorities; and always those many who labor at tasks in the marketplace and professions who preach the good news in subtler ways.

There are also lay Dominicans who work more directly with the institutional church in such capacities as members of diocesan justice and peace commissions, diocesan retreat directors, journalists and media specialists, associates of Dominican preaching teams, lay advisors to the NCCB, parish RCIA directors and eucharistic ministers, adult education specialists, lay contemplatives gifted with apostolic prayer and inner healing, and those gifted with promoting relationships among the Dominican family itself.

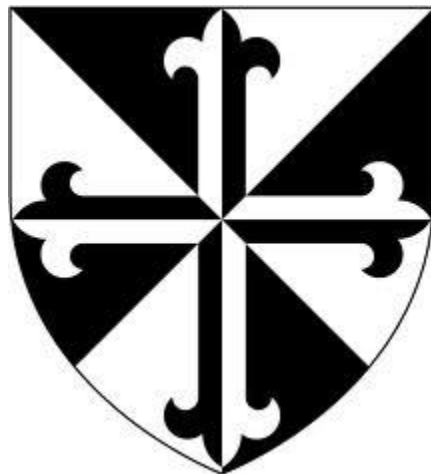
At the Bologna Dominican Family Symposium, in addition to new ways of preaching, the master of the order encouraged new models of Dominican community and new forms of commitment. The order and the National Dominican Laity Council are seeing new forms of community life and new forms of relationship and commitment to the order among new groups, especially those which are in dialog with other branches of the Dominican family. Surely, "new wineskins" will emerge that will benefit the whole Dominican family as we become more truly brothers and sisters in the service of the Word. Tugwell reminds us that "Dominic was not primarily concerned to find a way of life which would be convenient or even safe for himself, nor was he concerned to realize any dream of his own perfection: what he wanted was to preach the Gospel where it was needed most, in whatever way would make it most effective."(10) A recent event which reflects this spirit was the meeting of the first Southern Province USA Dominican Laity Council in November, 1984, at Rosaryville retreat center in Louisiana. There, representatives from traditional chapters and from a variety of new informal groupings from all over the South came together and shared what the Holy Spirit is doing among them. They explored possibilities for new forms of relationship and commitment to the order from a common vision of the urgent needs of the church and society today. They experienced a bonding in the recognition of something new being born among them in this sharing -- something which is also happening in the order in other places of the world. They dared to create minimal facilitating structures as the Holy Spirit leads them in the evolution of the Dominican family in their province. It was

significant that the council represented many nationalities, and that it elected an executive committee of leadership equally balanced between men and women to help develop these hope-filled beginnings.

The same gospel call to the apostolic life that fired thirteenth century laity to identify with the Dominican order is heard today in the hearts of lay Dominicans. The richness of the Dominican charism has nourished the people of God uniquely in every age, and no less today does the Lord promise: "See, I am doing a new deed, even now it comes to light; can you not see it? I am putting water in the wilderness to give my chosen people drink. The people I have formed for myself will sing my praises" (Isa. 43:18-21).

### NOTES

1. Vatican Council II, *Constitution on the Church*, no. 33. Henceforth this document will be cited in the text in parentheses thus: (CC 33).
2. Vatican Council II, *Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity*, no. 13. Henceforth this document will be cited in the text in parentheses, thus: (DAL 13).
3. National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Called and Gifted: The American Catholic Laity*, 13 November 1980, p. 3.
4. See Gregory F. Pierce, "A Spirituality of St. Joseph the Worker," *America*, 1 June 1984, p. 418.
5. *Fundamental Rule for Dominican Laity*, I, 5a.
6. *International Dominican Information*, no. 212 (1984).
7. Andrew Greeley, "American Catholicism: 1909-1984," *America*, 30 June 1984, p. 491.
8. Pope Paul VI, *Evangelization in the Modern World*, 8 December 1975, no. 19.
9. Tugwell, *St. Dominic and the Order of Preachers* (London: Catholic Truth Society, 1981), p. 14.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 4.



# CENTRAL PROVINCE



**INITIATE  
FORMATION**

**2. ORDERS**

## **“FOR WHERE TWO OR THREE ARE GATHERED TOGETHER IN MY NAME, THERE AM I IN THE MIDST OF THEM.” (Matthew 18: 20)**

“Lord, teach us how to pray.” In addition to the beautiful “Our Father” Jesus also often withdrew to pray in solitude or with his disciples. Since earliest Christian times men and women have been doing the same. St. Anthony and early monks withdrew to the Egyptian deserts to become united to God. Many of the laity also were attracted to the monks and would visit them for guidance. St. Benedict, the Father of Western Monasticism, also attracted the laity by his example. In the thirteenth century St. Francis and St. Dominic founded mendicant Orders which would leave their houses and travel the world on their apostolic mission. Again, they had many lay men and women who wished to share in their charisms from the earliest times.

The “Catechism of the Catholic Church” refers to religious life:

925. Religious life was born in the East during the first centuries of Christianity. Lived within institutes canonically erected by the Church, it is distinguished from other forms of consecrated life by its liturgical character, public profession of the evangelical counsels, fraternal life led in common, and witness given to the union of Christ with the Church.

926. Religious life derives from the mystery of the Church. It is a gift she has received from her Lord, a gift she offers as a stable way of life to the faithful called by God to profess the counsels. Thus, the Church can both show forth Christ and acknowledge herself to be the Savior’s bride. Religious life in its various forms is called to signify the very charity of God in the language of our time.



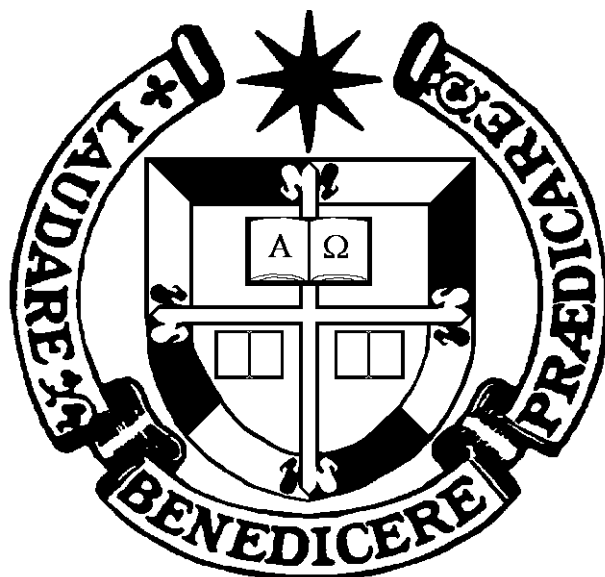
930. Alongside the different forms of consecrated life are “societies of apostolic life whose members without religious vows pursue the particular apostolic purpose of their society, and lead a life as brothers or sisters in common according to a particular manner of life, strive for the perfection of charity through the observance of the constitutions. Among these are societies in which the members embrace the evangelical counsels” according to their constitutions.

Is it any wonder then that lay men and women seeking to lead a life closer to Jesus as revealed in the Gospels would not be attracted to these institutes? These different institutes were founded by Saints who led many others to sanctity. They, as Jesus, have drawn disciples from the laity to this day.

Canon Law has written the following:

Canon 303: Associations whose members share in the spirit of some religious institute while in secular life, lead an apostolic life, and strive for Christian perfection under the higher direction of the same institute are called third orders or some other appropriate name.

Now we will examine some of these Orders, usually no longer called ‘Third’ but proudly ‘Lay’. Initiates could choose an example of an Order from the following and give a brief report on that example at the meeting. Although all have differing charisms, they also share much, especially the Dominicans.



# RESOURCES

The Diocese of Joliet, IL. has an excellent description of five prayer traditions: Benedictine; Carmelite; Dominican; Franciscan; and Jesuit:

**[Read attached for abridged version]**

[www.dioceseofjoliet.org/reo/currProject/AppendixL-PrayerTraditions.pdf](http://www.dioceseofjoliet.org/reo/currProject/AppendixL-PrayerTraditions.pdf)

“The Catholic Encyclopedia” has an interesting article on Third Orders, although dated:

<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/14637b.htm>

The largest group belong to the Lay Franciscans who emphasize evangelical poverty:

<http://www.nafra-sfo.org>

Lay Benedictines, known as Oblates, are attached to a particular monastery and follow the celebrated “Rule of St. Benedict”:

<http://www.osb.org/obl/>

Lay Carmelites are noted for their devotion to contemplation:

<http://www.laycarmelites.com>

We are indebted to the Augustinian founder, St. Augustine, for our original rule:

<http://www.midwestaugustinians.org>

The Friar Servants of Mary, Servites, have lay members:

<http://www.servite.org/secserv.htm>

The Cistercians have lay members:

<http://www.cistercianfamily.org>

The Trinitarians also have lay members:

<http://www.trinitarians.org/about/laity.html>

# QUICK SUMMARIES OF FOUR MAJOR ORDERS' PRAYER TRADITIONS

## 1. Benedictine Prayer & Spirituality

Benedictines are best known for communal living according to the Rule of St. Benedict, its founder, in which the two main principles are manual labor and communal prayer. Recently, there has been a movement for lay people to live elements of the Rule as well. The Rule can be simplified as: Commitment, Balance and Relationship. Lay Oblates live the Rule and receive ongoing spiritual guidance. Associated saints: Benedict of Nursia and Scholastica, his sister. The communal prayer of the Benedictines is the Liturgy of the Hours, a structured liturgical prayer consisting of psalms, prayers, songs and readings, following the rhythm of the times of day and of the Church Year. Lay people are encouraged to use the simplified version found in Christian Prayer, and includes Morning and Evening Prayer. Benedictine tradition includes a simple form of prayer using scripture – Lectio Divina (holy reading) – that facilitates understanding what God may be saying to a person through a reading.

The four steps are:

1.) Lectio:

read or listen to the text, paying attention to any words or phrases that stand out.

2.) Meditatio:

meditate on what speaks to you, repeating it to yourself and allowing it to interact with your thoughts, hopes, memories and desires.

3.) Oratio:

pray, entering into loving conversation with God, allowing the word you have heard and meditated on to touch and change you.

4.) Contemplatio:

simply rest in the presence of God and accept His loving embrace. In silence, let go of your own

words and simply enjoy being in the presence of God. The contemplative tradition of the Benedictines is best known from the Trappist monks, who observe a strict rule of silence. Their form of contemplation was recovered from the ancient tradition of meditation based on the desert Fathers and Mothers, the fourth movement of Lectio Divina, and the mystical tradition of *The Cloud of Unknowing*. This prayer form is called Centering Prayer, or The Prayer of the Heart.

Famous 20<sup>th</sup> Century American Trappists include Thomas Merton, Thomas Keating, Basil Pennington, William Meninger, and even Henri Nouwen, who spent a year as a “part-time” Trappist.

## 2. Carmelite Prayer & Spirituality



The earliest Carmelites were hermits who stayed on the slopes of Mount Carmel near the end of the twelfth century. They lived in poverty and sought solitude on the mountain where Elijah the prophet had made his home, while meditating on God. Today, they look to the mountain, to Elijah, to Mary, and that tradition of solitude as their spiritual wellspring. The symbol of Carmel stands for the intimate encounter that God brings about between the person and God in the midst of all that is most ordinary in life. The expression and source of this encounter, contemplation and prayer, are the very heartbeat of the interior journey of transformation of the Carmelite today, whether vowed religious or layperson.

Associated saints: Teresa of Avila, John of the Cross, Therese of Lisieux, Edith Stein (martyr)

The symbol of Elijah is central to Carmelite spirituality. He is seen as a man on a journey who hid in the desert in a time of dryness and journeyed back to meet God in new and unexpected ways. This symbol is operative in a key concept of Carmelite spirituality from St. John of the Cross: the "dark night of the soul" -- a period of spiritual dryness where God seems not to be present to the seeker. Mary is associated with the rain of God's Grace that ends the dryness, like the little cloud Elijah sees in 1 Kings 18:44.

Key concepts in Carmelite spirituality are

- 1.) Allegiance to Christ,
- 2.) Openness to Scriptures,
- 3.) A sense of silence and solitude, and
- 4.) The undivided heart.

The primary Carmelite prayer forms are solitude and meditation

The Carmelite mystics, Teresa, John of the Cross, and Therese of Liseux expanded the original vision, writing about new ways to understand the soul's continuous longing for union with God and the daily struggles of the journey to reach it. Their writings and poems help lead us into visionary prayer.

### 3. Dominican Prayer & Spirituality

Founded by St. Dominic de Guzman in 1286, the Dominican Order has a history of teaching, writing, art and preaching. Dominicans focus on following Christ, the wandering preacher who sent his disciples out in pairs to prepare for his coming. Their spirituality is rooted in the vocation of the preacher - being filled with the wonder of the Good News of salvation, which they want to share with the world. Their outlook on life is influenced by Dominic's special insights into the Good News. Dominican spirituality is diverse, though some major themes can be taken from the works of some of its main practitioners. Basic to understanding their spiritual practices is a sense of both the hiddenness and unknowability of God and the imperative call to loving ministry. Some lay people join the Third Order to live the Dominican call in the world.

Associated saints & others: Dominic, Thomas Aquinas, Catherine of Sienna, Rose of Lima, Martin de Porres, Meister Eckhart, the Beguine Mystics

Dominic was a cheerful and energetic saint and his spirituality reflects that. Dominican prayer, while it borrows from other traditions, follows the following principles:

- 1.) Rooted in the Eucharist - Dominic said it was "Christ's last and perfect prayer to the Father".
- 2.) Liturgy of the Hours(the Divine Office) -- important as a mainspring of community life.
- 3.) Contemplative Study- not an emptying one's head of thoughts, but rather a discursive, meditative analysis and study of scriptural truth and truth in general.
- 4.) Fruitfulness – contemplative action in the world (ministry)
- 5.) Praying Whole- using the whole body when addressing God – Dominic had "Nine Ways" to do this

There is also a mystical thread to Dominican spirituality, centering in silent praise of the inaccessible splendor of God, spiritual poverty, and detachment, found in the writings of Catherine, Aquinas, and Eckhart.

#### 4. Franciscan Prayer & Spirituality

Franciscan prayer is definitely in and of the world, at the same time it is an experience of God. Francis did not speak about spirituality so much as he lived his prayer - as Celano (an early biographer of Francis) said "He became prayer" and in the intimacy of his relationship with God he would have his followers join him. "Hold back nothing of yourself for yourself, so that he who gives Himself totally to you may receive you totally," Francis said. Franciscans seek God through an incarnational approach – God is our loving Father and all we have is gift; Christ is our Brother and the Spirit of that love lives in us. The Franciscan approach is Trinitarian, not static. Again Francis was practical - the Crib, the Cross, the Eucharist were his way to God, and finally his relationship to the Triune God led to an intimacy and familiarity with all wonders of creation so that he could address them as Brother/Sister - all are members of the one family.

Associated Saints: Francis of Assisi, Clare, Anthony of Padua, Bonaventure, Francis de Sales, Maximilian Kolbe, Frances Xavier Cabrini, Padre Pio and many more.

Features of Franciscan spirituality are community and solitude, prayer and penance, humility and poverty. Prayer can be vocal prayer, prayer using nature as its source and inspiration (see Francis' Canticle as an example – text is in popular hymn "Canticle of the Sun"), contemplation, or Lectio Divina. The contemplative dimension often focuses on union with God, and experiences of divine love. Yet, Franciscans are active contemplatives who find their mission in social justice ministry, and they are often found helping the poor, the elderly and the sick in homeless shelters, nursing homes and hospitals.

# CENTRAL PROVINCE



## INITIATE FORMATION

### 3. PRAYER

# “PRAY WITHOUT CEASING” (1 Thess. 5: 17)

## DOMINICAN PILLARS

The Dominican Order is firmly built on four pillars: Prayer; Study; Community; and Mission. However, do not think of these pillars as completely separate; for they are inclusive and flow in and out of each other. We study *“Veritas”* (Truth) and God is Truth. Our study is prayer. Jesus Christ is present among us and in us in Community. Our Mission is the work of Jesus. Prayer, then, can be considered alone or in each of the pillars.

## LAUDARE-BENEDICERE-PRAEDICARE

*‘To praise, to bless, to preach’*-a Dominican motto for Prayer. Of course, the topic of prayer could fill many, many volumes. St. John Damascene says that prayer is “an elevation of the soul to God.” St. Thomas Aquinas also agrees with this. This is accomplished in a conversation, with words or without words, with others or alone. Prayer can be defined by its ends: Adoration; Contrition; Thanksgiving; and Supplication (ACTS). The term *elevation* is a metaphor which indicates an effort on our part to detach ourselves from all that is not God. What will God do when we reach for Him? The answer appears in Hosea 11:3-4: “I took them up in my arms...I was to them like those who lift infants to their cheeks.” A beautiful response. Our objective in prayer is union with God.

Adolph Tanquary SS in *The Spiritual Life* (520) writes on prayer: “No wonder, then that through it, the soul is gradually *transformed* into God. Prayer causes, so to speak, a mutual exchange between us and God: whilst we offer Him our homage and our requests, He stoops down to us and bestows upon us His graces.” It is no wonder then that our Lord said: “We ought always to pray” (Luke

18: 1) and Paul asked us to “pray without ceasing”(1 Thess. 5: 17). We can do this by following our Dominican Pillars.

## LITURGY

Dominican prayer is **LITURGICAL**. Liturgy is the official public prayer of the Church. “In its full public worship is performed by the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, that is, by the Head and its members.” (*Sacrosanctum Concilium: 7*) For example, when we pray the “Liturgy of the Hours” we do not pray alone but united to all others around the world who are praying it and united to Jesus Christ who is offering this prayer to His heavenly Father. Let us consider three parts of the Liturgy: the Mass; the Sacraments; and the Liturgy of the Hours.

Our Rule asks us for “daily participation, as much as possible, in the celebration of the liturgy and the Eucharistic sacrifice” (Rule 10, b). This is “the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; it is also the fount from which all her power flows.” (S.C.: 9) Dominic often attended daily Masses. A Dominican will make every effort to attend daily Mass.

The Sacraments are also an important aspect of Dominican prayer life. Besides the Eucharist, “frequent celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation” (Rule 10, c) is encouraged. The Sacrament of the Sick should be asked for when needed.

The “Liturgy of the Hours” extends our Eucharistic prayer. “The purpose of the liturgy of the hours is to sanctify the day and the whole range of human activity.” (*Laudis Canticum: 11*) Again we pray the ‘Hours’ with Christ, “for He continues His priestly work through His Church. The Church, by celebrating the Eucharist and by other means, especially the celebration of the divine office, is ceaselessly engaged in praising the Lord and interceding for the salvation of the entire world.” (S.C.: 83) Each Lay Dominican should be introduced gradually to the ‘Hours’ as “Each member is expected to say some portions of the *Liturgy of the Hours* daily, especially the two principal components: Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer.” (Guidelines 10, d) “The faithful who celebrate the Liturgy of the Hours are united

to Christ our high priest, by the Prayer of the Psalms, meditation on the Word of God, and canticles and blessings, in order to be joined with His unceasing and universal prayer that gives glory to the Father and implores the gift of the Holy Spirit on the whole Church.” (Catechism 1196) St. Augustine advises us to “be assiduous in prayer (Col 4: 2), at the hours and times appointed.” (The Rule of St. Augustine 2: 1)

Although not liturgical, the Rosary has for centuries been a special prayer for Dominicans. They have spread devotion to this meditative prayer far and wide since the Middle Ages. We are encouraged to draw strength from “the Marian Rosary”. (Rule 10, d)

## **CONTEMPLATA ALIIS TRADERE**

A Dominican motto asks us to pass on to others what we have contemplated. Although an active Order, we are also a contemplative Order. No one was more active or more contemplative than St. Dominic. He travelled the world during the day and passed the night in contemplation. “Contemplative prayer is the simple expression of the mystery of prayer. It is a gaze of faith fixed on Jesus, an attentiveness to the Word of God, a silent love. It achieves real union with the prayer of Christ to the extent that it makes us share in his mystery.” (Catechism 2724)

Unfortunately, contemplation is thought to be reserved for those highly advanced, the ‘saints’. In actuality, our motto, quoted above, tells us that before we can preach we must first contemplate. “That original Dominican spirituality was distinguished by a Gospel directness and simplicity. The life of prayer and contemplation was something which was regarded as open to everyone...It was always understood as a way of being, a life in the Spirit, to which everyone was invited.” (“Searching for God: Contemplative Prayer in the Dominican Tradition” Paul Murray O.P. p.15)

Mother Teresa was asked how she prayed. She said that she listened to God; when asked what He said she said that He listened to me. “Exuberant happiness, ease of spirit, cheerfulness, joy – these are some of the words and phrases which come to mind when we think about contemplative prayer in the Dominican tradition. We are not surprised, therefore, to discover in a Dominican homily of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, a popular preacher making bold to declare, ‘Prayer is such an easy job!’” (ibid. p.9)

## RESOURCES

There are many resources that are or could be available. Lest we overwhelm the Initiate, one should pick and choose what is appropriate. One of the most highly recommended is a three page treatment:

***“Characteristics of Dominican Prayer”*** by Stan Parmisano O.P.:

**[SEE AND READ IT ATTACHED]**

A book that can be used as a resource or used at some length later:

*Praying with Dominic* by Michael Monshau O.P. – (e.g. amazon.com)



## LITURGY OF THE HOURS

The “Liturgy of the Hours” can be found on the internet, e.g.

[www.universalis.com](http://www.universalis.com)

Most members begin with the one volume “Christian Prayer: The Liturgy of the Hours”, as this is the easiest, simplest and most economical. Once you become committed to the recitation of the office, you can then use the four volume “The Liturgy of the Hours.” Both are available from Catholic Book Publishing Co., New York and can be found in Catholic bookstores.

“*Laudis Canticum: Apostolic Constitution: The Divine Office*” is available from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops as “The General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours.” It is also abridged in “Christian Prayer” and complete in “The Liturgy of the Hours.”

Perhaps the best explanatory book is “*The Divine Office for Dodos\** (\*Devout, Obedient Disciples of our Savior)” : A Step-by-Step Guide to Praying the Liturgy of the Hours” by Madeline Pecora Nugent. This book answers every question you might have on how to say the Office. Highly Recommended!

## CONTEMPLATION

There are many good sources and treatments on Contemplation, from ancient up till today. Read the **Catechism**: 2709-2719. Paul Murray O.P. has written much recently. Two additional references are mentioned below because they provide the Initiate with easy introductory material with which one might begin:

“Accepting the Embrace of God: The Ancient Art of *Lectio Divina*” by Fr. Luke Dysinger, O.S.B. <http://www.valyermo.com/ld-art.html>



“Centering Prayer” is a method of studying and practicing Contemplation: Union with God. It is an outgrowth of “Lectio Divina.” The Trappists, especially Thomas Keating OCSO, have promoted ‘Centering Prayer’. Much is available in books and videos, even on YouTube. Meister Eckhart and Blessed Johannes Tauler, two 14<sup>th</sup> century Dominicans, are in this tradition.

<http://www.contemplativeoutreach.org>

## WEB 2.0

This video is an introduction by Fr. Walter Wagner OP to the Dominican approach to Liturgical Prayer and its importance to Dominicans:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8aVYUhBR80U>

Adrian Dominican Sisters explain the importance of prayer:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x1KIE9tsXrU>

Combination of prayer and art by Fra Angelico’s work at San Marco, Florence, Italy:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rp83d-wfgOc>

Fr. Thomas Keating OCSO, Trappist, gives some guidelines on Centering Prayer:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3IKpFHfNdnE&feature=related>

**REMEMBER: “PRAYER IS SUCH AN EASY JOB!”**

## **Fr. Fabian (Stan) Parmisano, OP: Characteristics of Dominican Prayer**

Practiced and preached in our western world today are many different methods of prayer and meditation from a variety of religious and non-religious traditions. One has only to think of such oriental imports as Zen, Yoga, Aikido, Hindu, and Buddhist chant; or turn to the secularized adaptations of these like transcendental meditation, mind control, Arica, body reading, physical and mental massage; or recall the more familiar (and so less known?) forms of Christian prayer: liturgical worship, the rosary, Ignatian spiritual exercises, Benedictine, Carmelite, Carthusian, Trappist, Franciscan modes of contemplation — all still alive and well enough among us; or consider the free, easy, spontaneous approach to prayer promoted and popularized in and through the Christian charismatic renewal. For those who have eyes that see and ears that hear, there is invitation and method aplenty to move us beyond our prevailing stifling materialism into the lighter, fresher world of the spirit.

Dominicans, too, have their way of prayer which they have inherited from their founder. St. Dominic was born into an ancient tradition of prayer, that of the Eucharist, and early in life became a Canon Regular, whose chief duty and joy it was to offer the Eucharistic sacrifice and pray the liturgy that led up to and flowed from it. True, this was the Church's public worship, but it became Dominic's private prayer as well in that he became personally absorbed in it and allowed it to shape his solitary contemplative prayer.

For him the Eucharist was Christ's last and perfect prayer to his Father for the healing of humankind, and Dominic's concern was to say 'yes' to it, become one with it, and pattern all his individual prayer upon it. Dominic looked to Christ in his sacrificial act of total giving and with Christ looked also to the father, knowing that it is through such perfect orientation that humankind begins to be saved. It is not so much method, then, that characterizes Dominic's, and so Dominican prayer, as orientation — a constant moving outward into God that he might save the world. As part of, and as an outgrowth of, his personal and private

communication with God, Dominic was always devoted to the public recitation of prayer in the Divine Office. As a Canon of Osma Cathedral, he had been intimately involved in the official prayer of the Church, and he passed this on to the Order he brought into being. During his lifetime, Dominic was faithful to common prayer in the choir, which he saw as a mainspring to the development and continuity of a true community life. While private prayer was not neglected because of choir, neither was public prayer neglected in favor of personal devotion; today, his sons and daughters strive for this same balance between the individual and God and the group and God. The very discipline of combining the two into a harmonious unity is a means of growth in itself.

Thus Dominican prayer — personal or communal — is objective, with a dynamism that continually

moves beyond subjective self, beyond the world, beyond even the healing humanity of Christ, into God and further and further into the depths of God, confident in the belief that this right order to God makes for a right order within the world. But the order of the world is secondary and not the prime reason for prayer. People can and should pray for the world, for themselves, for the success of their good work, for those dear and not so dear to them, but unless they've learned to reach beyond all this into God himself, they make an idol of the world and so eventually destroy the world.

The note of objectivity carries over into another distinctive feature of Dominican prayer: study, principally of sacred revealed truth, but also of all truth wherever it may be found. It was difficult in Dominic's time for many to see any connection at all between prayer and study, especially careful, detailed, scientific study. It's equally difficult in our time. More often than not, study — the diligent use of the mind — is seen as an obstacle to prayer, which is regarded as the pious exercise of the heart.

But Dominic saw it as a deeper, more loving penetration into the Scriptures and the writings of the Fathers which surrounded and permeated that great Eucharistic prayer of Christ and as a way of uncovering and entering into the objectivity of God. Dominic was aware of the dangers, especially that of mind crushing heart, and so he sought to keep study reverent by setting it within the context of semi-monastic liturgical life; but he was more aware of the need to study, that an enlightened mind might help to direct the heart and keep it moving outward, in love and desire, to God.

For the Dominican, then, study is, or is meant to be, meditation. Not the kind of meditation popular in our time — an emptying of the mind, a peaceful abiding in darkness. Dominicans are for this, too, but as a first step in an advanced degree of prayer, which is contemplation. Prior to this, however, one's mind and heart must be informed by Christ — who he is, what he means, where he points and leads. Then when the darkness at last comes and the emptying is accomplished, it will be Christ, and not some thwarted spirit of self or Satan that will arise from the depths, bringing light and fullness and the joy of God.

A fourth characteristic of Dominican prayer is its issue. *Contemplata aliis tradere* (to give to others the benefits of one's own contemplation): not only an absorption in God but a return from him, and with him, into the lives of others. With him — this is important. Again, it is Christ who saves. And so not only is the Dominican's prayer meant to be contemplative, i.e., centered upon God, but his action in the world is also to be contemplative. Not, therefore, a nervous, feverish action that is anxious for results, especially the kind that we ourselves anticipate, but a still, quiet action that leaves room for God and is patient for God's results in God's time. Here again the movement is outward, with little if any break in one's prime concern. One contemplates God, reaching further and further into him, one acts for the world, reaching deeper and deeper into it for the best of it, which is the very God who is above and beyond it.

Still another feature of Dominican prayer is its use of the body. It involves a kind of physical yoga, but nothing exaggerated or extreme. Merely a few simple gestures toward the harmonization of body and spirit. This also Dominic bequeathed to his Order, having himself learned it in part from the

Eucharistic liturgy with its rich and delicate blend of word, chant, and gesture — the whole of the person engaged in worship. So from an early document we learn of the nine ways of Dominic's private prayer: he would incline profoundly, prostrate his body upon the ground, genuflect, scourge himself, raise his arms to heaven — in short, he would pray while standing, sitting, kneeling, prostrating, walking.

Dominic's 'nine ways' were probably nine times ninety. His body was as flexible as his spirit and just as engaged when he was aware of his God, which was always. So also with modern Dominicans. They pray, or should pray, whole. And their prayer should be their varied and personal responses to God's varied and personal touch upon them. They may borrow methods from other traditions to help dispose them for prayer, to quiet their bodies and still their nerves and imagination and thought — all so necessary especially in tense and nervous times like our own. But these, Dominicans see only as a beginning. They must move through and beyond them to their own personal meetings with God and to where Christ and his prayer are.



# CENTRAL PROVINCE



## INITIATE FORMATION

### 4. STUDY

# **“WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE EVEN ZEAL IS NOT GOOD.”**

**(Proverbs 19: 2)**

**STUDY** is the next pillar of the Dominican Order. It is fitting that it should follow Prayer because Dominicans see both as flowing one into the other. To a Dominican Study is the contemplation of *‘Veritas’* (Truth) and God is Truth. So our Study is another form of Prayer which is why the Dominican takes Study so seriously.

## **THE CHURCH**

Of course Study is not simply the province of the Dominican but is necessary for all Christians, ordained, consecrated and lay. The Church assures us of this: “Since they are called by baptism to lead a life in keeping with the teaching of the gospel, the Christian faithful have the right to a Christian education by which they are to be instructed properly to strive for the maturity of the human person and at the same time to know and live the mystery of salvation”. (Canon 217)

The Church encourages all to seek out and pursue this knowledge: “Lay people who are capable and trained may also collaborate in catechetical formation, in teaching the sacred sciences, and in use of the communications media.” (Catechism 906) This knowledge should be shared with others: “In accord with the knowledge, competence, and preeminence which they possess, [lay people] have the right and even at times a duty to manifest to the sacred pastors their opinion on matters which pertain to the good of the Church, and they have a right to make their opinion known to the other Christian faithful with due regard to the integrity of faith and morals...( Canon 212)

The Church was founded to spread the kingdom of Christ throughout the world. Every activity of the Mystical Body to accomplish this end is known as the 'apostolate'. Our Christian vocation is a vocation to this 'apostolate.' Like Dominic the Church wishes those called to this 'apostolate', to be properly trained. This is why "Zeal without knowledge is not good". (Prov. 19: 2)

There is a definite need for training for the apostolate: "A training, at once many-sided and complete, is indispensable, if the apostolate is to attain full efficacy. This is required, not only by the continuous spiritual and doctrinal progress of the layman himself, but also by the variety of circumstances, persons and duties to which he should adapt his activity" (Apostolicam Actuositatem 28)

"Study", then, is something which is a duty for every Christian who takes his or her vocation to the Apostolate (to which we are all called by virtue of our Baptism) seriously. We are called to come and follow Christ, if not literally to the ends of the earth, then at least to the ends of our particular world. For that reason the Church today echoes the humble servant of God who walked the byroads of Europe eight hundred years ago. Dominic knew that to preach without proper preparation was to be an "empty gong".

## **DOMINIC**

Dominic was a man who thirsted for truth. In Palencia he studied the liberal arts and philosophy for six years; then theology for four. At the time this formal education was a great gift. Blessed Jordan of Saxony writes, "He spent four years in these sacred studies during which he drank avidly and incessantly from the streams of Sacred Scripture. So indefatigable was his zeal to learn and retain tenaciously the truth of those things which he was learning that he would spend almost whole nights without sleep..." We know that Dominic carried the gospel of Matthew and the letters of Paul with him and read them so often that he had them committed to memory.

## DOMINICANS

Dominic sent his followers to the universities of Europe (Toulouse, Paris, Palencia, Montpellier and Oxford) as students. Study was to take the place that 'manual labor' had among monks of previous centuries. Study now became the essential means of the apostolate. Humbert of Romans wrote, "Study is not the purpose of the Order, but it is of the greatest necessity for...preaching and working for the salvation of souls, for without study we can achieve neither." Every Dominican priory had to have a rector who gave theological lectures on Sacred Scripture to all including the prior.

The Primitive Constitutions of 1228 stated, "Those who are studying shall be treated by their superior in such a manner that they not be easily withdrawn or hindered in their study because of some duty or other task...those who wish to do so for the sake of study may read, write, pray, sleep or even keep a nocturnal vigil in their cells." (XXIX) "We further ordain that each province is obliged to provide brethren destined for study with at least **three** books of theology." (XXVIII)

## LAY DOMINICANS

The necessity of study applies to every Dominican: ordained; consecrated; lay. The Nuns at Blessed Sacrament Monastery in Farmington Hills, MI have taken up the study of Greek for a deeper understanding of Sacred Scripture. Because of our active role in the apostolate, we, as Lay Dominicans, must participate in a *Lay Dominican Formation Program*. According to our Rule: "The purpose of Dominican formation is to mold true adults in the Faith, capable of accepting, celebrating and proclaiming the Word of God". (Rule 11) The Church in "Apostolicam Actuositatem" promotes this desire for a mature, adult Christian who can speak with authority gained by prayer and study. "The various lay groups and associations dedicated to the apostolate or to any other supernatural end should look after this education to the apostolate with care and constancy, in ways consistent with their objectives and limits. Frequently they are the ordinary channel of adequate apostolic training; doctrinal, spiritual and practical. The



members gathered in small groups with their companions or friends, evaluate the methods and results of their apostolic action, and measure their everyday behavior by the Gospel.” (30) It is amazing how closely the Lay Dominican vocation mirrors the Christian vocation. This leads to the conclusion that to be a serious Lay Dominican is to be a true Christian, a follower of Christ.

Rule 12 reads, “Every Dominican must be prepared to preach the Word of God.” Rule 13 continues, “The principal sources for perfecting Dominican formation are:

- a. the Word of God and theological reflection;
- b. liturgical prayer;
- c. the history and tradition of the Order;
- d. more recent documents of the Church and the Order;
- e. awareness of the signs of the times.”

We are fortunate to have at our disposal a fountainhead of books, writings, videos and speakers to help us with our formation. It can even appear to be overwhelming at times. A great amount of information was gathered together in 2007 in the “Program of Lay Dominican Formation” by a committee of Lay Dominicans. This represents a bibliography of suggested items which can be consulted and utilized. It is a twenty-eight page single-spaced document put together by Michael Porterfield OP, Fr. James Motl OP, Dr. Cynthia Ricard OP and Dr. Thomas Ryba OP. Also in 2007 “The Fisher’s Net” through the Aquinas Institute was activated on the net. Both of these sources have been consulted and incorporated in this Provincial Formation Program.

## **ST. THOMAS AQUINAS**

We should follow the advice of St. Thomas Aquinas in his letter to Brother John on how to study when we feel overwhelmed, “Because you have asked me, my brother John, most dear to me in Christ, how to set about acquiring the treasure of knowledge, this is the advice I pass on to you: That you should choose to enter by the small rivers, and not go right away into the sea, because you should move

from easy things to difficult things...Follow the steps of blessed Dominic...If you follow., you will attain whatever you desire.” With this in mind the Formation Program introduces the Initiate to the Dominican life, brings the Initiates and Candidates into ever deeper streams of study and then takes us into the sea. All can dive as deeply as they are able and are willing to be challenged. As adults in the Faith we are encouraged also to study on our own.

## **STUDY ?**

Indeed “study” should challenge us to push out into deeper waters. In *The Place of Study in the Ideal of St. Dominic* James A. Weisheipl O.P. asks, “What did St. Dominic and the early brethren mean by the word ‘study’?...The reading of newspapers and magazines is not study. Neither is watching television or listening to a lecture what is meant by study...Real study requires the quiet of one’s room or the library...Studying, therefore, is not to be confused with wide reading, spiritual reading or even reading the Bible...But study, real study, is the intellectual grappling with truth.” Thus, do not be discouraged if you are having difficulty understanding what you are reading, must reread it and, then, ponder it. You are ‘studying’”. The beauty of Dominican study is that it can be done on different levels. We all come from a different educational background and can all be accommodated at our level. The important thing is - *to study*.

Fr. Timothy Radcliffe O.P. said it well, “Study is not one activity [amongst others] of a Dominican; it should enter into every aspect of our life. It is part of the way we grow in friendship with God, delight in his creation, and take pleasure in His presence. It is fundamental to our preaching...”.

Do you like to study? Would you like to learn more about Jesus, about the Church, about the spiritual life? Would you like to share the fruits of your study with others? Perhaps Jesus through the Holy Spirit is calling you to be a Lay Dominican.

# RESOURCES

The early Dominicans insisted that all have *three books* to study. The following three books should be basic for every Lay Dominican (although they are available on <http://www.vatican.va/>, they belong in your library for reading, consultation and study):

1. A Bible – The translation should be chosen to fit your personal taste. Check out “The Catholic Comparative New Testament” for seven translations including NAB and NRSV.
2. “Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Postconciliar Documents” Essential for understanding the Church today.
3. “Catechism of the Catholic Church”( with modifications, if you do not possess one yet.) Read and consult.

Read the following for greater understanding of STUDY:

- “The Place of Study in the Ideal of St. Dominic” by James A. Weisheipl, O.P.  
**[FOR A LONG STUDY – SEE IT ATTACHED]**
- “Spirituality: Study” <http://3op.org/spirituality-study.php>  
**[FOR A SHORTER STUDY]**

# WEB 2.0

## **YOUTUBE:**

“Study and Contemplation” Fr. Kurt Pritzlop OP, Dean of School of Philosophy at Catholic University of America

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hsVEXWvfSi8>

“Study” Fr. Bruno Shah OP, pursuing theological studies at the Pontifical Faculty of the Immaculate Conception (Washington DC)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z3u18i1bl2E>

## **PODCASTS:**

The Dominican House of Studies in Washington DC offers an extensive collection of podcasts.

They offer a series entitled “Lectures in Dominican History” which is very thorough and erudite.

Another collection is also offered by the Priory. A lecture on “Dominican Teaching” by Fr. Terence Keegan OP, Professor of Theology at Providence College is recommended.

## **WIKIPEDIA:**

The following saints are known as Dominican scholars; all devoted to study. They are available at: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dominican\\_Order](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dominican_Order)

(also some at: <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/12354c.htm> )

### **Some examples of Dominican**

#### **Saints and Scholars:**

Albertus Magnus (1193-1280)

Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274)

Catherine of Siena (1347-1380)

Raymond of Penafort (1175-1275) →

Fra Angelico (1395-1455)

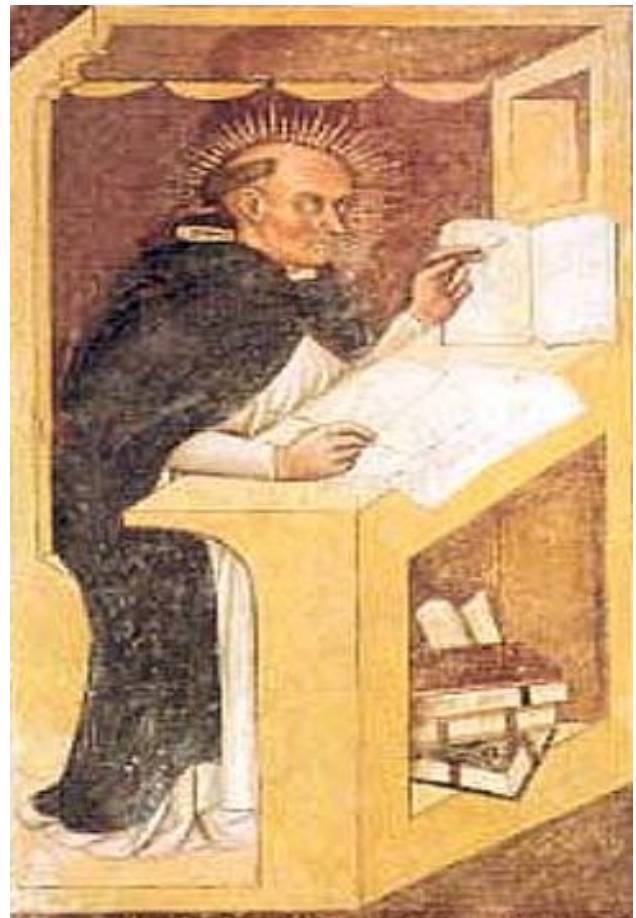
Pope Pius V (1504-1572)

Louis de Montford (1673-1716)

Henri Lacordaire (1802-1861)

Yves Congar (1904-1995)

Edward Schillebeeckx (1904-2009)



**[FOR THOSE WHO LOVE TO STUDY – STUDY THIS:]**

# **The Place of Study In the Ideal of St. Dominic (James A. Weisheipl, OP)**

**James A. Weisheipl, O.P. (1923-1984)**

**Feast of St. Rose of Lima**

**30 August 1960**

**Dominican House of Studies River Forest, Illinois**

The purpose of the Dominican Order is stated clearly and simply in the Constitutions:

Our Order is known from the beginning to have been specially instituted for the sake of preaching and the salvation of souls. Consequently our study must aim principally at this, that we might be useful to the souls of others.(1)

This statement of purpose is taken almost verbatim from the earliest extant constitutions, which goes on to say that in view of this end the prelate is to have authority to dispense brethren in his own convent from these [constitutions] when it seems to him expedient to do so, particularly in those matters which seem to impede study or preaching or the good of souls.(2)

The essential means for attaining the special aim of the Order are explicitly stated in our modern constitutions as follows:

The means, established by the most holy Patriarch for reaching our goal, are: besides the three solemn vows of obedience, chastity and poverty, the regular life with its monastic observances, the solemn recitation of divine office, and the assiduous study of sacred truth.(3)

These means, we are told, may not be abandoned or substantially changed without changing the character of the Dominican Order, although, the vows excepted, they may be opportunely tempered (*temperari*) to a certain extent (*aliquatenus*) by the demands of the age or circumstances, provided that these four means are rendered more apt for attaining the goal of preaching and the salvation of souls. These four means, namely solemn vows, monastic life, choral office and study, are not classified as such in the Constitutions of 1228, 1238 or 1241. But no one could doubt that the four essential means are implied throughout the entire text of the primitive rule. The unique character of St. Dominic's Order lies in the special goal of preaching plus the four essential means.

For us in the twentieth century there is no difficulty in understanding the importance of solemn vows in the Dominican Order. The counsel of Christ to leave all things and follow Him is the very cornerstone of all religious life. This surrender, confirmed by vows having special canonical effects, makes the existence of an Order possible. Similarly it is not difficult for us in the

twentieth century to appreciate the importance of a common life according to a recognized rule. Without a stable rule of life regulating procedures, order and obligations, it would be impossible for men (or women) to live in religious peace. Likewise it is not difficult for twentieth century Dominicans to appreciate the value of the choral recitation of the divine office. Modern religious institutes have generally abandoned the choral recitation of the office. Twentieth century Dominicans, however, find no difficulty in accepting the ancient practice as a means of personal sanctification and of giving public glory to God. It is fitting that those who live together with one mind should pray together with one heart.

In the case of study, however, it is not so easy in the twentieth century to appreciate the place of study in the ideal: of St. Dominic. Since the Council of Trent a great number of seminaries have been established, seminaries with a high standard of academic excellence. Today every secular priest has had the benefits of some college education, two or three years study of philosophy and four years of theology. Every religious Order and Congregation engaged in the training of priests must meet the academic standards of Rome. What, then, makes study so special in the Dominican Order? Perhaps St. Dominic merely anticipated the modern seminary. Perhaps today study does not occupy the same position in the Dominican ideal as it did in the thirteenth century when so few of the clergy were educated. Moreover, the modern standard of living, particularly in the United States, would seem to diminish the importance of study in the Dominican Order. Today the majority of the laity have had at least a high school education, and not a few are eminent scientists, scholars and writers. The facility with which learning can be acquired through the printed word has been increased by the radio, television and the silver screen. It would seem, then, that study does not occupy the same place in the Dominican ideal as it did in previous centuries.

In this brief paper I wish to clarify the precise place of study in the ideal of St. Dominic. I will not say anything about the actual status of study in the Order, or about its appreciation in this or that Province of the Order. I wish to concentrate on study, the fourth essential means of attaining the goal of the Order, as understood by St. Dominic and the brethren of the early thirteenth century. So often when a Dominican thinks of study, he thinks immediately of St. Thomas, and perhaps exclusively so. In this paper I wish to focus attention on the period preceding St. Thomas. Such a focus may help us to appreciate more fully the Dominican spirit of the Angelic Doctor.

First we will examine the historical facts; then we will try to analyse them for a better understanding of the place of study in the ideal of St. Dominic.

## I

The intellectual character of the Order stems from Dominic himself and the needs of the early thirteenth century.

The intellectual and cultural renaissance of the twelfth century were beginning to change the face of Europe by the turn of the thirteenth century, but this change was slow. Centers of learning such as Paris, Oxford, Bologna and Padua were beginning to take the place of monasteries and Cathedral schools, but these centers were small and few in number. Contact with the wealth of Arabic culture had been made in Spain, and commerce with the Greeks opened new horizons in

Sicily and Venice. But only a few scholars had the opportunity of transmitting this learning to eager students. The intellectual level of the secular clergy was generally low, and it was outside the competence of monks to elevate it. In the spirit of Saints Isidore and Leander, Cassian and Pope St. Gregory the Great, monks of every sort were forbidden to study secular literature; whatever learning was encouraged in the monasteries was supposed to be limited to personal meditation on the Bible and private reading of the Fathers. Clerics, on the other hand, both secular and regular (i.e. the Canons Regular), had an obligation to acquire a modicum of learning both secular and divine in order to fulfill the functions of their office. Bishops, of course, were the official teachers of sacred truth, but there were too few bishops sufficiently learned and zealous for the apostolic office. At the beginning of the thirteenth century Pere Mandonnet has estimated, (4) there were no more than a dozen masters of theology outside the universities actually teaching sacred doctrine. It is not surprising that the Cistercian monks, the secular clergy and even the local bishops were unable to cope with the new intellectual heresies of Albigensianism, Waldensianism and Catharism, which took root in Southern France and Northern Italy.

Onto this scene came Dominic of Guzman. Born in 1170 at Caleruega in Northern Castile, he received his elementary training from a certain uncle, an archpriest. About the age of 14 Dominic was sent to the nearby city of Palencia to study the liberal arts. Bl. Jordan tells us that at that time there flourished a *studium* of arts in that city.(5) After studying the arts Dominic enrolled in the Cathedral school at Palencia, where he “spent four years in sacred studies.”(6) Dominic had a great love for books and he annotated them carefully.(7) It was not easy for him to sell his books to help the poor during the famine, but his example inspired fellow theologians and even masters of theology to follow his liberality.(8) As a secular priest, and later as archdeacon of Osma (1199) and a member of the Cathedral Chapter which had recently embraced the rule of Canons Regular, he pursued a life of ardent prayer and assiduous study.(9)

Dominic was about 35 years old when he accompanied the learned and zealous Bishop Diego into the heretical territory of Southern France. We are told that he sat up all night in theological discussion with an Albigensian inn-keeper, a discussion which ended in the conversion of the heretic.(10) Between 1205 and 1208 the itinerary of St. Dominic can be plotted with some ease because of the great number of public disputations with heretics which were notable enough to have been mentioned by various chroniclers. The next seven years of Dominic’s life, however, are obscure to the historian, but we know that the Albigensian crusade brought the heresy under complete control.

In the calm of 1215 Foulques, the learned bishop of Toulouse, appointed Dominic and his companions preachers for the diocese of Toulouse.(11) It was at this time, when Dominic was 45 years old, that he and his six companions presented themselves to Alexander Stavensby, an English secular master in theology then lecturing in Toulouse. Alexander Stavensby “genere, scientia et fama preclarus,”(12) was later professor at Bologna, member of the papal household and eventually bishop of Coventry and Lichfield.(13) Stavensby was thus the first teacher of the new band of preachers which received the confirmation of Pope Honorius III on December 22 of the following year. Dominic understood well the words of Proverbs: “Without knowledge even zeal is not good.” (Prov. 19:2) Henceforth university cities became the centers of his Order’s work. At the first dispersal of the friars in August, 1217, seven of the sixteen were sent to Paris,



and early the following year a foundation was made at Bologna.(14) In 1220 Dominic sent friars to Palencia and Montpellier to establish houses just as new universities were being founded in those cities. One of Dominic's last official acts was to send thirteen friars to the university city of Oxford.(15)

Why did Dominic send his brethren to the university cities? Was it to teach in the growing universities? Obviously not. These original friars at Toulouse, Paris, Bologna, Palencia, Montpellier and Oxford were not masters in theology; hence they could not teach in any university. No, these brethren were sent to centers of learning in order to learn. "Without knowledge even zeal is not good." Dominic was not only convinced of the importance of learning, but he made it an essential element in his new Order; he made it an essential means of the apostolate. "Study," wrote Humbert of Romans, "is not the purpose of the Order, but it is of the greatest necessity for the aims we have mentioned, namely, preaching and working for the salvation of souls, for without study we can achieve neither."(16)

Among the early brethren there were a few with arts degrees from various centers of learning. At Paris "many excellent clerics"(17) entered the Order so that when Dominic arrived in 1219 the new priory already numbered thirty members.(18) On the other hand, there were many who were uneducated (*rudes*). Nevertheless all were bound to "the assiduous study of sacred truth", just as they were bound to the three vows, the common life and the choral office.

Every Dominican priory had to have a rector whose obligation it was to give theological lectures on the Sacred Scriptures to all the brethren.(19) Not even the prior was exempt from attendance at these lectures. The degree of Lector in Sacred Theology is nothing more than the authorization of the Order to lecture within Dominican houses. It was not a degree from any university. Later when priories were large, a number of lectors would be assigned to a house, one friar, called the *lector primarius* was entrusted with supervising all teaching and deciding all theological disputes. Thus even before the Order had any claim on the University of Paris, that is, before the Order obtained its first Master in Theology, every cleric in the Order was bound to the assiduous study of sacred truth.

The spirit of St. Dominic was understood perfectly by Jordan of Saxony, who was elected to succeed Dominic at the General Chapter of 1222. Jordan, himself a master in arts and a bachelor in theology of the University of Paris, saw clearly the importance of learning in the Order. In all of his travels and preaching he tried to recruit members from university circles.(20) In 1228 Jordan brought Roland of Cremona to Paris and had him enrolled in the faculty of theology under John of St. Giles, an English master. Roland was a master in arts from Bologna and he had spent almost ten years in the study of theology before he enrolled at Paris. Jordan indeed must have had considerable influence at Paris, for Roland merely lectured on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard for one year before receiving the S.T.M. This was most extraordinary. Roland of Cremona was, in fact, the first Dominican to lecture as a master at the greatest center of Christian learning. In September of the following year (1230) John of St. Giles himself entered the Order, thus giving the Dominicans two chairs at the University of Paris.

Learned men such as Jordan of Saxony, Roland of Cremona Hugh of St. Cher and John of St. Giles, were attracted to the Order because of the spirit of St. Dominic which flourished among

the brethren. The primitive constitutions in force during B1. Jordan's Generalate declare strongly: "The brethren ought to be so intent on study that by day and by night, at home or on a journey, they read or meditate on something, and endeavor to commit to memory whatever they can."(21) One day a man asked Jordan of Saxony what rule of life he followed, apparently he had never before seen the habit. To this query Jordan replied, "The rule of Friars Preachers, and this is their rule: to live virtuously, to learn and to teach (*honeste vivere, discere et docere*)."(22) Jordan went on to explain that these are the three blessings David asked of God when he said, *Bonitatem et disciplinam et scientiam doce me* (Ps. 118:66). B1. Jordan's statement of the rule, namely "to live virtuously, to learn and to teach," is a perfect expression of the mind of St. Dominic in establishing the Order of Preaching Friars.

By the time Humbert of Romans was elected fifth Master General in 1254 the fame of the Order was widespread and the intellectual character of St. Dominic's Order was solidly established by the growing renown of St. Albert the Great and the promising ability of St. Thomas Aquinas. Humbert of Romans, who first loved the Carthusians and who all his life cherished a strong bent toward asceticism, himself found no difficulty in ranking study as an essential means of the apostolate.(23) After listing eleven benefits of study Humbert says, "Who is there who knows the reputation of the Friars Preachers, who does not know that these benefits have been produced and are being produced in them from the study of letters? Consequently lovers of that Order are accustomed to be not a little zealous for study in promoting it in the Order."(24)

If this is not sufficient to indicate the importance of study in the ideal of St. Dominic, two further indications should confirm the picture already presented.

First, there is the unique feature of the primitive constitutions not found in the statutes of any other religious Order at the time. By this I do not mean the organization of the laws. One anonymous author tells us that before Raymond of Peñafort's revision (1239) the Dominican constitutions were in a state of utter confusion (*que sub multa confusione antea habebantur*).<sup>(25)</sup> Raymond merely regrouped the ancient legislation under distinct headings. The format of Raymond's revision resembles the constitutions of other Canonical Orders of the period. The unique feature of the Dominican constitutions, however, is that they alone made provision for study. The constitutions of Prémontré, St. Victor of Paris, St. Denis of Rheims, the Austin Canons and the Grandmontines do not say a word about study.<sup>(26)</sup> Yet we know that Canons Regular, since they were clerics, did devote considerable time to study and writing. The Dominicans, unlike other Orders, made study an essential part of their rule. Study, therefore, did not have the same importance in other Canonical institutes as it did in the Order of St. Dominic. With the Dominicans learning was not a luxury, but a necessity; the pursuit of learning was not a concession, but an obligation. This new role of study in religious life was necessitated by the special end of the Order, which was the preaching of sacred doctrine.

Another interesting light is thrown upon the place of study in the Order by thirteenth century writings concerning the Order. By the middle of the thirteenth century Dominicans were very conscious of the greatness of their ideal. During the second half of the century there appeared a considerable number of literary works designed to increase devotion and to record the traditions of the Order: *ut devotio amplius augeatur and ut cuncti . . . noverint sui status primordia et progressus*.<sup>(27)</sup> The *Vitae Fratrum* or Gerard of Frachet falls into this category. More important,

however, are the various big bibliographical lists of illustrious men. These lists combine two aspects of the Order in describing illustrious Dominicans: sanctity and learning.(28) These lists of renowned theologians are not simply historical chronicles; they are rather ascetico-scientific works intended to arouse in the reader a deeper appreciation of Dominican tradition. An example of this type of work is the treatise of Stephen of Salanhac (+1291) entitled *De Quatuor in Quibus Deus Praedicatorum Ordinem Insignivit*.(29) This treatise, which was completed by Bernard Gui early in the fourteenth century, is divided into four parts corresponding to the four marks by which God distinguished the Order of Preachers. The first mark is the greatness of its founder, who was Christlike; the second is the glorious title of Preacher, which is apostolic; the third mark is its illustrious progeny which illuminates the world, and fourth is the excellence and security of its rule of life. In listing the illustrious men of the Order Stephen of Salanhac first describes those who have given their lives for the faith (*fratres passi pro fide*), then he lists those who have been illustrious in writing and in doctrine (*virii illustres in scriptis et doctrinis*). Historians today are, of course, very grateful for such reliable catalogues, but medieval readers were expected to be edified by these examples of the Dominican ideal in practice.

Briefly, then, we can say that Dominic had a new conception of religious life. Its purpose was the preaching of sacred doctrine and the salvation of souls. The sublime office of preacher had never before been the goal of any Order. Preaching belonged by divine right to bishops, the authoritative teachers of sacred doctrine. Dominic was given authority to establish preaching as the goal of his Order by the universal bishop of Christendom, the Holy Father. In order to attain such a goal, Dominic took the three means he knew as a Canon Regular, namely solemn vows, regular life with its monastic observances and solemn recitation of the divine office. To these he added the new element of study; this was necessitated by the special goal of preaching. Study, therefore, was the new feature in St. Dominic's way of life.

## II

Lest we read historical facts oblivious of the implications of such a novelty, let us try to analyze the place of study in the ideal of St. Dominic by posing a few questions.

1. What did St. Dominic and the early brethren mean by the word 'study'? Does study mean simply reading, as one would read a newspaper, a magazine or a best-seller? The Latin verb *studere* means a pushing forward with effort, or a striving after something with zeal. The Latin word *studium* means not only 'study' or a place of study in the English sense, but very often it has its original sense of 'zeal'. Therefore the reading of newspapers and magazines is not study. Neither is watching television or listening to a lecture what is meant by study. A lecture may be very helpful for acquiring new ideas or direction in thought. Real study, however, requires the quiet of one's room or the library. The rule of silence in Dominican houses has always been called "the most holy law" and "foremost of all observances"(50) because it is necessary for study as well as for prayer. Studying, therefore, is not to be confused with wide reading, spiritual reading or even with reading the Bible. Wide reading is excellent for acquiring a wide range of information. Spiritual reading is necessary for the spiritual life. Reading the Bible is essential for a Dominican. But study, real study, is the intellectual grappling with truth.

In describing the Dominican rule Jordan of Saxony said *discere et docere*. *Discere*, to learn, means to acquire a perception in the manner of a disciple learning new truths; it means to acquire

truth from a teacher. The doctrine, or learning which has been thus acquired can then be taught to others. B1. Jordan's expression, *discere et docere*, as the rule of the Dominican Order corresponds perfectly to St. Thomas' expression: *contemplare et contemplata aliis tradere*.(31) "The highest place among religious orders," writes St. Thomas, "is held by those which are ordained to teaching and preaching, which functions belong to and participate in the perfection of bishops."(32) Commenting upon this the older Dominican constitutions declare:

Of such type is our Order of Preachers, which from its first foundation is principally, essentially and by name ordained to teaching and preaching, to communicating to others the fruits of contemplation.(33)

It is clear, then, that the fruits of contemplation which are given to others in Dominican teaching and preaching are none other than those acquired by study, learning, contemplation. The three expressions, *studere, discere, and contemplare*, designated one and the same reality among Dominicans of the thirteenth century. That reality is the zealous, human effort by which truth is assimilated.

2. What truth, we may ask, is the object of Dominican study? Is it philosophical truth? Is it knowledge of current political affairs, literature or sports? The constitutions are very explicit about this when they declare "the assiduous study of sacred truth." Sacred truth is the *sacra doctrina* of divine revelation contained in Sacred Scripture and interpreted by the Church. The prestige of a Master in Sacred Theology and a Preacher General in the thirteenth century is intelligible only in terms of the sacred doctrine which is to be given to others in the apostolate. It has been said(34) that the Dominican Order has a transcendental relation to truth, that is, to sacred truth and the Absolute Truth which is God Himself. The Order of Preachers was described by Mechtilde of Magdeburg as "*Ordo veritatis lucidae*",(35) luminous truth because the object of its study, teaching and preaching is the sacred truth of sacred doctrine.

What, then, about the study of philosophy, the arts and current affairs? The primitive constitutions explicitly forbade the study of philosophy and the liberal arts.

The brethren are not to study the books of classical authors and philosophers, even though they glance at them briefly. They are not to pursue secular learning, not even the liberal arts, unless the Master of the Order or the General Chapter disposes otherwise in certain cases. Rather the brethren both young and old are to study only theological books.(36)

This legislation is taken almost verbatim from the ancient Church law governing monks.(37) In the early days there was no need to study philosophy or the arts in the Order; young men entered already trained in the humanities at the university. St. Albert received his arts training at Padua, St. Thomas at Naples; they were prepared to study theology. By 1259, however, it became evident that youths entering the Order were not sufficiently trained; the new *ratio studiorum* of 1259 established *studia philosophiae* in certain provinces corresponding to the university faculty of arts. But even in these houses of philosophy students were required to attend the theology lectures of the *lector primarius*. In other words, the study of philosophy was considered a necessary means to theology, the study of sacred doctrine.

The principal study of every Dominican cleric in the thirteenth century was theology, even when he was assigned to a studium of logic or natural philosophy. The importance of philosophy for theology cannot be over-estimated. Since the middle of the thirteenth century the Order of Preachers has continually fostered the study of philosophy the sciences and arts — all with a view to sacred doctrine and the apostolate. “Our study,” declare the primitive constitutions, “must aim principally at this, that we might be useful to the souls of others.”

3. Upon whom, however, does this obligation to study rest? It would seem that only those who are assigned by superiors to study have the obligation, for example, students during their years of training and Fathers who are sent on to special studies. Not all Dominicans have the same inclination to study. Thus it would seem that those who can take it should take it. Further, superiors are preoccupied with details of the common good and hence would seem to be exempt from study. It is often said that once a man is elected or appointed superior, his days of study are over. Furthermore, it would seem that brethren who are engaged in the apostolate or parish work or full-time teaching in high schools are too busy to study beyond the immediate needs of class. All things considered, it would appear that only those assigned to study have the leisure or the obligation to study.

Before answering this question one historical point ought to be clarified with regard to actual preaching in the thirteenth century. Every member of the Order in the Middle Ages was technically called a ‘Preacher’, just as every Franciscan was called a ‘Minorite’. But not every Dominican was given the honor of actual preaching. Only specially qualified Fathers were given a *mandatum* to preach by the Prior, Provincial or General Chapter.(38) A preacher thus commissioned was not to be burdened with temporal administration, nor was he to carry anything with him except necessary clothing and books.(39) Sermons were also given by Masters in Sacred Theology in the university and curia, preaching was a function proper to masters in theology. But other members of the Order could only prepare themselves for the day when they too might receive the mandate to preach or become a master.

But with regard to the means chosen by St. Dominic for his way of life every Dominican, whether he be superior or subject, teacher or student, preacher or secretary, was obliged to the three solemn vows, to regular life with its monastic observances, to the solemn recitation of divine office, and to the assiduous study of sacred truth. Even the most inept cleric in the Order was bound to assiduous study according to his abilities. The obligation of choral office was not limited to those with good voices; nor was the obligation of common life restricted to the gregarious. Why, then, should we think that the obligation to study fell only on geniuses? Study, therefore, is a universal obligation in the Order as serious in intent as solemn recitation of the divine office and regular observance. In fact, historically and constitutionally study is more important, since from the very beginning of the Order the constitutions readily provided for dispensations from choir and certain observances for the sake of study.(40) But they provided no dispensation from study itself.

While it is true that superiors have less time for study than their subjects, this does not relieve them of the obligation to study. In the thirteenth century, we have already noted, priors were held to attend the daily theological lecture of the *rector primarius*. St. Albert the Great wrote most of his commentaries on Aristotle when he was Provincial of Germany, preacher of the crusades or

burdened with the episcopal office. Hugh of St. Cher prepared his monumental work on the Bible while he was an active Cardinal of the Church. Peter of Tarentaise revised his commentary on the *Sentences* while he was Provincial of France. Hervé Nédélec was most energetic in study and writing during his Provincialate and Generalate. Cajetan was Master General of the Order and Cardinal when he wrote his remarkable commentary on the Summa of St. Thomas. In the thirteenth century Provincials were expected to study sacred doctrine assiduously; commonly they were assigned by the General Chapter to teach theology in a studium after their term of office. There was no doubt, at least before the Reformation, that study was binding upon all Dominicans, lay-Brothers and Sisters excepted. "The brethren," stated the constitutions, "ought to be so intent on study that by day and night, at home or on a journey, they read or meditate on something, and endeavor to commit to memory whatever they can."(41)

The medieval mind would have found it hard to comprehend the excuse that a Dominican is too busy with the apostolate to study. The argument that a preacher is too busy preaching to pray would have been just as incomprehensible. Mention has already been made of the constitution forbidding preachers to carry anything with them except clothing and books. St. Dominic himself always carried with him the Gospel according to St. Matthew and the Epistles of St. Paul.(42) Jordan of Saxony listed books as the first necessity of mendicant preachers.(43) The more one is engaged in preaching and the apostolate, the more one needs the light of divine truth, just as he needs the strength of prayer. In the Dominican Order no one is exempt from the assiduous study of divine truth.

The story is told of a certain friar in the early days of the Order who neglected study for the sake of long prayers and works of asceticism. Once he was discovered "the brethren often accused him of making himself useless to the Order by not studying."(44)

4. How much, we may ask, should a Dominican study in order to fulfill his constitutional obligations? From what has already been said, no other answer can be given but: *Always*, according to the dictates of supernatural prudence. Just as we are told by Christ to "pray always and not lose heart" (Luke 18:1), so a Dominican is told by his constitutions to study always without interruption. The primitive constitutions use the expression "by day and night, at home or on a journey". The modern constitutions express this by the word "assiduous". The Latin word *assiduus* means continual, unremitting, incessant, perpetual. For a Dominican there is no time limit to the assiduous study of sacred truth.

The profundity, breadth, care and zeal of St. Albert's study are apparent on every page of his writings. The prodigious industry of St. Thomas has never ceased to astound later generations; the clarity and precision of his style, the aptness of his quotations, the extent of his sources and the genius of his synthesis all testify to ceaseless study. Describing Cardinal Cajetan, the careful historians, Quétif and Echard, remark:

What is more amazing about Cajetan, however, is his pertinacity in the study of letters, so that no day ever passed without his having written a line whether he was alone or engaged in official duties, whether at home or on a journey, whether as cardinal or legate, free or captive, healthy or sick. This is evident if one examines the lower margin of each of his writings where the place, day, year and current activities are diligently noted. Hence, it is related, he was wont to say that

he could hardly excuse from grievous sin a fellow Dominican who failed to devote at least four hours a day to study.(45)

This strong statement attributed to Cajetan indicates the seriousness of study in the Dominican Order. It is an obligation arising not from Holy Orders, but from the solemn vow to live according to the rule and constitutions of the Order. Contempt for study amounts to contempt of the constitutions. Neglect of study in the Order is neglect of sanctity. Every Dominican, therefore, has an obligation not binding on secular priests, monks or other religious. This is the obligation to study without ceasing.

In discussing the frequency of prayer St. Thomas distinguishes between prayer itself and the root of prayer.(46) Prayer arises from the desire of charity, which desire must be within us continually either actually or habitually. Actual prayer, however cannot be continual (*assiduus*) because of other necessities. Similarly it can be said that for a Dominican study must be assiduous in its root, which is desire for the ideal of St. Dominic. Actual study cannot be assiduous or unremitting because of other necessities. The amount of actual study every day must be determined by the ideal of St. Dominic and daily necessities.

A learned Dominican of the last century, Fr. Alberto Guglielmotti, used to say to his novices, “A true Dominican ought to die at his desk or in the pulpit.”(47) Fr. Guglielmotti himself died fittingly at his desk on September 29, 1893.

5. One final question must be asked before we have a complete picture of study in the ideal of St. Dominic. What about sanctity? The picture presented thus far seems to imply that study is more important than sanctity in the Order of Preachers. Not at all. Sanctity is the common goal of all the faithful and of all religious. Striving for sanctity is not peculiar to any one religious community or rule. The way in which one organization strives for sanctity is established in the rule and constitutions officially approved by the Church. There are many religious communities in the Church, each with its own goal to achieve and rule of life directed to that goal. Individual members attain sanctity by fidelity to the goal and the way of life. In other words, sanctity is the goal of every religious, but the manner of attaining sanctity is peculiar to a particular rule of life. Sanctity is attained by fidelity to the rule over and above the ordinary means established for all the faithful.

Sanctity for a Dominican is attained through the rule of life proper to the Order of Preachers, that is, through the goal of preaching and the four means specified in the constitutions. A Dominican, therefore, cannot progress in sanctity except through his vows, the solemn recitation of divine office, regular life with its monastic observances, and assiduous study of sacred truth.

Beginners in the Dominican way of life not uncommonly experience a conflict between the desire for prayer and the obligation of study. Sometimes there seems to be an opposition between the spiritual life and the intellectual life of an individual. Patience, perseverance, meditation and the study of theology, however, gradually unite the disparate impressions into a single ideal, the ideal seen and loved by St. Dominic himself. This ideal is so sublimely one that no aspect can be neglected without losing the whole.

The ideal of St. Dominic was beautifully described by God the Father in a dialogue with St. Catherine of Siena:

Look at the ship of thy father Dominic, My beloved son: he ordered it most perfectly, wishing that his sons should apply themselves only to My honor and the salvation of souls, with the light of science, which light he laid as his principal foundation, not, however, on that account, being deprived of true and voluntary poverty, but having it also.... But for his more immediate and personal object he took the light of science in order to extirpate the errors which had arisen in his time, thus taking on him the office of My only-begotten Son, the Word.(48)

Learning is so important for a Dominican that he might well fear the words of the Prophet Osee: "Because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will reject thee, that thou shalt not do the office of priesthood to me."(49)

#### NOTES

1 *Constitutiones FFr S.O.P.*, ed. iussu M.S. Gillet (Rome 1932), I, I, 3, 1. All translations here and elsewhere in this paper are my own, unless explicitly stated otherwise.

2 *Constitutiones Antiquae Ordinis Fratrum Praedicatorum* (1228), Prol. ed H. Denifle in *Archiv f. Lit.-u. Kirchengeschichte*, I (Berlin 1885), p.

3 *Const. FFr. S.O.P.*, ed. cit., I, I, 4, 1.

4 P. Mandonnet, *Saint Dominique, l'idée, l'homme, et l'oeuvre*. 2nd ed. (Paris 1987), II, p. 99.

5 Jordan of Saxony, *Libellus de principiis*, n. 6 (MOPH, XVI, p. 28).

6 *Ibid.*, n. 7.

7 *Acta canonizationis*, n. 35 (MOPH, XVI, p. 158).

8 *Ibid.*, n. 35 (p. 154), Jordan, *Libellus*, n. 10, ed cit. p. 31.

9 Anon., *Vita Beati Dominici* (before 1260), ed. *Analecta Ord Praed.* IV (1899), p. 299b.

10 Jordan, *Libellus*, n. 15, ed. cit., pp. 33-34, Humbert of Romans *Legenda S. Dominici*, n. 11 (MOPH, XVI, p. 377).

11 Jordan, *Libellus*, nn. 39-43, ed. cit., pp. 45-46. Cf. P. Mandonnet *op. cit.*, II, p. 44. The official document constituting Dominic and his companions preachers in the diocese of Toulouse is published by M. H. Laurent, O.P., *Monumenta Historica S.P.N. Dominici*, (MOPH, XV), n. 60

12 Humbert of Romans, *Legenda*, n. 40, *ed. cit.*, p. 400.



13 Conrad Eubel, O.S.B., *Hierarchia Catholica Medii Aevi*, 2nd ed. (Munich 1913), I, p. 207, A. Potthast, *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum* (Berlin 1874), I, n. 7223/24, p. 624.

14 Jordan, *Libellus*, n. 51 *ed. cit.*, p. 49-50

15 Nicholas Trivet, *Annales sex regum Angliae*, 1135-1307, ed. T. Hog (London: English Historical Society, 1845), p. 209. Cf. W. A. Hinnebusch O.P., *The Early English Friars Preachers*, (Rome: Dissertationes Historicae, XIV, 1951), pp. 1-10 and 333.

16 Humbert of Romans, *De Vita Regulari*, Prol., n. 12, in *Opera*, ed. J. J. Berthier, O.P., I (Rome 1889), D. 41

17 *Acta Canonizationis*, n. 26, *ed. cit.*, p. 144.

18 Jordan, *Libellus*, n. 59, *ed. cit.*, p. 53.

19 *Constitutiones Antiquae*, Dist. II, cap. 23, *ed. cit.*, *Archiv*, I, p. 221. Cf. revised constitutions of Raymond of Peñafort, Dist. II, cap. I, ed. R. Creytens, O.P., “Les Constitutions des Freres Precheurs dans la Rédaction de s. Raymond de Peñafort (1241),” in *Archivum FFr. Praed.*, XVIII (1948) 48. Humbert, speaking of the office of Prior, notes his obligations: “pro religione primo, et pro studio secundo, plusquam pro aliis quibuscumque zealare.... Spiritualibus quoque exercitus intra claustrum, ut sunt scholae, collationes, sermones, officium divinum, et huiusmodi, libenter interesse.” *De Officiis Ordinis*, cap. III, *Opera*, *ed. cit.*, II, p. 202.

20 See the history of the Friars Preachers by Fr. W. A. Hinnebusch, O.P., chapter XXV, sect. 2: “Dominican Recruiting in University Circles.”

21 *Constitutiones Antiquae*, Dist. I, cap. 13, *ed. cit.*, *Archiv*, I, p. 201. Constitutions of Raymond, Dist. II, cap. 14, *ed. cit.*, p. 66.

22 Gerard of Frachet, *Vitae Fratrum*, P. III, cap. 42, 8, ed. B. M. Reichert, O.P. (MOPH, I, p. 138).

23 See Fr. Hinnebusch’s history of the Order, chapter XXV sect. 1: “Dominic’s Attitude Toward Learning.”

24 Humbert of Romans, *Expositio Regulae B. Augustini*, cap. 4, n. 143 in *Opera*, *ed. cit.*, I, p. 435.

25 *Cronica Ordinis*, annotation for 1238 (MOPH, I, p. 331). See the critical study of Raymond’s revision by R. Creytens, O.P., *op. cit.*, *Archivum FFr. Praed.*, XVIII (1948), 5-28.

26 Edmund Martène, O.S.B., *De Antiquis Ecclesiae Ritibus*, Antwerp 1764. The rule of St. Victor of Paris (III, pp. 252-291), St. Denis of Rheims (III, pp. 297- 302) Austin Canons (III, pp. 306-320), Premonstratensians (III, pp. 323-336), Grandmontines (IV, pp. 308-319).

- 27 H. Denifle, O.P., “Queller zur Gelehrten-geschichte des Predigerordens im 13. und 14. Jahrhundert,” in *Archiv f. Lit.-u. Kirchengeschichte d. Mittelalters*, II (Berlin 1886), 165-248. See the letter of Bernard Gui to the Master General, Aymeric, dated 22 Dec. 1304, in which the purpose of Stephen of Salanhac’s work is stated. *De Quatuor in Quibus Deus Praedicatorum Ordinem Insignivit*, ed. T. Kappeli, O.P., (MOPH, XXII, p. 8).
- 28 P. Auer, O.S.B., *Ein Neuaufgafundener Katalog der Dominikaner Schriftsteller* (S. Sabinae, Dissert. Hist., II), Paris 1933, pp. 2-7.
- 29 Edited by T. Kappeli, O.P., in MOPH, XXII (Rome 1949).
- 30 *Constitutiones FFr. S.O.P.*, IV, I, 4, 5, 1.
- 31 St. Thomas, *Sum. Theol.*, II-II, q. 188, a. 6.
- 32 *Ibid.*
- 33 *Constitutiones*, ed. iussu A. V. Jandel, Prol., Decl. I, n. 13, (Paris 1872), p. 16.
- 34 Ernst Commer, “Die Stellung des Predigerordens in der Kirche und seine Aufgaben,” *Divus Thomas*, III (1916), 445-7.
- 35 *Revelationes Gertrudianae ac Mechtildiana*, II (Paris 1877), p. 528, quoted by Angelo Walz, O.P., in his *San Tommaso d’Aquino*, (Rome 1945), p. 92, and in his *Compendium Historiae Ordinis Praedicatorum*, rev. ed. (Rome 1948), p. 28.
- 36 “In libris gentilium et philosophorum non studeant, etsi ad horam inspiciant. Seculares sciencias non addiscant, nec etiam artes quas liberales vocant, nisi aliquando circa aliquos magister ordinis vel capitulum generale voluerit aliter dispensare, sed tantum libros theologicos tam juvenes quam alii legant.” *Constitutiones Antiquae*, Dist. II, cap. 28, *ed. cit.*, *Archiv*, I, p. 222.
- 37 *Regula monachorum*, c. 8 (PL 83, 877-8). Cf. Gratian, *Decretum*, Dist. XXXVII, in *Corpus Iuris Canonici, Pars Prior: Decretum Gratiani*, ed. A. Friedberg (Leipzig 1924), col. 135-140. See the excellent article by G. G. Meersseman, O.S.B., “In libris gentilium non studeant. L’étude des classiques interdite aux clercs au moyen age?” in *Italia Medioevale e Umanistica*, I (1958), 1-13.
- 38 *Constitutiones Antiquae*, Dist. II, cap. 20 and cap. 32, *ed. cit.*, pp. 219- 220 and 224; revision of Raymond, Dist. II, cap. 12, *ed. cit.*, pp. 63-4.
- 39 *Constitutiones Antiquae*, Dist. II, cap. 31, *ed. cit.*, p. 223, revision of Raymond, Dist. II, cap. 13, *ed. cit.*, p. 64.
- 40 *Constitutiones Antiquae*, Dist. II. can. 29, *ed. cit.*, p. 223, revision of Raymond, Prol. and Dist. II, cap. 14, *ed. cit.*, pp. 29 and 67.

41 *Constitutiones Antiquae*, Dist. I, cap. 13, *ed. cit.*, p. 201; Raymond, Dist. II, cap. 14, *ed. cit.*, p. 66.

42 *Acta Canonizationis*, n. 29, *ed. cit.*, p. 147.

43 Jordan, *Libellus*, n. 89, *ed. cit.*, p. 45.

44 Gerard of Frachet, *Vitae Fratrum*, P. IV, cap. 5, 2, *ed. cit.*, p. 161.

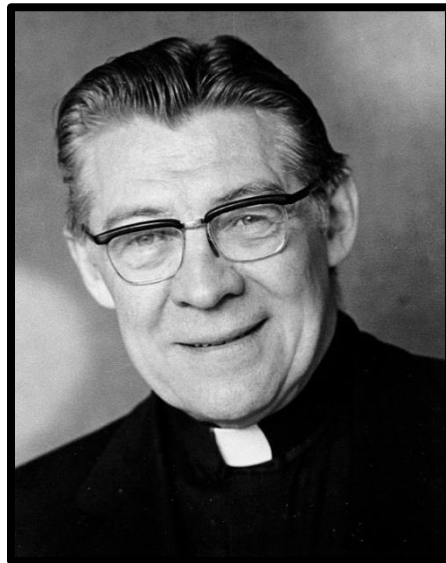
45 “. . . Unde fertur dicere solitum, sodalem Praedicatorum vix se a peccato mortali excusare, qui quoto die quatuor horas studio non impenderit.” Quétif- Echard, *Scriptores Ord. Praed.* (Paris 1722), II, p. 16a.

46 St. Thomas, *Sum. Theol.*, II-II, q. 88, a. 14.

47 *Il Rosario — Memorie Domenicane*, 1912 p. 466; 1918 p. 481 ff.

48 *The Dialogue of St. Catherine of Siena*, chap. 158 (in Ital. ed. of I, Taurisano O.P., Rome 1941), trans. by Algar Thorold (Westminster, Maryland 1943), p. 298.

49 Osee 4:6 Cf. St. Thomas, *In III Sent.*, dist. 25, q. 2, a. 1, sol. 3 ad 3.



**Fr. James A. Weisheipl OP**

# CENTRAL PROVINCE



## INITIATE FORMATION

### 5. COMMUNITY

**“FOR WHERE TWO OR THREE ARE GATHERED  
TOGETHER IN MY NAME, THERE AM I IN THE MIDST OF  
THEM” (Mt 18: 20)**

**“LORD, IT IS GOOD THAT WE ARE HERE.” (Mt 17: 4)**

**COMMUNITY** is the third pillar of the Dominican Order. A building, dependent on four pillars, will fall if one of the pillars is weak. Prayer, Study and Mission are usually present in our Dominican Chapters; however, sometimes Community is not taken seriously enough. Can you imagine a Contemplative Nun asking to be excused from the Convent for a week or two each month? The Prioress would question her vocation. Our Community consists in attending our monthly meetings faithfully. It is so important that we must schedule our busy lives around that meeting. We should want to attend and participate in Chapter meetings. Community is a wonderful and necessary thing as St. Dominic imagined it so many years ago.

## **COMMUNITY – What is it?**

This is a question which has just as many answers as it has people trying to achieve it. In biology it is described as a group of interacting organisms sharing an environment. Sociology supplies us with over one hundred definitions. Think of the virtual communities which did not exist ten years ago. President Obama worked as a ‘Community Organizer’. Many join a Sorority, Kiwanis, Bridge Clubs, the American Legion or the Knights of Columbus in search of it. How often do you see a community of men who meet regularly at McDonald’s to solve the problems of the world?

In a 1986 study *Sense of Community* Macmillan and Chavis offered four criteria for a community:

1. Membership – There must be some rules for becoming and remaining a member;
2. Influence – Members influence each other and attempt to extend their influence beyond their community, if only to attract new members;
3. Integration and fulfillment of needs – This is the *raison d’etre* of the community and without it, the group will slowly fade away;
4. Shared emotional connection – This must build over time and will unite the members to remain involved and active.

Community comes from the Latin: *cum* – with and *munus* – gift. To come together in a group is a gift for the individual and the group itself; there is “strength in numbers” and “two heads are better than one”. Men and women are social animals, pack animals, who gravitate to one another and live together, seeking out one another. Witness the growth of ‘Coffee Houses’ where often people come together to work alone but in the proximity of others. Many elderly shop often just to get out of their houses and to be around other people.

## **COMMUNITY HISTORY**

In history we could site many examples of communities from the Greek City-States to the Feudal communities which grew up around the Lord’s castle. The Jewish people have been a united community for five thousand years: “You shall be my people and I will be your God”. (Ez. 36: 28) In the time of Jesus the Essenes lived in a monastic community at Qumran (it is generally accepted) where centuries later their library was discovered.

St. John the Baptist founded a community of disciples who followed his teachings and practices. Jesus chose to found a small community of Apostles and a larger community of disciples and followers who accompanied Him. His Apostles were with Him day and night for three years. Later, after abandoning

Him, they came together with Mary and other disciples in a house where they received the Holy Spirit and a new community was born, the Church. Smaller communities were then formed by the Apostles throughout the Middle East and, thus, we have the followers of Matthew, John, Peter, etc. St. Paul made it his vocation to visit communities in Corinth, Antioch, Ephesus, etc.

The Church has always encouraged the founding and nurturing of communities as a way to spread the 'Good News.' The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (752) says, "In Christian usage, the word 'church' designates the liturgical assembly, but also the local community or the whole universal community of believers. These three meanings are inseparable. 'The Church' is the People that God gathers in the whole world. She exists in local communities and is made real as liturgical, above all a Eucharistic, assembly. She draws her life from the word and the Body of Christ and so herself becomes Christ's Body." And 807: "The Church is this Body of which Christ is the head: she lives from Him, in Him, and for Him; He lives with her and in her." We belong to the greatest community on earth and are obligated to participate in its actions. "Each disciple of Christ has the obligation of spreading the faith to the best of his ability." (Lumen Gentium 17)

"The faithful are called as individuals to exercise an apostolate in the various conditions of their life. They must, however, remember that man is social by nature and that it has been God's pleasure to assemble those who believe in Christ and make of them the People of God, a single body." (Apostolicam Actuositatem 18) In commenting on this Br. Ambrose Sigman O.P. writes, "... since man is a social creature, this calling [the apostolate] can be exercised in the context of a group or association".

Pope John Paul II in "Christifideles Laici" (29) elaborates, "Church communion, already present and at work in the activities of the individual, finds its specific expression in the lay faithful's working together in groups, that is, in activities done with others in the course of their responsible participation in the life and mission of the Church". Throughout the history of the Church various groups have arisen and been approved by the Church to spread the 'Good News'.

## **ST. DOMINIC**

When St. Dominic began to form the Dominicans he was directed to choose a Rule that had already been approved. Being of late a Canon Regular he chose the Rule of St. Augustine. The latter wrote, “The main purpose for you having come together is to live harmoniously in your house, intent upon God in oneness of mind and heart”. (1:2) The Dominican fathers surrendered their priory to a group of nuns in Madrid in 1220 so that the nuns could begin community life. This probably occurred under the direction of St. Dominic who wrote to the nuns, “If until the present you have not had a place in which to live your religious life, now you can no longer be excused, because by the grace of God you have buildings suitable enough for living the religious life”. In 1228 the ‘Primitive Constitutions’ reflect these references: “Because a precept of our Rule commands us to have one heart and one mind in the Lord, it is fitting that we, who live under one rule and under the vow of one profession, be found uniform in the observance of canonical religious life, in order that the uniformity maintained in our external conduct may foster and indicate the unity which should be present interiorly in our hearts”. (Prologue) These thoughts have survived through the centuries and continue to inspire and lead us until this present day.

## **LAY DOMINICANS**

The Lay Dominicans have existed, under various names, since the beginning of the Dominican Order. From the penitential movements surrounding St. Dominic, the first Rule promulgated in 1285, through the present Rule approved in 1987 we have been called ‘To Praise, To Bless, To Preach’. By virtue of our Baptism we, as disciples of Christ, have been made participants in the prophetic, priestly and royal office of Jesus Christ. We have assumed the apostolic obligation to preach Jesus’ ‘Good News’ to ourselves, our neighbor and to all to the best of our ability. Our Rule, which we know, love and follow states:



2. Some of these disciples of Christ, moved by the Holy Spirit to live a life according to the spirit and charism of St. Dominic, are incorporated into the Order according to their appropriate statutes.

3. Lay Dominicans are united in communities, and they constitute with other groups of the Order, one Family.

8. Lay Dominicans should strive, to the best of their ability, to live in true familial communion in accordance with the spirit of the Beatitudes in every circumstance...

15. The local community is the appropriate means for nourishing and developing each member's dedication to his or her vocation...Faithful attendance demonstrates the fidelity of each member.

Our Guidelines further elaborate this latter point:

15.b. Regular attendance at meetings is of the utmost importance for all members. For those having made their final profession, regular attendance witnesses to their Dominican vocation. For those in the early stages of formation, their presence at meetings manifests their Dominican calling...***Fidelity to one's vocation through regular attendance at community meetings is of the utmost importance.***

The primary truth in the spiritual life, *sine qua non*, is that all advancement is based on regularity. Whether you are seeking to improve your prayer life, your practice of charity, your patience, your steps into contemplation, you will only advance step by step with consistency and persistence. There is no other way. Even Jesus Christ took three years to achieve His goal of saving the world and after two thousand years we are still participating in this apostolic work with Him. Saints have become Saints by rising each day and trying to live a life in communion with Christ. Upon returning to Nazareth after the Temple incident, "Jesus **advanced** in wisdom and age and favor before God and man." (Luke 2: 52)

This is why our Rule leads us to sanctification: it instructs us to be faithful in our prayer life, to persevere with our studies, to continue to preach and to build up our community by assiduously attending our Chapter Meetings. To live and

operate alone is obviously not the Dominican way of life. We are not hermits but social beings who benefit by the example we give and receive from our brothers and sisters. This is something that takes time to build but is a beautiful thing when it occurs. A true blessing! Community life is not always easy and often challenging but ultimately life-affirming.

## COMMUNITY LIFE

“All members bear responsibility for contributing to the climate, creativity and content of community life. Each member receives back what he/she invests in the communal life of a Lay Dominican. Community life should be democratic and participatory.” (A Handbook for Lay Dominican Leadership, p.11) Here are some suggestions for making meetings

### ***Dominican:***

- **PRAYER.** From St. Dominic the Dominicans have been devoted to the *Liturgy of the Hours*. For this traditional reason each meeting should include an Hour, depending on the time of day. In addition to tradition this prayer of the Church, the prayer of Christ, must have a salutary effect on each of us and the group. We need all the help that we can get. Especially recommended is the Office of Readings as it includes a reading from the Fathers of the Church. For years our communities have been encouraged to allow time for preaching (a reflection) on the the day’s relevant Scripture with feedback and discussion. We are an Order of Preachers.
- **STUDY.** Members should engage in study according to their stages. They should use the materials from the Provincial Formation Program with a variety of resources. Study is not spoonfed by the lecture method but is interactive. Participation is necessary. Study at home is necessary and encouraged.
- **MISSION.** Members are encouraged to perform a ministry, e.g. visiting the sick, teaching catechism, working in a soup kitchen,

helping in a parish, etc. If unable, they should pray for the Mission of the Church. In addition, each Chapter should have a chapter project in which all collaborate in some manner. Bring a non-perishable food item for the poor (a Dominican tradition) to your meeting.

- **COMMUNITY**. Refreshments and conversation encourage a collegial atmosphere of good cheer. Get to know each other. A yearly Day of Recollection is a must for fostering Dominican Spirituality. A good suggestion is to have a Christmas party for a relaxing and celebratory end to the year.

There must be a reason why **“Community”** has persisted through the centuries as a Dominican Pillar. It is necessary. It is good. It is a blessing.

***CONTEMPLARI,***

***ET ALIIS***

***CONTEMPLATA.***

***VERITAS***

***LAUDARE-BENEDICERE-PRAEDICARE***

# RESOURCES

“The Bologna Document” This should be read, studied and discussed as it is very well-known and an important document which officially integrated Lay Dominicans into the Order. Very important.

**[SEE AND READ ATTACHED]**

## WEB 2.0-YOUTUBE

Fr. Joseph Alobaidi O.P. discusses Dominican life and Community:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DjodybzLG4E>

An inspiring video on what Community Life means to the Dominican Sisters:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QR\\_Y72dJ2N0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QR_Y72dJ2N0)

You will like this video from the Irish Dominicans which illustrates in a modern fashion the melding of Community with Contemplation and the Active Life; very enjoyable (those Irish!):

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h6AsnN-hQac>



## **The Bologna Document**

*On the Dominican Family*

*Rome, 1983*

### 1. Prologue

God continually calls a people out of darkness into the light of the Good News of Jesus Christ. He has always called men and women to worship him and to proclaim his name. Dominic heard his call in the cry of the men and women of his time and brought them a message of hope and freedom. From the very beginning people followed in the footsteps of Dominic. Today Dominican men and women are attentive, as Dominic was, to the needs of our time.

The Church, the people of God, is open to the Gospel values wherever they are found and proclaims these values to the ends of the earth. The followers of Dominic, because of their diversity, are a microcosm of the Church, in the local community and throughout the world, fully engaged in spreading the Word of God. Faithful to the example of Christ and the vision of Dominic, we are open to the Spirit, continually calling the Church to make the risen Lord present in every age and culture.

### 2. Charism of Dominic

1. Dominic was a man of the Gospel in word and in deed. He had only one passion: to know and to experience the Word of God in truth and from this experience to announce the compassion of God to men and women.

2. The Word of God who became man in the womb of Mary now takes flesh in us, a Word contemplated, celebrated in joy, studied attentively, lived and announced as Good News.

Dominic was at the heart of the Church in the service of the world. He was sensitive to the Word spoken in the heart of every man and woman, especially those who were enslaved in misery and need. We share in that charisma and his prophetic vision, proclaiming the Word that the Lord puts into our hearts.

Our apostolic way of life is continually renewed in dialogue with our brothers and sisters and challenged by the values of the Gospel. Dominic associated women with his mission, thus affirming their place in the Church and its mission. As his heirs we have the task of manifesting the equality and complementarity of men and women.

We are open to the world, celebrating the goodness of creation and encouraged to use our freedom and to develop the gifts God has given us.



### 3. Followers of Dominic

1. From the very beginning the charism of Dominic was realized in different groups. New forms are still emerging, but all find their roots in Dominic. He is their common father.

The first group to be called into existence by Dominic's preaching was the nuns. In the first stage they formed part of the *Jesu Christi Praedicatio* of which Dominic was the leader. After he had established an Order, the nuns became part of that Order. They were deeply rooted in Dominic's work of preaching by their totally contemplative way of life. The nuns retain their original relationship to the Order through their profession made to the Master of the Order, the successor of Dominic.

In 1215 Dominic founded his Order of Preaching Friars, whose purpose was summed up by Honorius III. *God has inspired you to embrace a life of poverty and regular observance and to devote yourselves to preaching the Word of God, making known the name of our Lord Jesus Christ through the world.* The friars comprise priests and brothers, forming a branch of the Dominican Family, under the Master.

From the beginning, groups of lay people associated themselves with the Order, some of whom committed themselves to its life and mission in a more integral way, either in fraternities or as *Brothers and Sisters of Penance of Saint Dominic*, with their own proper rule. The Dominican laity is directly under the authority of the Master.

In a similar way, there arose fraternities of priests who wished to be integrated into the life and charism of Dominic and his Order.

Over a period, especially in the nineteenth century, different congregations of sisters were formed, who by their mission shared directly in the Order's charism of preaching. Each congregation is independent, and profession incorporates the sisters into their congregation and the Order. In the twentieth century secular institutes sprang up. Their call to evangelization is by way of a presence to the world in which they live out their total gift of themselves to God. They make profession of counsels in the spirit of Dominic.

A phenomenon of our time is the emergence of groups of looser structures who look to Dominic and the Order for inspiration. These new groups, together with members of associations connected with the Order along with relatives, friends, and collaborators, belong to the Dominican Family in a broad sense.

2. Sharing in Dominic's charism these various groups participate in the one Dominican vocation. In complementarity and mutual collaboration, these branches constitute the Dominican Family and realize their mission while respecting the autonomy and vocation proper to each.

The principle and sign of unity of the Dominican Family is the Master of the Order, successor of Saint Dominic, the one who grants aggregation to the Order, the one who outside the General Chapter guarantees and promotes fidelity to the spirit of Saint Dominic.

On the basis of their equality, the different branches discover their responsibility for one another. This care for one another is expressed by regional, national and international organizations. All of these serve to foster cooperation at the local level, which remains the most fundamental area of mission and unity.

#### 4. Evangelization as Common Mission for the Kingdom

1. The members of the Dominican Family live out their baptismal commitment and their special Dominican charism. The particular mission we receive is the proclamation of the Word of God, above all by sharing, as Dominic did, God's mercy as a sign of liberation.

In the spirit of Dominic this Word is addressed to all, to *the sinners, the destitute and the afflicted*,<sup>1</sup> and is awaited especially by the poor, the blind, captives and those on the margins of society.

---

<sup>1</sup>Cf. Blessed Jordan of Saxony, Lib. 12.



Preaching in the various forms as understood in the Dominican tradition, is the indispensable liberating force most needed in the contemporary world, and without it the command to spread the Kingdom cannot be fulfilled.

Open to the actual needs of the time we search for a path to young people and their world.

The Dominican Family, especially the Dominican Laity, show to its contemporaries the richness of an authentic apostolic lay spirituality.

2. The Dominican charism of preaching is continually nourished by the Word shared in community. Thus, in the proclamation of the Word of God the Dominican Family expresses a unity centered on the Word of God and seeks to give common witness to the Good News.

3. So that we might be effective preachers, we see ongoing formation as a central task. Our study is, above all, of the Word of God, but we must also seek to understand the world in which that Word is proclaimed. In a rapidly changing world, Dominicans listen to and welcome the Word of God already present in the cultures in which we live. We must also be in the vanguard in proclaiming the liberating Good News in diverse cultures.

## 5. Conclusion

The Dominican Family is present with a certain vitality in all five continents. We are united to one another by the deepest bonds of the Lord's love. We affirm our solidarity with all our suffering brothers and sisters, especially those who are persecuted for their fearless proclamation of the Gospel of peace and justice. Grounded in the profound peace of our common vocation we move full of hope into the future. We pray the Holy Spirit to renew in us the courage to continue in the footsteps of Dominic, *speaking only to God and of God.*



# CENTRAL PROVINCE



## INITIATE FORMATION

### 6. MISSION

## **“[JESUS] JOURNEYED FROM ONE TOWN AND VILLAGE TO ANOTHER, PREACHING AND PROCLAIMING THE GOOD NEWS OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD.” (Luke 8: 1)**

The Dominicans were founded in the thirteenth century by St. Dominic as the ‘Order of Preachers’. He saw their mission as that of preaching the Gospel to the saved and the unsaved. In the three letters we have of St. Dominic he describes himself as: ‘Master of the Preachers’; ‘the Least Among Preachers’; and ‘Humble Minister of Preaching’. The picture on the cover shows Dominic selling his books and then giving the money to the poor.

We read in “*The Primitive Constitutions of the Order of Friars Preachers*” from 1228, “[Preachers] shall receive a blessing and then go forth as men desirous of their own salvation and the salvation of others. Let them act, with religious decorum, as men of the Gospel following in the footsteps of their Savior and speaking with or about God to themselves and their neighbor...” (XXXI).

Our three mottos remind us of the centrality of preaching:

1. Veritas (truth)
2. Laudare-Benedicere-Praedicare (to praise-to bless-to preach)
3. Contemplari et Contemplata aliis tradere (to contemplate and to pass on to others that which is contemplated)

All of us, as Dominicans, are to imitate Jesus, as Luke writes above, preaching and proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom of God in our daily lives as befits our personal station in life. No hard and fast rules can be set as to how we will accomplish our preaching. We must do this after prayer and study. But we must do something. *The Rule of St. Augustine* (Chapter II, 1.) states, “Be assiduous in prayer (Col 4: 2), at the hours and times appointed.” The *Primitive Constitutions* (XXXI) command that Preachers must be well-grounded in Theology, “We ordain

that no one shall be made a preacher general before he has listened to theology lectures for three years.” (XXXI)

## **HOLY PREACHING**

When Dominicans refer to the *HOLY PREACHING*, the last paragraph is what they are talking about. The ‘Preaching’ becomes ‘Holy’ because the preacher strives for holiness in his or her life. Preachers must practice what they preach. In India one does not teach ‘Holiness’ as a Guru until he has reached that level of holiness he is teaching. Remember: we pass on to others (Preach) the fruits of our prayer life. The key to a ‘prayer life’ is persistence. Even after Paul was struck down and converted, he ran the race, step by step; he persevered.

Secondly, the *HOLY PREACHING* refers to much more than the Homily at Mass. Preaching involves our whole life. As lay men and women we are precluded from preaching at Mass ordinarily. We and the Friars, Brothers, Nuns and Sisters preach the Good News to everyone we meet and wherever we go. We are preaching when we study, tend the sick, visit the prisoner, teach catechism, attend our Chapter meeting, etc. We are preaching to our family members in the good times and the bad times. We preach to each other by our example and words during our Chapter meetings which is why it is so important to attend.

What is the purpose of this *HOLY PREACHING*? We can take our cue from a *Statement on Preaching by the Preaching Advisory Board*: “The end of preaching is to cause hearers to move closer to the Person of Christ. Preaching is about this approach of persons to God. Preaching is not just about helping others ‘understand better’. It is not enough just to communicate a message. We are called to preach the Person of Christ, not merely the message of Christ. The end of preaching is not that people ‘like the sermon’ [or the Preacher] but that they ‘catch fire’. Preaching must effect in the hearer a palpable movement in truth and grace toward Christ. In this way, preaching is quasi-sacramental.” What a wonderful obligation and opportunity we have in the *HOLY PREACHING*. We pray; we study; we meet in community; then we go out to the ‘*Cumans*.’ (An area in Central and Eastern Europe where Dominic wished to preach as a missionary but did not.)

*“Were not our hearts burning (within us) while He spoke to us on the way and opened the scriptures to us.” (Luke 24: 32)*

## **CHRISTIAN OBLIGATION**

Our mission as Dominicans is not something unique to the Dominican Order, but is an obligation for every Christian. “The Church---that is, the kingdom of Christ already present in mystery---grows visibly through the power of God in the world.” (Lumen Gentium 3) “The Church...receives the mission of proclaiming and establishing among all peoples the kingdom of Christ and of God...” (LG 5) “Each disciple of Christ has the obligation of spreading the faith to the best of his ability.” (LG 17) “The apostolate of the Church therefore and of each of its members, aims primarily at announcing to the world by word and action the message of Christ and communicating to it the grace of Christ...The witness of life, however, is not the sole element in the apostolate; the true apostle is on the lookout for occasions of announcing Christ by word, either to unbelievers to draw them towards the faith, or to the faithful to instruct them, strengthen them, incite them to a more fervent life; ‘for Christ’s love urges us on’ (2 Cor. 5: 14), and in the hearts of all should the apostle’s words find echo: ‘Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel’” (1 Cor. 9: 16). (Apostolicam Actuositatem 6)

Becoming Dominican means becoming Christian. We hope to say with Paul, “yet I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me.” (Gal. 2: 20) As Christ is the Head and we are the Body of the Church, He carries out the mission of the Church through us. As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states: “Since, like all the faithful, lay Christians are entrusted with the apostolate by virtue of their Baptism and Confirmation, they have the right and duty, individually or grouped in associations, to work so that the divine message of salvation may be known and accepted by all men throughout the earth.” ( 900) So we do not receive our mission of preaching the ‘Good News’ as a commission from a Bishop or a Provincial but directly from God as a result of our Baptism and Confirmation. This is an obligation which must be taken very seriously and worked on to the best of our ability. We must pray and study over it and come together to learn more. There is no better place to urge us on than our Dominican way of life. We know

that “where two or three are gathered together,” Jesus and the Holy Spirit are present to inspire us to live our faith as mature adults.

## **LAY DOMINICAN RULE**

The Lay Dominican Rule emphasizes our mission for the members:

- They carefully attend to the principal goals of the Church’s contemporary apostolate, striving in a special way to manifest true mercy for all who are suffering, to defend freedom, and to promote justice and peace. (6)
- Inspired by the charism of the Order, they are mindful that their apostolic activity emanates from an abundance of contemplation. (7)
- The purpose of Dominican formation is to mold true adults in the Faith, capable of accepting, celebrating and proclaiming the Word of God. (11)
- Every Dominican must be prepared to preach the Word of God. (12)

## **MISSION: INDIVIDUAL AND CHAPTER**

The individual member must decide for himself or herself how he or she will participate in the Church’s mission of preaching the Gospel. This depends upon their state in life, their ability, their knowledge, their commitment and their stage of formation. It is such an individual, perhaps private, decision that is reached after prayer and study. You decide but do something; even if you can only pray (a major contribution).

The Chapter should also be encouraged to take up a Chapter mission. What can they do as a group to participate in the Church’s mission? What work of mercy could be agreed upon and with the participation of the members be accomplished? This is also a great means to build community. They are also encouraged to bring a non-perishable food item for the poor to their Chapter meeting.

## **GOSPEL REFERENCES**

As Dominicans we draw inspiration and guidelines from Sacred Scripture. Jesus has told us what He would like us to accomplish. Here are three

selections, among others, to contemplate and to model our preaching, our mission:

- ❖ “He stood up to read and was handed a scroll of the prophet Isaiah. He unrolled the scroll and found the passage where it was written: ‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord.’” (Luke 4: 16-19)
  
- ❖ “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land. Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” (Matt. 5: 3-10)
  
- ❖ “Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? When did we see you ill or in prison, and visit you? And the king will say to them in reply, ‘Amen I say to you, whatever you did for one of the least brothers of mine, you did for me’” (Matt. 25:37-40)



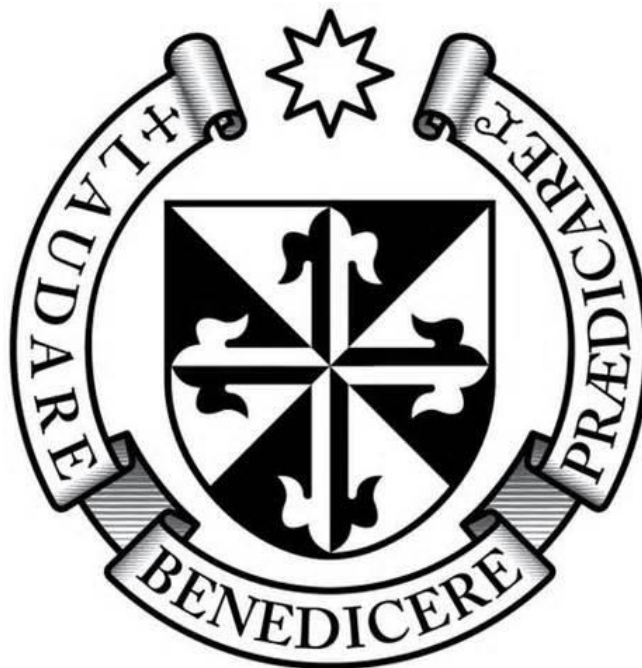
## RESOURCES

*“Proclaiming the Gospel in the Order of Preachers ( The Dominicans).”* by Brother Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, OP (former Master General) This is an excellent review of preaching that can be adapted to our state of life.  
**[READ IT AS ATTACHED]**

## WEB 2.0

*“Dominican Preaching”* Fr. Dominic Izzo OP does an excellent job in explaining the concept of the ‘HOLY PREACHING.’

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1SWiYrjjVU&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1SWiYrjjVU&feature=player_embedded)





## **PROCLAIMING THE GOSPEL IN THE ORDER OF PREACHERS (THE DOMINICANS)**

Brother Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, OP

Rome, 7 November 2002    Feast of All the Saints of the Order

The Order of Preachers (the Dominicans) "was founded, from the beginning, especially for preaching and the salvation of souls ". Because of this, we, the sons and daughters of Saint Dominic, offer ourselves in a new way to the universal Church, dedicating ourselves entirely to the complete evangelization Word of God to all men and women, groups and communities, believers and non-believers and especially the poor . We are conscious that history and the world of humanity are the places where salvation is achieved. Because of this, attentive to the dynamism of modern society, we insist on the necessity of establishing our preaching on the new experiences and realities that contemporary men and women daily bring to the Christian faith. Reading the Acts of the most recent General Chapters, we can sketch the new "Areopagus" or "frontiers" to which we are called; which are priorities for the Order and how we can portray our proclamation of the Gospel.

### **I. THE MISSION OF THE ORDER FROM ITS ORIGINS: "MISSION WITHOUT FRONTIERS"**

The emphasis on the missionary and evangelizing character of the Church in Vatican II, in *Evangelii Nuntiandi* - which Brother Damian Byrne called the "Carta Magna of the preacher" - makes singularly clear the foundational project of Dominic. It is the responsibility of the whole Dominican Family, "men and women together in mission," to realize that project and to set in motion the specific mission of the Order in the world. Some features that have characterized the Dominican mission from the beginning are:

The mission of the Order was and must continue to be a mission beyond frontiers.

This mission, situated at the - as fr. Pierre Claverie OP, bishop of Oran in Algeria, called them, "lignes de fracture" of humanity, which go across our globalized world so often marked by injustice and the violence of racial, social and religious conflicts.

It demanded and demands of the Dominican community the attitude and practice of itinerancy, mobility, the continuous displacement towards the new frontiers to which the priorities of our mission guide us.

## II. THE FRONTIERS ON WHICH WE ARE CALLED TO EVANGELIZE:

### 1. The frontier between life and death:

The great challenge of justice and peace in the world

The most dramatic and urgent problems that confront contemporary men and women are of a historical character. They deal with the systems, structures, social practices, politics and economies that put a great mass of people between life and death. So, the dedication to justice and peace - analysis, reflection and actions of solidarity - is a criterion of the validation of any Dominican mission, and must accompany any sphere or modality of our preaching. The example of Bartolomé de las Casas, Antonio de Montesinos and Pedro de Córdoba in Latin America, like the example of Domingo de Salazar in the east and the works of Brother Louis Joseph Lebet in our time are illuminating.

### 2. The frontier between humanity and inhumanity:

The great challenge of the emarginated

The marginalizing structure of today's society produces an ever-increasing number of emarginated men and women, who come close to the frontier of an inhuman or sub-human life. Among the categories of emarginated can be found many peoples that suffer from material poverty and a cultural, social, economic and political marginalization. There are still today, in various forms, victims of "apartheid": emigrants, dissidents, workers, women, the sick, the young, the old. These are manifest signs of the absence of the reign of God, and as such, a challenge that takes priority in our reflection, study and evangelization. The mission of the Dominican community is to inaugurate and show a new model of communion and participation among all men and women.

### 3. The Christian frontier:

The challenge of the universal religions

The universal religious traditions give us the experience of God. Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism and Islam are situated nevertheless, beyond the frontier of the Christian experience of God. Some of these religious traditions exert a strong influence on contemporary men and women. The dialogue with other religions brings into question the traditional conceptions of the evangelizing mission of the Church as well as inauthentic attitudes and models of evangelization. The dialogue must be at once analytical and self-critical; this presupposes a listening attitude and an inculturated presence, free of any hint of colonialism, imperialism or fanaticism. Dominic's ideal was to be in mission beyond the frontiers of

established Christianity, among the Cumbans (this was his dream). The placing of convents in cities and the presence of the friars in universities for intercultural and inter-religious dialogue give priority to this challenge of Dominican evangelization.

#### 4. The frontier of religious experience:

##### The challenge of secular ideologies

Contemporary men and women find themselves in a deeply paradoxical situation: there is a lack of religion and a yearning for the religious. Secular ideologies explain, in part, this lack and question the old models of the transmission of Christ's message. Many of these questions, planted by contemporary thought, remain to be answered. Present in all of these is the interrogative about the person and his or her future and the critical question about the truth. Atheism, unbelief, secularization, indifference and laicism are questions that deal strongly with these ideologies. Dialogue on these very subjects can serve as a critical corrective to the varied manifestations of religious and Christian actions and, at the same time, suggest a priority area of Dominican evangelization. An important lesson from the origins of Dominican history has been the capacity of the Order to establish a dialogue between Christ's message and both classical and emerging cultures. Some examples are: Saint Dominic, who incorporated study in his foundational project; Thomas Aquinas in the 13th century; the Dominican professors and theologians of the 16th century; the Dominican theologians at Vatican II. Theology has been creative and prophetic in the Dominican Family in so far as it has been allowed to be clarified by cultural coordinates. It has been life-giving in the measure that it has taken as its point of departure the pressing *quæstiones disputatæ* of each time.

#### 5. The frontier of the Church:

##### The challenge of the non-Catholic confessions and other religious movements

The plurality of confessions is a scandal for believers and non-believers. The hidden riches in the diverse Christian traditions are an invitation to ecumenical dialogue and reconciliation. The theological reflection of the Order, faithful to its tradition, addresses this challenge. With other overtones, the frontier of the Church also goes to the phenomenon of the "new religious options". In certain countries and regions of the world, the growing presence of these "movements" constitutes a challenge for evangelization. Simple denunciation and anathemas are insufficient. The first ideal of Dominic was to be in mission beyond the frontiers of "Christianity". The immediate needs of the Church impeded him, and he carried out his mission among heretics, in the frontiers of the Church. From them he learned and took models of the evangelical and apostolic life. With them, he was in dialogue without rest. He questioned them with his witness and fidelity to the communion of the Church.

### III. PRIORITIES OF THE ORDER THAT CORRESPOND TO THESE FRONTIERS:

The Order of Preachers, which participates in the Apostolic Life of the Church, must be always in mission and position itself on the frontiers. The highest priority of all for us is preaching, "dedicating ourselves entirely to the complete evangelization of the Word of God". To realize this end, the Order has reaffirmed four priorities in recent years. These priorities can not be separated one from the other nor can one be emphasized while diminishing the importance of the others; on the contrary, they are complementary; each one responds in a different way to the more pressing needs of contemporary peoples with regard to preaching the Word of God. Neither are they new, but belong wholly to the charism and tradition of the Order: in the life of Saint Dominic, in the life of the brothers of the 13th century, in the life of the brothers of the 16th century who arrived in Latin America and the Far East, in the modern epoch. The four priorities are certainly the fruit of our original grace. They are:

1. Catechesis in a dechristianized world: the world of those who grew up in the context of a Christian tradition, but in fact live on the fringes or outside; indifferent or hostile to the visible community of believers. This catechesis should be Pascal, to call people to a personal conversion and bring about the transformation of the world; also, it should promote lay ministries.
2. Evangelization in the context of diverse cultures: oriented towards a philosophical and theological investigation of cultures, intellectual systems, social movements and religious traditions operative "outside of historical Christianity". The Order is called to help to give birth to a new way to be Christian on the various continents. The local communities must identify with the people in a positive attitude of dialogue and appreciation of their cultural values.
3. Justice and Peace: critical analysis of the origins, forms and structures of injustice in contemporary societies; evangelical praxis for the liberation and promotion of the whole person. Actions for Justice and Peace, that they may be prophetic signs in the world, need to be integrated into projects of local, provincial or regional communities; they must be based in social analysis and biblical and theological sources; they must support the brothers and sisters who participate at the risk of their lives in associations and movements in favor of human dignity.
4. Human communication through mass media: in the preaching of the Word of God. The media has very evidently shown us "the drama of our times": the fracture between human culture and the evangelical message, between the human word and the word of faith (Evangeli Nuntiandi 20); the media today constitutes a privileged instrument to provide a culturally intelligible and effective word to the efficacious proclamation of the whole Gospel. Immersed in a world in which the whole person is communicative of life or death. This occurs in a process in which there are no spectators; all are actors;

the vocation of the Order calls us, then, to be preachers, that is, communicators with these characteristics: conviction, new vision, liberty.

#### IV. CHARACTERISTICS OF PREACHING AND ATTITUDES OF THE PREACHER

Evangelization in these frontiers and in accord with these priorities has certain characteristics and requires some personal and communitarian attitudes :

##### 1. THEOLOGICAL Preaching

This implies a total openness to the whole truth, wherever it is to be found. It demands a profound reflection and disposition for dialogue (ecumenical, inter religious and cultural). Our preaching has always been rooted in a profound and scientific study of theology. "Our study must be directed principally, ardently and diligently to this: that we can be useful to the souls of our neighbors." Since then our study has been intimately related to the apostolic mission of preaching of the Order. To dedicate ourselves to study is to respond to a call to "cultivate the human search for the truth". Saint Dominic encouraged his friars to be useful to souls through an intellectual compassion, to share with them misericordia veritatis, the mercy of the truth. The crisis of today's world, the scandal of growing poverty and injustice, confrontation of different cultures, contact with dechristianized peoples; all of this is a challenge for us. Our practice of theological reflection must prepare us to penetrate profoundly into the significance of these subjects in the mystery of Divine Providence. Contemplation and theological reflection give us the capacity to seek ways more suited for today's preaching of the Gospel. This is the true path we follow so that our preaching be doctrinally true, and not an abstract, intellectual exposition of some system.

##### 2. COMPASSIONATE Preaching

This demands an attitude of profound compassion for people, especially for those who find themselves "distant". Only compassion can cure our blindness and make it possible that we see the signs of the times. Compassion brings humility to our preaching - humility for which we are willing to listen and speak, to receive and give, that we may influence and be influenced, to be evangelized and to evangelize. Compassion and humility come only from a profound union with God in Christ. We are united to God when we imitate the compassion and humble service of Christ. Compassion and humility are fountains from which emanate the knowledge of the signs of the times, pervading prayer and contemplation. This is how we contemplate God, who has revealed himself to us through Sacred Scripture and who manifests his will in the signs of the times.

### 3. INCULTURATED AND INCARNATED Preaching

This demands a profound sensibility to the diverse visions of reality that other religions, cultures and philosophies (incarnation and inculturation) have. It implies an education in order to know how to hope, to learn, to come to conversion, to be part, integrate and help to purify and elevate that which we find in these religions, cultures and philosophies.

### 4. PROPHETIC Preaching

It is the proclamation not of our own knowledge, but of the Word of God, living and life-giving, integral pronouncement of the revealed Gospel that contains words of eternal life. It is not possible to omit the serious analysis of the "signs of the times", which proceeds from supernatural principles and is illuminated through prayer. To discern the signs of the times, we must attend diligently to the cry of the poor, the oppressed, the emarginated and the tortured, and all those who, because of race, religion and denouncing injustice, suffer persecution. God talks to us through these cries and also through the silence of those who have no voice and live in apathy, loneliness and depression.

### 5. Preaching IN POVERTY

Poverty is not only a form of self-denial, but also a testament and appropriate means that lends credibility to our preaching; it is a sign of its authority and sincerity. We live in a world that augments the division between the rich and the poor - as much in rich and poor nations as in rich and poor groups and people. Moreover, the poor today have a better knowledge of national and international structures that are the cause of this state of servility and poverty. If in a world such as this we were to present ourselves as living more with the rich than with the poor, our preaching would not be credible.

### 6. ITINERANT Preaching

We are men and women in journey. Itinerancy is, in the first place, a spatial concept that implies a disposition to go on journey, to travel; but our preaching asks of us a social, cultural, ideological and economic itinerancy. It is an aspect of Dominican spirituality that must inform the whole of our lives and that is nurtured from diverse biblical experiences from the Hebrew Scriptures as well as those of Jesus, "The Way" whom Dominic longed to follow as a true evangelical son.

## 7. COMMUNITARIAN Preaching

Our preaching is not the solitary effort of isolated individuals. And so, it demands a disposition to collaborate, to work in groups, to support the efforts of others with a demonstrated interest, vivaciousness and effective aid. These attitudes have their roots in the essential elements of our Dominican life: the common life, contemplative prayer, assiduous study, a fraternal community and consecration through our vows. The communion and universality of the Order also inform its government in which are exceptional the organic and proportioned participation of all of the parts to attain the correct ends of the Order. It is a communitarian government in its way and is certainly appropriate for the promotion of the Order and its frequent revision.

## 8. SHARED Preaching: THE DOMINICAN FAMILY

The Order was born as a Family. Friars, contemplative nuns, sisters, members of secular institutes and lay and clerical fraternities and other groups in some manner associated with the Order (among these: Dominican Youth Movement - IDYM ; Dominican Volunteers International - DVI ) inspire us in the charism of Dominic. This charism is one and indivisible: the grace of preaching. It is a shared preaching with our brothers and sisters of the Order who through their baptism live the same common priesthood and who are consecrated through the same religious profession and through their promise to the same mission. Our global identity is better manifested through our collaboration with one another. This collaboration includes: praying together, planning, making decisions and completing projects from a mutual complementarity that respects equality. These projects include very diverse themes such as ministries of prayer, teaching, preaching, pastoral animation, justice and peace, the mass media, investigations and publications, as well as promotion of vocations and formation.

Conclusion: These frontiers, priorities and characteristics of our proclamation of the Gospel are not "new tasks" that are added to others like a kind of "categorical imperative" or "new way" that excludes others of yesterday. On the contrary, they express a path of joy and freedom; they express the vocation of many men and women that have given and give their lives making their own the words of the Apostle:

" Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel!" (1 Corinthians 9, 16)

Rome, 7 November 2002

Feast of All the Saints of the Order

# CENTRAL PROVINCE



## CANDIDACY II

### UNIT 6:

### THE CHURCH

### IN THE MODERN WORLD



# **“I DID NOT COME TO CONDEMN THE WORLD BUT TO SAVE IT.” (JOHN 12: 47)**

*“Gaudium et Spes”* (*“The Church in the Modern World”*), a Pastoral Constitution, was approved by a vote of 2,307 to 75 of the Bishops at Vatican II and promulgated by Pope Paul VI on December 7, 1965, the day the Council ended. As in all documents the title is taken from the first sentence. This is the longest document of the Council (nearly 100 pages) and considered one of the most important. Our task is to read, study and discuss this document during these three months. Then apply it to ourselves and our Chapter.



In this introduction we will provide useful information on the background and foreground of *Gaudium et Spes*. “The Church...receives the mission of proclaiming and establishing among all peoples the kingdom of Christ and of God, and she is, on earth, the seed and the beginning of that kingdom.” (*Lumen Gentium*, #5) If the Church is to accomplish her mission, it is necessary that, since she is in the world, she understands and is able to relate to the world. Revelation has a ‘love/hate’ relationship with the ‘world’. The world is a wondrous creation of God and “God saw how good it was.” (Gen. 1: 25)

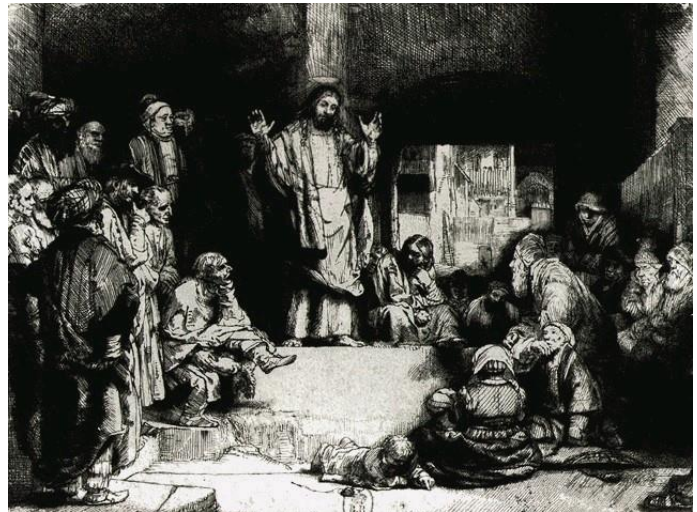


Yet the ‘world’ has not lived up to its potential “and friendship with the world is enmity with God”. (James 4: 4) On the other hand “God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life.” (John 3: 16) So the ‘world’ is not ‘either/or’ but ‘both/and’. It is, like us: sometimes good, sometimes bad, but always remember that “God created man in his image” (Gen. 1: 27) and we have been redeemed. “For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world,

but that the world might be saved through him.” (John 3: 17) Since the world and its creatures are a wonderful creation of God, the Church is “interested in one thing only – to carry on the work of Christ under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, for he came into the world to bear witness to the truth, to save and not to judge, to serve and not to be served.” (*Gaudium et Spes*, #3) So we are in the world as Jesus was and His Church is, but we are not “of the world” (cf.:John 17: 14-16) We are counseled: “Do not love the world or the things of the world.” (1 John 2:15) and “Do not conform yourselves to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect.” (Rom. 12: 2) The world is a magnificent place as long as we are not coopted by its imperfect values but remain true to the ‘Beatitudes’. We can live in the world and be joyful Dominicans.

## THE WORLD IS WORTH SAVING

The world is worth saving. We, the Church, are to “go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature.” (Mark 16: 15) “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the world as a witness to all nations.” (Matt.: 24: 14)



Jesus Himself has given us this mission: “As you sent me into the world, so I send them into the world.” (John 17: 18) While we, the Church, are in the world, how are we to relate to it? *Gaudium et Spes* states : “At all times the Church carries the responsibility of reading the signs of the time and of interpreting them in the light of the Gospel...Ours is a new age of history with critical and swift upheavals spreading gradually to all corners of the earth.” ( #4) We, living in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, must use the tools available to us in the 21<sup>st</sup> century to preach the Gospel to this world, not the world of the 19<sup>th</sup> or the 13<sup>th</sup> centuries. A challenging but exciting task.

## THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD

Throughout history the Church has always been involved with the world, often effectively, sometimes grudgingly and occasionally late. Vatican II attempted to remedy the shortcomings and bring 'a breath of fresh air' to the Church.

"The world which the Council has in mind is the whole human family seen in the context of everything which envelopes it: it is the world as the theater of human history, bearing the marks of its travail, its triumphs and failures, the world, which in the Christian vision has been created and is sustained by the love of its maker, which has been freed from the slavery of sin by Christ, who was crucified and rose again in order to break the stranglehold of the evil one, so that it might be fashioned anew according to God's design and brought to its fulfillment." (GS #2)

St. Paul traversed the known world, bringing the Gospel to the Greeks and Romans, establishing many converts and churches. He broke out of narrow confines into the wider civilization. Although visited with torture and death the Church began to flourish until it achieved official recognition. Though plunged into the Dark Ages, the Church, under many great Popes, began to convert and civilize the Barbarians. Pope St. Leo the Great (+461) met this challenge head-on, including a meeting with Attila the Hun, averting the sacking of Rome. Pope St. Gregory the Great (+604) laid the foundations of Medieval Christendom. He sent a Roman monk named Augustine to Britain to convert the Angles and Saxons.



During the Middle Ages the Church was in danger of losing the masses who had moved from the feudal and rural districts into the cities. The monastic orders, from the Benedictines to the Carthusians, with their complete withdrawal

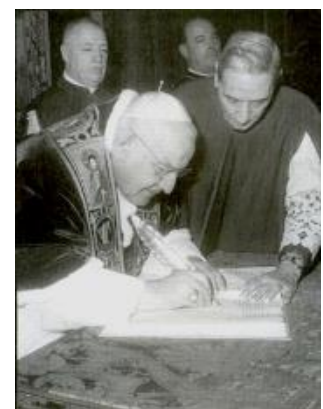
from the world had been able to provide for the rural Catholics. New orders arose to serve the new populations swelling the towns and cities. Adhering to the monastic vows of poverty, chastity and obedience and known as Mendicants because they begged for their needs, they moved from a strict monastic life to be with the people and meet their new needs in new ways. Many did not accept these gyrovagues, who were comprised mainly of Franciscans, Dominicans, Carmelites and Augustinians.

Unfortunately there have been times when the Church did not move fast enough in interpreting the signs of the times. Although there were attempts to reform itself in the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance, the Church failed to act in time. The papal legate who became Pope Pius II wrote presciently in 1454: "I cannot persuade myself that there is anything good in prospect...Christianity has no head whom all will obey...There is no reverence and no obedience; we look on the pope and emperor as figureheads and empty titles." The Papacy, the Curia and the clergy were disorganized and decaying. The reform of the Church began



in earnest outside the Church, in a manner of speaking, with disastrous results. Luther split Christendom. The Church began to recover with the Council of Trent (1545-63). It issued seventeen dogmatic decrees which defined Church teachings and answered the Protestants. The Church was back and the Counter-Reformation had begun. A new order, the Jesuits, founded by St. Ignatius of Loyola (+1556), arising opportunely, helped lead the Church in its reform.

Vatican I (1869-70) was convened by Pope Pius IX and issued two Constitutions, on the *Catholic Faith* and on the *Church of Christ*. Also the dogma of *papal infallibility* was defined. Vatican II (1962-65) opened under Pope John XXIII and closed under Pope Paul VI. Our 'Apostolic Mission' as Lay Dominicans should arise from "*knowledge of the conciliar and post-conciliar documents of the Second Vatican Council.*" (vide: *Rule, Guidelines*, 6)



## GAUDIUM ET SPES AND THE POPES



We would be remiss if we did not cite *Rerum Novarum*, an encyclical issued by Pope Leo XIII in 1891. It is subtitled “*On Capital and Labor*”. Living in the 21<sup>st</sup> century it is difficult to imagine the working conditions suffered by the laboring classes in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This encyclical began the ‘*Social Teachings of the Popes*’. It brought Christian principles to the ethical and charitable and just treatment of the worker with his right to organize and gain a living wage. It rejected both communism and unrestricted capitalism, while holding the right to private property. Pius XI, Pius XII, John XXIII and Paul VI also issued social encyclicals.

To commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*, Pope John Paul II issued the encyclical *Centesimus Annus* in 1991.

“Today more than ever, the Church is aware that her social message will gain credibility more immediately from the witness of actions than as a result of its internal logic and consistency. This awareness is also a source of her preferential option for the poor, which is never exclusive or discriminatory towards other groups. This option is not limited to material poverty, since it is well known that there are many other forms of poverty, especially in modern society—not only economic but cultural and spiritual poverty as well.” (#57)



In an interview, *Zenit*, 4/10/2003, George Weigel spoke on the relationship of *Gaudium et Spes* and *Centesimus Annus*:

“*Gaudium et Spes*” opened new conversations between the Church and democracy, the Church and science, and the Church and nonbelievers. Its description of the free society as having three parts -- democratic political community, free economy and vibrant public

moral culture, the last being the most important -- was picked up and developed brilliantly by Pope John Paul II in "Centesimus Annus."

Pope Benedict XVI has also written and spoken about the concerns of *Gaudium et Spes*. He spoke on the solemnity of Christ the King, 2005 as printed in *Fides Service*, Nov. 21, 2005:

"Christ alpha e omega" is the title of a paragraph of the "Gaudium et Spes" pastoral constitution issued by Vatican II, the Pope recalled, quoting Pope Paul VI: "In the light of the centrality of Christ, *Gaudium et Spes* interprets the conditions of humanity today, human calling and dignity, and ambits of human life: family, culture, economy, politics, international community. This is the mission of the Church, yesterday, today and always: announce and bear witness to Christ so that every man and woman may live their vocation to the full."

In his encyclical, *Caritas in Veritate*, signed on June 29, 2009 Pope Benedict XVI wrote on the necessity of providing for the poor and poor nations by the wealthy individual and nations. He also spoke to the modern world on the energy problems it has:

"Questions linked to the care and preservation of the environment today need to give due consideration to *the energy problem*. The fact that some States, power groups and companies hoard non-

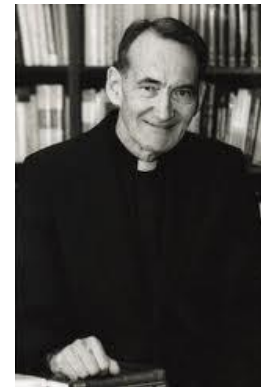


renewable energy resources represents a grave obstacle to development in poor countries. Those countries lack the economic means either to gain access to existing sources of non-renewable energy or to finance research into new alternatives. The stockpiling of natural resources, which in many cases are found in the poor countries themselves, gives rise to exploitation and frequent conflicts between and within nations. These conflicts are often fought on the soil of those same countries, with a heavy toll of death, destruction and further decay.

The international community has an urgent duty to find institutional means of regulating the exploitation of non-renewable resources, involving poor countries in the process, in order to plan together for the future.’ (#49)

So both of the last two Popes have promoted *Gaudium et Spes* and its reaching out to the world as it is today. Yet their emphases are different:

“The contrast between Pope Benedict and his predecessor is striking. John Paul II was a social ethicist, anxious to involve the Church in shaping a world order of peace, justice, and fraternal love. Among the documents of Vatican II, John Paul's favorite was surely the pastoral constitution *Gaudium et Spes*. Benedict XVI, who looks upon *Gaudium et Spes* as the weakest of the four constitutions, shows a clear preference for the other three.” (*First Things, From Ratzinger to Benedict*, Avery Cardinal Dulles)



Much progress has been made by the Church in many ways in its desire to talk and work with the modern world. Much work still needs to be done. As Dominicans and members of the Church the burden does not just fall on the shoulders of the Popes but it is also our burden. But remember the words of the Master, “For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (Matt. 11: 30) Each member, each Chapter must find their ways to influence by words, deeds and example the world in which we find ourselves placed by God.



## DOMINICANS IN THE WORLD

*“The Church in the Modern World (Gaudium et Spes), undoubtedly the most ambitious project of the Council both in its length and scope as well as its objective, which was to begin a realistic dialogue with the modern world.” (A Concise History of the Catholic Church, Thomas Bokenkotter, p. 418)*

This has always been the *modus operandi* of the Dominican Order from the days of St. Dominic. He followed Jesus who said, “While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” (John 9:5) and said to us, “You are the light of the world.” (Matt. 5:14) As we read, Dominic sent his members where the people were: the cities and sent them prepared through education “to begin a realistic dialogue” with them. An old proverb, translated from the Latin, follows:

*Bernard loved the valleys, Benedict the mountains,  
Francis the towns, Dominic the populous cities.*

*The Primitive Constitutions of the Order of Friars Preachers* which St. Dominic influenced states in the *Prologue* that the “Order was founded, from the beginning, especially for preaching and the salvation of souls.” Thus a dialogue with the world is in our ‘DNA’. This must be accomplished in a manner that is understandable to be effective:

“On one occasion a public debate was organized against the heretics. The local bishop proposed to go to it with an imposing entourage, but St. Dominic said to him, “No, my lord and father, that is not the way to go to meet such people. The heretics are to be convinced by an example of humility and other virtues far more readily than by any external display or verbal battles...everything came to a satisfactory conclusion.” (*Early Dominicans*, p. 87)





On June 5, 1222, Pope Honorius gave the church of Santa Sabina to St. Dominic and it is the headquarters of the Order. It is fitting that it is on the Aventine next to the Tiber, in the heart of that great city to which all roads lead, Rome, Italy. Here St. Thomas Aquinas began writing the *Summa Theologica*.



### ***GAUDIUM ET SPES* AND THE ORDER OF PREACHERS**

The Order of Preachers had a profound impact and influence on the documents of Vatican II. This is especially true of *Gaudium et Spes*. Here is a brief mention of three of the Dominican '*Periti*' (experts) who guided Vatican II:

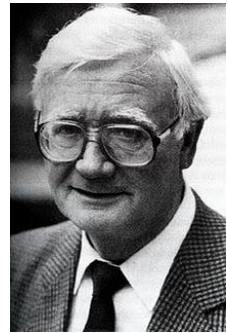
1. **Yves Marie-Joseph Congar OP** (1904-95) was a principle architect of many of the documents, including *Gaudium et Spes*. He brought his exhaustive research into the Christian tradition, especially the riches of the patristic era and of Thomas Aquinas. John Paul II named him a Cardinal a year before he died.



2. **Marie-Dominique Chenu OP** (1895-1990) was very influential in the writing of *Gaudium et Spes*. Schillebeeckx said that Chenu influenced him to “open all his ears” to human life and culture, knowing that “nothing genuinely human is foreign to the followers of Christ.” (GS, #1)



3. **Edward Cornelis Florentius Alfonsus Schillebeeckx OP** (1914-2009) was one of the busiest *Periti* at the Council. He contributed to the chapter on marriage and the family in *Gaudium et Spes*. He gave many conferences to Bishops assembled in Rome and did assist Cardinal Bernard Jan Alfrink at the Council. He was awarded the prestigious *Erasmus Prize* (1982) for contributions to European Culture.



## THE GAUDIUM ET SPES GENERATION

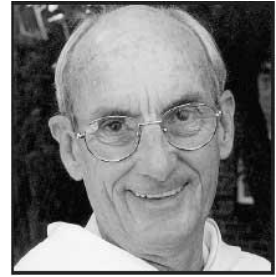
It is difficult today to imagine the excitement and exhilaration that Vatican II and, especially, *Gaudium et Spes*, created among the clergy and laity of the 1960's and 1970's. The Church was not breaking from the past but, in Dominican style, it was building upon its rich tradition, keeping the good and adding, after study and discussion, the ability to communicate this to today's generation. *Tradition* evolves and enriches itself, as we learned from *Dei Verbum*; otherwise we would be '*sola scriptura*'.

“The people of God believes that it is led by the Spirit of the Lord who fills the whole world...For Faith throws a new light on all things and makes known the full ideal which God has set for man, thus guiding the mind towards solutions that are fully human.” (GS, #11)

As John Paul II wrote in his encyclical, *Dominicae Cenaee, The Mystery and Worship of the Eucharist*, 1980, #13:

“Convinced as we are that by means of the Council the Holy Spirit ‘has spoken to the Church’ the truths and given the indications for carrying out her mission among the people of today and tomorrow.”

On the *Ordo Praedicatorum* website, 7/2011, it was noted that two Dominican Friars in South Africa celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of priestly ordination, Albert Nolan and Gregory Brooke. Fr. Nolan preached the homily which appears in part below:



“Some Australian priests who are celebrating their jubilees round this time have taken to calling themselves the Gaudium et Spes generation. Gaudium et Spes, of course, was the name of the famous Vatican Council document on the Church in the Modern World. It is the Latin for joy and hope.

“The Gaudium et Spes generation of priests are those who were ordained in the 1960’s, immediately before or shortly after the II Vatican Council. Gregory and I belong to this generation of priests. For us the Council was a source of great joy and hope. We were wildly excited by it and bubbling over with hope for the future. At last the church was changing, catching up with the modern world - beyond our wildest expectations. As priests we were able to hold our heads high. We were proud to be known as Catholic priests. We started to move away from the clericalism and narrow-mindedness of the past. We embraced ecumenism. We tried to work more with the people rather than for them.

“In a small way, over the last 50 years, Gregory and I have had the privilege of sowing some of these seeds of spiritual and intellectual renewal. For that we are extremely grateful to God and to all who sowed the seeds in us, even before the II Vatican Council. This is the privilege we would like to celebrate today with 50 years of priestly ministry: the privilege of sowing a few seeds. And it is for this reason that we remain the generation of joy and hope - of Gaudium et Spes.

“Our lives were filled with joy and hope.” **[Thank you, Father!]**

1. **Preface (1-3)**
2. **Introduction: The Situation of Men in the Modern World (4-10)**
3. **Part 1: The Church and Man's Calling (11-45)**
  1. The Dignity of the Human Person (12-22)
  2. The Community of Mankind (23-32)
  3. Man's Activity Throughout the World (33-39)
  4. The Role of the Church in the Modern World (40-45)
4. **Part 2: Some Problems of Special Urgency (46-93)**
  1. Fostering the Nobility of Marriage and the Family (47-52)
  2. The Proper Development of Culture (53-62)
    1. The Circumstances of Culture in the World Today (54-56)
    2. Some Principles for the Proper Development of Culture (57-59)
    3. Some More Urgent Duties of Christians in Regard to Culture (60-62)
  3. Economic and Social Life (63-72)
    1. Economic Development (64 - 66)
    2. Certain Principles Governing Socio-Economic Life as a Whole (67-72)
  4. The Life of the Political Community (73-76)
  5. The Fostering of Peace and the Promotion of a Community of Nations (77-93)
    1. The Avoidance of War (79-82)
    2. Setting Up an International Community (83-93)

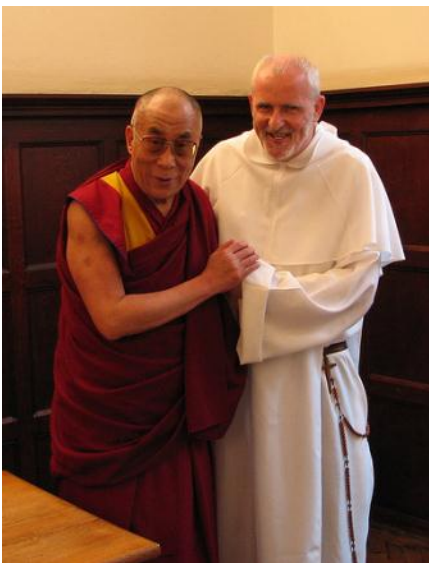
## CONCLUSION OF UNIT 6

Hopefully this background and foreground information will serve to round out your understanding of *Gaudium et Spes*. The key thing is to read the document, discuss it and apply it to your life and, hopefully, your Chapter. After all, if we do not relate to the modern world, what good can we do?

St. Dominic used the media available to him to relate to the people, viz. *preaching*. We have a wider variety of media to utilize in our preaching: Internet; YouTube; Blogs; Facebook; Twitter; Email; TV; Next?

“Within modern society the communications media play a major role in information, cultural promotion, and formation. This role is increasing, as a result of technological progress, the extent and diversity of the news transmitted, and the influence exercised on public opinion.” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #2493)

Are you ‘open’ to the world, its wonders, its marvelous people? As a Dominican, we should be. Witness the stories about our joyful founder:



“The sense of openness to the world is a marked characteristic of many of the great Dominican preachers. ‘When I became a Christian,’ noted Lacordaire, ‘I did not lose sight of the world. And in the twentieth century, Vincent McNabb remarked once to some of his brethren: ‘The world is waiting for those who love it...If you don’t love men, don’t preach to them – preach to yourself.’” (*The New Wine of Dominican Spirituality*, Paul Murray OP, pp. 148-9)

FOR AN INTERNET COPY OF ‘GAUDIUM ET SPES’ -

<http://www.ewtn.com/library/councils/v2modwor.htm>

# CENTRAL PROVINCE



## CANDIDACY II

## UNIT 3: CONTEMPLATION

**“BUT WHEN YOU PRAY, GO TO YOUR INNER ROOM,  
CLOSE THE DOOR, AND PRAY TO YOUR FATHER IN  
SECRET. AND YOUR FATHER WHO SEES IN SECRET  
WILL REPAY YOU.” (MATT. 6: 6)**

**Contemplation** is a very important component of the ‘Dominican Way of Life’. This is the reason for this unit in our Candidacy II formation which we will study and pray over for three months and, then, continue for the rest of our lives. We have answered the **call** (vocation – *vocare* – *to call*) of the Holy Spirit and become Dominicans. “The fulfillment of St. Dominic’s vision of a community of contemplative preachers requires a careful balancing so that both the active-preaching dimension and the contemplative-prayer-study dimension are held in creative tension,” writes Thomas McGonigle OP (*The Dominican Tradition* p.xx). St. Thomas Aquinas was the author of our Dominican motto: ***Contemplari et Contermplata Aliis Tradere*** (to contemplate and to pass on to others what is contemplated). Thus as Dominicans the Holy Spirit is also calling each of us to be ‘*contemplatives*’. We will examine various sources, especially that of the Mystics.

## EXPRESSIONS OF PRAYER

By way of introduction Unit 3 of Initiate Formation on *Prayer* could be reviewed. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (#2700-2724) presents an excellent summary of the types of prayer:

- I. VOCAL PRAYER – “Vocal prayer is an essential element of the Christian life.” (#2701) We use this form when we pray with words in the morning and evening, the Rosary, Liturgy (Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours) etc.
- II. MEDITATION – “There are as many and varied methods of meditation as there are spiritual masters.” (#2707) “Meditation engages thought, imagination, emotion and desire.” (#2708) Meditation is usually used when saying the Rosary. *Lectio Divina* also employs meditation. (for the

latter cf: *Accepting the Embrace of God: The Ancient Art of Lectio Divina* by Fr. Luke Dysinger OSB – see Unit 3 of Initiate Formation).

- III. CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER – “Contemplative prayer is the simple expression of the mystery of prayer. It is a gaze of faith fixed on Jesus, an attentiveness to the Word of God, a silent love. It achieves real union with the prayer of Christ to the extent that it makes us share in His mystery.” (#2724)

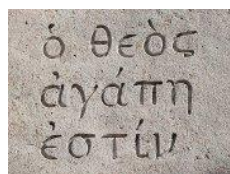
## CONTEMPLATION/LOVE

You cannot study Contemplation without seeing the interchangeability of the word ‘love’. “God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him’ (1 Jn 4: 16). These words from the *First Letter of John* expresses with remarkable clarity the heart of the Christian faith: the Christian image of God and the resulting image of mankind and its destiny.” (Benedict XVI - *Deus Caritas Est*)

- ❖ O inestimable Love!
- ❖ With the fire of your love, set our hearts alight with desire to love you and to follow you in the truth.
- ❖ You alone are Love, alone worthy of being loved! (St. Catherine of Siena)

St. Therese, the Little Flower, a Doctor of the Church because of love wrote:

“I know of no other means to reach perfection than by love. To love: how perfectly our hearts are made for this! Sometimes I look for another word to use, but, in this land of exile, no other word expresses the vibrations of our soul. Hence we must keep to that one word: love.”





## WHAT IS CONTEMPLATION?

Much could be written in answer to this question. However, the answer must be arrived at by each individual through his or her own pursuit as it pertains to him or her. “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.” (Mt. 7: 7) The contemplative journey must be undertaken by each serious Dominican. But, oh what a wonderful journey because the spiritual goal to be reached is union with God. We can say with the Apostle, “Yet I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me.” (Gal. 2:20) In the words of St. Thomas Aquinas: “I have Christ alone in my affection and Christ Himself is my life: ‘To me, to live is Christ; and to die is gain’” (Phil. 1: 21)(Commentary on Galatians, cap. 2, lect.6) No one should fear undertaking this journey because the roadmap is different yet suited to each pilgrim. The important thing is to be in the race regardless of other racers.

“Contemplation is a type of knowledge that begins and ends in love; it is more experiential and intuitive than theoretical and discursive...Union with God is the goal of the spiritual life, and the bond of that union is the love that is charity...St. Thomas Aquinas had approved and praised the ‘mixed life’; that is, an active apostolic life that proceeds from some sort of contemplation. Indeed, St. Thomas Aquinas went so far as to say that the mixed life surpasses the purely contemplative life in excellence.” (Jordan Aumann OP – *The Contemplative Dimension of Dominican Spirituality*)

James Arraj in *Essays in Existential Thomism* commented on the great Dominican theologian, Reginald Garrigou-Lagrangé, and his idea of the universal call to the contemplative life: “Contemplation, that culmination of the life of prayer in which the presence of God manifests itself in a very real and experiential, yet mysterious way, is, he asserted, the normal outcome of the development of the life of grace...If contemplation is thus the normal development of the life of the virtues and gifts, then we are all called to it.” This is treated by Garrigou-Lagrangé briefly but deeply in *The Three Conversions in the Spiritual Life*.

The Church teaches in *Lumen Gentium* that all, ordained and lay, are called to holiness: “For this is the will of God, your sanctification.” (1 Th. 4: 3) “It is

therefore quite clear that all Christians in any state or walk of life are called to the fullness of Christian life and to the perfection of love..." (L.G. #39) We who have answered the call of the Holy Spirit to follow St. Dominic who so closely followed Jesus Christ must embark on this contemplative journey to union with God. As you journey, ever so slowly, you will constantly move into ever deeper waters but you will never be over your head.

## DOMINICANS AND CONTEMPLATION

There have been many great Dominican mystics and mystical writers through the centuries down to the present day. Of course our founder, **St. Dominic** never failed to pass on to others what he contemplated during long hours of prayer. In his Canonization Process (1233) Brother Rudolph of Faenza gave testimony about the prayer life of St. Dominic: "The Blessed father Dominic nearly always spent the night in church, praying and weeping there, as I saw by the light of the lamp which is in the church...Because of the intimacy I had with him I sometimes went and prayed beside him, and I saw in him a fervor in prayer such as I have never seen the like of." (*Early Dominicans*, p. 76) *The Dominican Tradition* (McGonigle and Zagano) treats in *The Nine Ways of Prayer of St. Dominic* contemplation as practiced by St. Dominic: "Enraptured, the holy father then appeared to have entered into the Holy of Holies and the Third Heaven." (7<sup>th</sup> way) "Our father quickly withdrew to some solitary place, to his cell or elsewhere, and recollected himself in the presence of God. He would sit quietly, and after the sign of the cross, begin to read from a book opened before him...This holy custom of our father seems, as it were, to resemble the prophetic mountain of the Lord inasmuch as he quickly passed upwards from reading to prayer, from prayer to meditation, and from meditation to contemplation." (8<sup>th</sup> way) This is *Lectio Divina*, a method of arriving at contemplation, as we have previously discussed. (p. 2), and available to all.



**St. Thomas Aquinas**, Mystic and Theologian, had much to say on contemplation. *Contemplari et contemplata aliis tradere*. The active life must flow from the contemplative life. We are 'contemplative preachers'. "In the

end for Thomas (and, he would argue, for everyone) God is not so much an object to be thought or even thought about, much less discussed endlessly, as a Presence to be sought. The art of such seeking is contemplative action, and its end is mystical union, both in this life and hereafter.” (*Mysticism and Prophecy* by Richard Woods OP, p. 76) “When we speak of Thomas as a mystic we do not mean that he had frequent ecstasies or visions or that he was a little introverted or overly concerned about his own experiences. Yet Thomas was a mystic. He knew about the ‘hidden Godhead,’ *Adore te devote, latens deitas* (Devoutly I adore Thee, hidden Deity). He knew the hidden God. He spoke of the God who pervades and determines everything in silence. He spoke of a God beyond everything holy theology could say about Him. He spoke of the God he loved as inconceivable. And he knew about these things not only from theology but from the experience of his heart. He knew and experienced so much that in the end he substituted silence for theological words. He no longer wrote and considered all that he had written to be ‘straw’. (*Thomas Aquinas: Friar, Theologian, and Mystic*. By Karl Rahner SJ)

‘**Rhineland Mysticism**’ in the Fourteenth Century is also known as ‘Dominican Mysticism’ because of the influence of Meister Eckhart, Johannes Tauler and Henry Suso, all Dominicans.

**Meister Eckhart** (Eckhart von Hochheim OP +1327) was a leading preacher and theologian who influenced many and is experiencing a resurgence today. “In his explanation of the precise nature of the union between God and the soul, Eckhart states that the mystical experience flows from grace as a supernatural principle and involves immediately an intellectual or contemplative activity on the part of man, though not excluding the activity of the will under the imperation of charity. Thus, through vision and love, the soul that attains the heights of mystical union with God is, as it were, identified with the divine essence; it experiences complete beatitude in and through God.

“This does not mean as Eckhart explained in his response to the judges at Cologne, that we are transformed and changed into God, but just as numerous hosts on various altars are transformed into the one and the same body of Christ, so also. ‘by the grace of adoption we are united to the true Son of God



and made members of the one Head of the Church, who is Christ.” (op.cit, chapter seven, *Dionysian Spirituality and Devotio Moderna* by Jordan Aumann OP)

“What we plant in the soil of contemplation, we shall reap in the harvest of action...What a man takes in by contemplation, that he pours out in love.”  
(Meister Eckhart)

**Bl. Henry Suso OP** (+1366) was a student of Meister Eckhart and has been called a lyric poet and troubadour of mystic wisdom. His writings were very popular in the later Middle Ages. Thomas a Kempis was an admirer. Among his writings is *The Little Book of Divine Wisdom*:

“But essential reward consists in the contemplative union of the soul with the pure Divinity, for she can never rest till she be borne above all her powers and capacities, and introduced to the natural entity of the Persons, and to the vision of their real essence.

“And in the emanation of the splendor of their essence she will find full and perfect satisfaction and everlasting happiness.

“Just as a drop of water loses itself, drawing the taste and colour of the wine to and into itself, so it happens that those who are in full possession of blessedness lose all human desires in an inexpressible manner, and they ebb away from themselves and are immersed completely in the divine will.”

**Johannes Tauler OP** (+1361) was also greatly influenced by Meister Eckhart. He worked with the ‘Friends of God’, especially corresponding with Margaret Ebner OP. He is especially known for his sermons, emphasizing the moral and spiritual life:

“In the most intimate, hidden and innermost ground of the soul, God is always essentially, actively and substantially present. Ere the soul possesses everything by grace which God possesses by nature.”



Of course, one of the glories of the Dominican Order is the celebrated and loved mystic and Doctor of the Church, **St. Catherine of Siena**, a Lay Dominican. She exemplified the 'mixed life' praised by St. Thomas Aquinas. "The balance of contemplation and action in the last twelve years of Catherine's life was not merely a relationship of complementarity...It was precisely what she experienced in contemplation that impelled her into action. And all that she touched or was touched by in her activity was present in her prayer." (*The Dialogue, Introduction* by Susan Noffke OP, p.8) Catherine often spoke of *fire*, both the fire of God and of the soul:

"When the soul considers and sees the great excellence and strength of the fire of the Holy Spirit within herself, she is inebriated, and knowing her creator's love she completely surrenders herself...Then her love towards God has become perfect; since she has nothing within herself, she cannot hold to the rapid race of desire, but runs without any weight or chain.  
(Letter 189)

Only time and space limits us in discussing the many other Dominicans, especially modern spiritual writers (some additional will be considered in the **RESOURCES** at the end of the unit) who have developed thoughts on contemplation (Several are included as resources for this unit). "...all Christian ministry is somehow grounded in contemplation...The Dominican Laity, the Sisters of Apostolic Life and the Friars all share the contemplative grounding of preaching...at various times in their history they have experienced the need to bring the contemplative side of their life more clearly to light. Calls to do so are being heard among Dominicans in recent years. A General Chapter of the Friars, at Providence (RI) in the United States in 2001, made such a call." (*Living in an Ashram* by **Liam G. Walsh OP**, p. 5) (cf. *Recovering the Contemplative Dimension*, by fr. Paul Murray OP, Providence 2001)

Lastly, fr. Timothy Radcliffe OP, a former Master of the Order, has also written on this topic. “It is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God.’ (Heb. 10: 31) It can be hard to live with God. We find ourselves in the desert, awake at Gethsemane and watching at Golgotha. Sometimes the contemplative must live in the dark but, as the *Cloud of Unknowing* says, ‘Learn to be at home in the darkness.’ The temptation is to run away from God and to find refuge in small consolations, and tiny desires. We must leave that emptiness there for God to fill...Dare to abide in darkness and to be at home in the night without fear. As the English poet D H Lawrence wrote, ‘It is terrible to fall into the hands of the living God, but it is even more terrible to fall out of them.’” (“A city set on a hilltop cannot be hidden” *A Contemplative Life* 2001, p. 6)



## CARMELITES ON CONTEMPLATION

We must include some very important Carmelites who have written from their hearts and experience on contemplation. The writings of St. Teresa of Avila (+1582) and St. John of the Cross (+1591) are roadmaps to the goal of the spiritual life, union with God. Their works are still popular today, even available on Kindle.

**St. Teresa**, Doctor of the Church, described the journey of the soul through four stages to the highest union. Her definition, taken from *The Book of Her Life*, is used by the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*: “Contemplative prayer [*oracion mental*] in my opinion is nothing else than a close sharing between friends; it means taking time frequently to be alone with him who we know loves us.” (#2709) She knew that the contemplative act of loving God must be manifested in the active act of loving our neighbor:

“We cannot know whether we love God, although there may be strong reason for thinking so; but there can be no doubt about whether we love our neighbor or not. Be sure that, in proportion as you advance in fraternal charity, you are increasing your love of God, for His



Majesty bears so tender an affection for us that I cannot doubt He will repay our love for others by augmenting, and in a thousand different ways, that which we bear for Him.”

(*Fifth Mansion*, ch. 3)

**St. John of the Cross**, Doctor of the Church, is considered by many to be the



foremost mystical writer and one of Spain’s greatest poets. His work has influenced numerous well-known spiritual writers, theologians, philosophers, pacifists and artists. John Paul II wrote his theological dissertation on the mystical theology of John of the Cross; Allen Ginsberg mentioned him in his poem *Howl*.

Here are some examples of the poetry of St. John of the Cross. First is Stanza 4 with a commentary by John of the Cross from *The Living Flame of Love*. Then we conclude with Stanzas 5 and 8 from *The Dark Night*. These, meditated upon, will bring us deeper into union with our *Bridegroom*:

4. How gently and lovingly  
You wake in my heart,  
Where in secret you dwell  
alone;  
And in your sweet  
breathing,  
Filled with good and  
glory,  
How tenderly you swell  
my heart with love.

#### COMMENTARY

*How gentle and loving (that is, extremely loving and gentle) is your awakening, O Bridegroom Word, in the center and depth of my soul, which is its pure and intimate substance, in which secretly and silently, as its only lord, you dwell alone, not only as in your house, not only as in your bed, but also in my own heart, intimately and closely united to it.*

5. O guiding night!  
O night more lovely than the dawn!

O night that has united  
the lover with his beloved.

8. I abandoned and forgot myself,  
laying my face on my Beloved;  
all things ceased; I went out from myself,  
leaving my cares  
forgotten among the lilies.  
transforming the beloved in her Lover.

**“LET HIM SIT ALONE AND IN SILENCE.” (Lam. 3: 28)**

“One of the Fathers said: Just as it is impossible for a man to see his face in troubled water, so too the soul, unless it be cleansed of alien thoughts, cannot pray to God in contemplation.” (*The Wisdom of the Desert*, tr. By Thomas Merton, LXXIV) We, as Dominicans, are very familiar with vocal prayer and liturgical prayer. These are things, urged by the Spirit, we can do and do do. These represent active prayer but contemplative prayer is more passive. It is opening ourselves passively to receive God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. **We have the intention to consent to His presence and action.** We listen silently to the Word Who speaks without words. We being human are limited in what we can do; He being divine is without limits. In contemplation we leave it up to God to transform us in a wonderful union with Him.

Where this will take us, what it will cost us, is unknown but in faith we know that He loves us and wants us united to Himself. Contemplation is an act of faith just as Abraham packed up his family and set off for parts unknown. But it was the *Promised Land*, heaven on earth. “Whoever has a true desire to be in heaven, then in that moment he is in heaven spiritually...’Though our bodies are now on the earth nevertheless our living is in heaven.’ (Phil. 3: 20)...And, indeed, a soul is wherever it loves.” (*The Cloud of Unknowing*, ch. 60) “We are the People of God, already seated ‘with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus’ and ‘hidden with Christ in God’.” (CCC #2796)

“God created man in his image; in the divine image he created him.” (Gen 1: 27) We began: “God is love, and whoever remains in love remains in God



and God in him.” (1 John 4: 16) As Ken Wilber observed, it is not a matter of growing into union with God, but of recognizing the union which already exists. We begin this by going into our inner room, closing the door and praying to our Father in secret; He will answer us secretly. By this we mean that we will not hear words nor see visions but He will answer us, if we are persistent in our practice, by slowly transforming us into Him, by losing our will and doing His will. Evidence of this will become apparent as time goes by. Trust Him. “Not my will but yours be done.” (Luke 22: 42) Contemplation places our lives in His hands to do as He will, like clay in the hands of the potter, so that “Then it will be his will to send out a ray of spiritual light piercing this cloud of unknowing between you and him.” (*Cloud of Unknowing*, ch. 26)

“Contemplative prayer is the world in which God can do anything. To move into that realm is the greatest adventure. It is to be open to the Infinite and hence to infinite possibilities...All true prayer is based on the conviction of the presence of the Spirit in us and of his unfailing and continual inspiration...the Spirit prays in us and we consent. The traditional term for this kind of prayer is *contemplation*...The root of prayer is interior silence...’Prayer,’ according to Evagius, ‘is the laying aside of thoughts.’...Contemplative prayer is not so much the absence of thoughts as detachment from them. It is the opening of mind and heart, body and emotions – our whole being – to God, the ultimate Mystery, beyond words, thoughts and emotions – beyond, in other words, the psychological content of the present moment...The Spirit speaks to our conscience through scripture and through the events of daily life...The Spirit then begins to address our conscience from that deep source within us which is our true Self. This is contemplation properly so-called.” (*Open Mind, Open Heart* by Thomas Keating, ch. 2)

“Contemplative prayer is, in a way, simply the preference for the desert, for emptiness, for poverty. One has begun to know the meaning of contemplation when he intuitively and spontaneously seeks the dark and unknown path of aridity in preference to every other way...He accepts the love of God on faith...Only when we are able to ‘let go’ of everything within us, all desire to see, to know, to taste and to experience the presence of God, do we truly become



able to experience that presence with the overwhelming conviction and reality that revolutionize our entire life.” (*Contemplative Prayer* by Thomas Merton, ch.XV, p. 89)

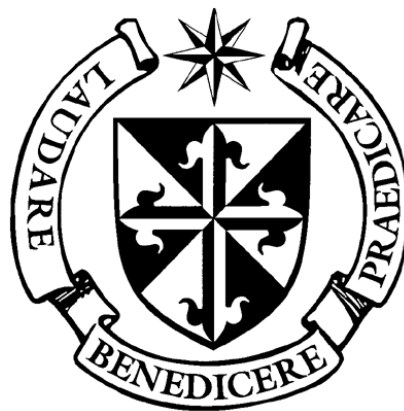
## DOMINICAN HOPE

It is the hope of the Dominican Order that a renewed interest in and practice of contemplation will begin. As we mentioned, the **2001 General Chapter** of the Friars in Providence, RI issued a renewed call to contemplation:

**202)** Contemplation, situated in time and place, in relationship to God and to others, has always marked our Dominican life. The challenges of the present time only increase our taste for it and our need to return to it. The new generation wishes to put it at the heart of our common life. In fact, only an enriched contemplative life can ensure authentic witness.

**206)** We Dominicans are experiencing the same hunger for God but many of us are largely unaware of the depths of the great Dominican contemplative tradition beginning with St. Dominic himself.

**207)** In our Dominican tradition contemplation is not an isolated activity or a special spiritual exercise. It is a dynamic attitude of openness to the creative and saving presence of God in the present moment. Like the leaven in the dough it permeates our study, preaching, silence and common life.





# *MY NATURE IS FIRE*

Prayer 12 (XXII) St. Catherine of Siena

In your nature,  
Eternal Godhead,  
I shall come to know my nature.  
And what is my nature, boundless love?  
It is fire,  
because you are nothing but a fire of love.  
And you have given humankind  
a share in this nature,  
for by the fire of love  
you created us.  
Today, eternal God,  
let our cloud be dissipated  
so that we may perfectly know and follow your Truth  
in truth,  
with a free and simple heart.

## CONCERNS AND FAQ

*Isn't contemplation just for the great saints and not for little ol' me?*

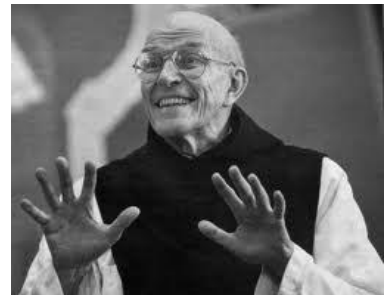
Absolutely not. It is for everyone. In *Lumen Gentium* the Church declared that we, clergy and lay, are all called by the Holy Spirit to aim for the heights of holiness.

*Isn't contemplation infused by the Holy Spirit?*

Yes, it is. But all prayer and good works are inspired by the Holy Spirit. "Ask and you shall receive." Be faithful to the practice of contemplation and the Spirit will lead you to unknown and glorious places. Have faith "for behold, the Kingdom of God is within you."

*Is contemplation normal for my spiritual life?*

Yes, so write all spiritual mentors from St. Teresa to Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange OP. "Contemplative prayer, rightly understood, is the normal development of the grace of Baptism and the regular practice of *lectio divina*. It is the opening of mind and heart – our whole being to God beyond thoughts, words and emotions. Moved by God's prevenient grace, we open our awareness to God whom we know by faith is within us...Contemplative prayer is a process of interior transformation, a relationship initiated by God and leading, if we consent, to divine union." (*The Christian Contemplative Tradition* by Thomas Keating OCSO)



*This seems complicated.*

Remember always the words of an early Dominican, "Prayer is such an easy job." Contemplation is a very simple, quiet prayer between two friends. The Cure of Ars asked an old farmer what he was doing sitting in church. He replied that he was looking at the good Lord Who was looking at him. The same question was asked of Mother Teresa on how she prayed. She said that she listened to God and, asked what He said, she said that He listened to her.

*How often should I do this?*

Begin, if you will, slowly, by building up to twenty minutes. Then add another session. Two periods of twenty to thirty minutes is a very possible goal. Remember God is working in you, so give Him time. You will be surprised at the great work He can accomplish.

*I am easily filled with distracting thoughts.*

Don't fight them; dismiss them by returning to a mantra, word or thought. We empty our minds of these thoughts so God can fill them with Himself.

*Sometimes I fall asleep.*

It could mean that you are not getting enough sleep but worry not; the Spirit can work whether you are conscious or unconscious.

*I feel dryness and lack of affective emotions.*

Now you are advancing, if you do not falter. We are not doing this to get something out of it but to recognize God's presence and accept His actions in and on our lives. We consent to God's work.

*What style of contemplation should I follow?*

This is a good question because, since there are different formats, you might



try them to find your fit. Fr, Donald Goergen OP speaks of: Lectio Divina; Centering Prayer (Thomas Keating); Christian Meditation (John Main); Practice of Presence of God (Br. Lawrence); Jesus Prayer (several versions); the Rosary. Don't be confused or overwhelmed; simply try one.

*What's the most important thing about contemplation?*

In the words of Fr. Goergen – “disciplined perseverance”. If you are faithful to it you will soon discern in your life the maturing of the fruits of the *Spirit*: love, joy, peace patience, gentleness and kindness.” (*Finding Grace at the Center*, p. 108)



So **never judge** your prayer, never think you have failed, never give up!

***DISCIPLINED PERSEVERENCE!***

# RESOURCES

There are many resources available to the student of contemplation. Many have been mentioned in this unit. As you progress in the land of 'Contemplation', you will read and learn from these and many others. It is a wonderful journey, Pilgrim!

Since this unit is so important, take three months to delve into contemplation, making it a life-project. The rewards are infinite and eternal. Be mindful that the most important thing is not your study (which is important) but the practice of contemplation. Incorporate into your daily life time for contemplation. After thirty days you will have established the habit of contemplation and will not ask "if" but "when". Study the following two items:

***Recovering Our Dominican Contemplative Tradition*** by Richard Woods OP. Fr. Woods has written many books on a variety of topics including several on Meister Eckhart and teaches at the Dominican University. [richardwoodsop.net/](http://richardwoodsop.net/)  
<http://tinyurl.com/3zpn4sp>

***Recovering the Contemplative Dimension*** by Paul Murray OP This was presented to the General Chapter in 2001. Fr. Murray has written much on contemplation, available on the internet. He addressed the House of Lords, a first, on the topic of contemplation in 2011. He also wrote a delightful book on Mother Teresa, his friend. <http://tinyurl.com/3sg4vhr>

Also for those Chapters who are able, Fr. Goergen has a CD series: *The Christian Contemplative Tradition* <http://tinyurl.com/cm7ovno>

## YOUTUBE

Numerous short videos are available on YouTube by searching the different types of contemplation alluded to on page 15, e.g. <http://tinyurl.com/c8bn85>

*CONTEMPLARI ET CONTEMPLATA ALIIS TRADERE*

# CENTRAL PROVINCE



**CANDIDACY II**

**UNIT 5:**

**GOSPEL OF ST. MATTHEW**

**“JESUS SAW A MAN NAMED MATTHEW...HE SAID TO HIM, ‘FOLLOW ME.’ AND HE GOT UP AND FOLLOWED HIM.” (MATT. 9: 9)**

The purpose of Candidacy II is more than *study*; it is *transformation* as a result of *study*. We take three months for each unit to afford us time to grow into a greater union with God. The painting on our titlepage is *The Calling of St. Matthew* by Caravaggio (1599) from the Contarelli Chapel in Rome. Jesus, accompanied by St. Peter, points to St. Matthew and says, “Follow me.” Matthew points to himself, as if to say, “Who, me?” Jesus, His feet already turning to leave, adds nothing after His invitation. Matthew immediately rises and commits himself to follow this Jesus. This is a real act of faith because Matthew, like Abraham, knows not where this will take him or what will be involved. He has taken the first step to transform his life from one of money and comfort to an unknown future of what – God only knows.

**ST. DOMINIC**

Although we do not follow Jesus physically, we do have the Gospel of Matthew, St. Dominic’s favorite Gospel. This has been chosen for this unit because St. Dominic carried it with him, read it over and over, even memorizing it. He carried this along with St. Paul’s Epistles and John Cassian’s *Conferences*. Sr. Diana Culbertson OP wrote on this for *St. Dominic’s Day 2010*:

“Matthew’s Gospel was St. Dominic’s favorite. He took it with him everywhere and how many times must he have prayed over that last chapter. When shortly after the foundation of the Order, he decided to disperse the brethren over all of Europe, he was cautioned not to take





such a risk. He made the announcement at a chapter meeting with the whole order present – all 16 of them. According to the record, when everyone protested, he replied, ‘I know what I am doing.’ This was not self-confidence. This was trust— trust in the promise of Jesus: ‘I am with you always...’ And so they left southern France, two by two. And not willingly.”

Thus, we can see that St. Dominic applied and followed the Gospel of Matthew in his life. It transformed him. A man or a woman is not born a saint but becomes one.

## PRAYER

“...the apostles handed on to their hearers what he had said and done, but with that fuller understanding which they, instructed by the glorious events of Christ and enlightened by the Spirit of truth, now enjoyed.” (Dei Verbum, #19) In our quest to understand the Scriptures we should seek the guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit before we read the Gospel of Matthew. A suggested traditional prayer is:



Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Thy faithful and enkindle in them the fire of Thy love.

V. Send forth Thy Spirit and they shall be created.

R. And Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.

Let us pray. O God, Who didst instruct the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit, grant us in the same Spirit to be truly wise, and ever to rejoice in His consolation. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**“WHEN I FOUND YOUR WORDS, I DEVoured THEM; THEY BECAME MY JOY AND THE HAPPINESS OF MY HEART.” (JER. 15: 16)**

To get up and follow someone, to leave one’s life behind, as one knows and enjoys it, to turn our future over to another is a supreme act of faith, or even “foolishness to Gentiles” (1 Cor. 1: 23). But we are assured that “the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom.” (1 Cor. 1: 25) There are people, not just canonized saints, who have read the Gospels and changed their lives. It can be done; witness Bobby Jindal: Bobby Jindal, Governor of Louisiana, grew up a devout Hindu. He completely reversed his life, leaving his religion, his culture and straining his family relationship after he began to read the Gospels:

“I began reading the Bible to disprove the Christian faith I was learning both to admire and despise. I cannot begin to describe my feelings when I first read the New Testament texts. I saw myself in many of the parables and felt as if the Bible had been written especially for me.” (*America Magazine*, 7/31/93)

In the spirit of *Nostra Aetate* (#1) we can reference Bobby Jindal’s former religion of Hinduism. A *Guru* is a spiritual teacher who has attained the spirituality he teaches. ‘He practices what he preaches.’ Hinduism teaches that we need a *Guru* to guide us on the path of perfection and union with God. In *Guru: The Spiritual Teacher* Dr. C. S. Shah writes:

“If we are fortunate enough to find such a Teacher, then a lofty kind of love can begin to bosom in our heart. Everything that happens between the Guru and the disciple happens through love and compassion. It is said in Indian religious lore, ‘If the disciple is ready, the Guru will appear; he will come to us.’ Intense yearning and effort to realize God is sure to help the aspirant find his or her Guru. Let us prepare ourselves to receive such a noble soul.”

Of course, we have found our *Divine Guru*, Jesus Christ. When you follow Jesus Christ, you know you are following God. He has appeared; are we ready?

## LECTIO DIVINA

The important thing about reading the Bible is, simply, *to read it*. Begin by reading a small portion each day and after thirty days it will have become a habit. Then you will not ask, “Will I read it today but when?” Read something, a page, a paragraph, a sentence. You will honestly be surprised over time how much you will have read.

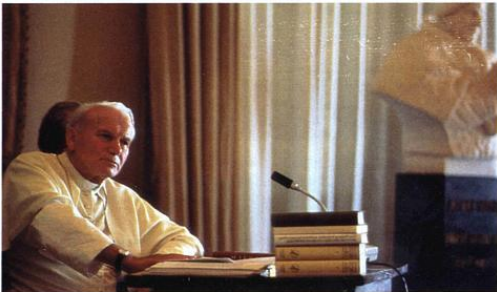
One of the ancient methods of reading the Bible is *Lectio Divina*. This practice goes back many centuries in the Church. It was cited in Unit 3: *Prayer, Initiate Formation, “Accepting the Embrace of God: The Ancient Art of Lectio Divina”* by Fr. Luke Dysinger OSB (<http://www.valyermo.com/ld-art.html>) The format is composed of four parts:

1. Lectio – Reading
2. Meditatio – Meditation
3. Oratio – Prayer
4. Contemplatio – Contemplation



*Lectio Divina* has been recommended by our last two Popes. Pope John Paul II counsels:

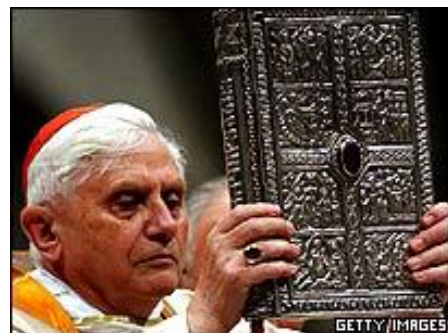
“It is especially necessary that the listening to the Word becomes an essential meeting, following the ancient and present-day tradition of *Lectio Divina*, enabling us to discover in the biblical text the living word that challenges us, directs us, that gives shape to our existence” (*Novo Millennio* # 39).



Source: Weltbild, 24, 18 November 1988, p. 27.

On Sept. 16, 2005 Pope Benedict XVI spoke the following words to 400 participants in the international congress on “*Sacred Scripture in the Life of the Church*” at Castel Gandolfo:

“In this context, I would like in particular to recall and recommend the ancient tradition of ‘*Lectio divina*’:



‘the diligent reading of Sacred Scripture accompanied by prayer brings about that intimate dialogue in which the person reading hears God who is speaking, and in praying, responds to him with trusting openness of heart’ ( *Dei Verbum*, #25). If it is effectively promoted, this practice will bring to the Church -- I am convinced of it -- a new spiritual springtime.”

## TO KNOW TRULY

You can see that there is much more to reading the Bible than simply reading it as one would a novel. We are trying to do more than reading words on a page as we



are trying to imprint the *Word* on our hearts. Action must be the end result and our actions must be transformed from what they have been. Truly to know the Gospel of Matthew, our task with this unit, will transform us and bring us into closer union with Jesus Christ.

“For one *knows truly* when one *understands* what one knows, when one *feels* what one has understood, and when one has *put into practice* what one has understood and felt.” (*Meditations on the Tarot*, p.343 [The two volume edition of this book appears on Pope John Paul II’s desk in the picture above, a gift of Cardinal Hans Urs von Balthasar])

As an example of this: “*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*” (Matt. 5: 3) After giving this verse much study and thinking, how do you *understand* it? Now *feel* what you understand. This joins the heart to the mind and you move to a higher integrated plane with this verse. Now after closing the book how will you put this into *practice*? Each of us will answer differently but our being “poor in spirit” will affect our lives as our actions *must* be different. We will be different; we will be transformed and closer to Jesus, the author of these words. We will be challenged out of our comfortable existence into what? We do not know but God knows and wants us to be there – with Him.

## OUTLINE

Although the purpose of Unit 5 is not 'Scripture Study', but rather an affective treatment resulting in transformation, a few words on the outline of St. Matthew's Gospel are in order for greater understanding. The following is adapted from *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary, The Gospel According to Matthew*, by Benedict T. Viviano OP, p. 633:

- 1-4 a Narrative: Birth and Beginnings
- 5-7 b Sermon: Blessings, Entering the Kingdom
- 8-9 c Narrative: Authority and Invitation
- 10 d Sermon: Mission Discourse
- 11-12 e Narrative: Rejection by this Generation
- 13 f Sermon: Parables of the Kingdom
- 14-17 e<sup>1</sup> Narrative: Acknowledgement by Disciples
- 18 d<sup>1</sup> Sermon: Community Discourse
- 19-22 c<sup>1</sup> Narrative: Authority and Invitation
- 23-25 b<sup>1</sup> Sermon: Woes, Coming of the Kingdom
- 26-28 a<sup>1</sup> Narrative: Death and Rebirth

This outline is provided to the author by C. H. Lohr (*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, 23, 1961, p. 427). "It is based on the symmetry of ancient compositions and employs the concepts of *inclusion* or bracketing, chiasmus or criss-crossing of literary elements, and ring composition technique." (*NJBC*, p. 632) It illustrates the centrality of the theme of the 'Kingdom' in Jesus' message. His first public words were: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matt. 4: 17)

## PARABLES

The use of parables by Jesus was an essential means He employed to get His message across to His audience. Sometimes they were employed so that only the few would understand and, then, only with explanation.

“Jesus used realistic images from daily life that caught his hearers’ attention by their vividness and narrative color. Yet his parables have a surprising twist; the realism is shattered and the hearers know that something more is at stake than a homey illustration to drive home a point. The parables raise questions, unsettle the complacent, and challenge the hearers to reflection and inquiry.” (NJBC, p. 1366)



The parable is contained within the text and the meaning can be lost as we continue to read. A good technique to counteract this is to read a number of parables together on a particular theme. Thus the message is reinforced. Since Jesus came to preach the ‘Kingdom’, let us examine some parables on this topic together. Draw your own conclusions after meditating upon some of these parables from Matthew’s Gospel regarding the ‘Kingdom’:

- The Sower 13: 1-9; 36-43
- The Weeds among the Wheat 13: 24-30
- The Mustard Seed 13: 31-32
- The Yeast 13:33
- The Buried Treasure 13: 44
- The Fine Pearl 13: 45-46
- The Thrown Net 13: 47-48
- The Unforgiving Servant 18: 23-35
- The Little Children 19: 13-15
- The Laborers in the Vineyard 20: 1-16
- The Two Sons 21: 28-30
- The Wedding Banquet 22: 2-14
- The Ten Bridesmaids 25: 1-13
- The Talents 25: 14-30
- The Judgement of the Nations 25: 31-46



**“WHERE DID THIS MAN GET ALL THIS?’ AND THEY TOOK OFFENSE AT HIM.”  
(MATT. 13: 56-57)**

When we read the Gospel, we must not make the mistake many churches do: proclaiming only half the Gospel – the attractive half. We know and love the fact that Jesus rose from the dead; that He offered peace, joy and the promise of heaven to those who believe. But there is another side to the Gospel – one we often gloss over. These are the ‘Hard Sayings’ of Jesus which we must understand and take to heart. Sometimes we ‘spin’ these sayings away. These are difficult



but each of us must incorporate them meaningfully into our lives.

We are all familiar with the incident in John’s Gospel when Jesus said: “...unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you.” (Jo. 6: 53) “Then many of his disciples who were listening said, ‘This saying is hard; who can accept it?’” (Jo. 6:60) “As a result of this, many (of) his disciples returned to their former way of life and no longer accompanied him.” (Jo. 6: 66) Remember, these are His disciples John is writing about. We say, “But we do believe, so you are not writing about us.” True on this incident but what about other ‘hard sayings’? Do we no longer accompany Him?

St. Augustine commented on this passage from John in *Tractate 27, New Advent*:

“2. Many therefore, not of His enemies, but of His disciples, when they had heard this, said, ‘This is a hard saying; who can hear it?’ If His disciples accounted this saying hard, what must His enemies have thought? And yet so it behooved that to be said which should not be understood by all. The secret of God ought to make men eagerly attentive, not hostile. But these men quickly departed from Him, while the Lord said such things: they did not believe Him to be saying something great, and covering some grace by these words; they understood just according to their wishes, and in the manner of men,

that Jesus was able, or was determined upon this, namely, to distribute the flesh with which the Word was clothed, piecemeal, as it were, to those that believe in Him. *'This,' say they, 'is a hard saying; who can hear it?'*"

## 'HARD SAYINGS'

Let us examine a few of these 'Hard Sayings' of Jesus:

- But I say to you whoever is angry with his brother will be liable to judgement. (5:22)
- Therefore, if you bring your gift to the altar, and there recall that *your brother has anything against you*, (italics mine) leave your gift at the altar, go first and be reconciled with your brother, and then offer your gift. (5:23-24)
- Everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. (5: 28)
- If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. (5: 29)
- When someone strikes you on (your) right cheek, turn the other to him as well. (5:39)
- So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect. (5: 48)
- Follow me and let the dead bury their dead. (8:22)
- Do not think that I have come to bring peace upon the earth. I have come to bring not peace but the sword. (10: 34)
- Jesus answered, " I say to you seven times seventy-seven times." (18; 22) [re: forgiving brother]
- Then in anger his master handed him over to the torturers until he should pay back the whole debt. So will my heavenly Father do to you, unless each of you forgives his brother from his heart. (18: 34-35)





- Jesus said to him, “If you wish to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to (the) poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.” (19:21)
- Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Amen, I say to you, it will be hard for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven. Amen, I say to you it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.” (19: 23-24)
- Then Jesus said to him, “Put your sword back into its sheath, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword.” (26: 52)
- And about three o’clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani? Which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (27: 46)

As you can see there are many ‘Hard Sayings’ of Jesus for us to wrap our minds around. How do we interpret them in our lives? We, as His disciples must accept this half of the Gospel along with the half we like. Of course the ‘Beatitudes’ in the fifth chapter are also ‘Hard Sayings’ that are at the heart of our Christian Faith. This is why we devoted Unit 1 of Candidacy II to them. If we can integrate the attractive with the difficult, we will have the complete Christian message. “I am the way and the truth and the life.” (Jo. 14: 6) The early Christians were known as belonging “to the way”. (cf. Acts 9: 2)

## **CONCLUSION**

As Dominicans we should have a daily acquaintance with the Scriptures. They should be read, meditated upon and prayed over until “I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me.” (Gal. 2: 20) We as Lay Dominicans are on this path with our Rule:

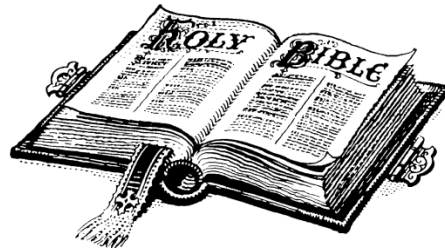
10. To advance in their proper vocation, which inseparably joins the apostolic and the contemplative, Lay Dominicans draw their strength from these principle sources:

a. listening to the Word of God and reading Sacred Scripture, especially the New Testament

e. conversion of heart, according to the spirit and practice of evangelical asceticism

As mentioned our task for this unit is to **read and love the Gospel of St. Matthew**, so we can say with Jeremiah:

*“When I found your words, I devoured them; they became my joy and the happiness of my heart.” (15: 16)*



Christ Lives in Me

# CENTRAL PROVINCE



**ONGOING FORMATION  
PREACHING**

## “I AM EAGER TO PREACH THE GOSPEL.” (Rom. 1: 15)



We, whether ordained, consecrated or lay, are all members of the Order of Preachers. Through our answering the Holy Spirit and joining the Dominicans we are *Preachers*. “...our Order was founded, from the beginning, especially for preaching and the salvation of souls.” (*The Primitive Constitutions of the Order of Friars Preachers, Prologue*)

Our Lay Dominican Rule speaks on ‘preaching’:

11. The purpose of Dominican formation is to mold true adults in the Faith, capable of accepting, celebrating and proclaiming the Word of God.

12. Every Dominican must be prepared to preach the Word of God.



### ***APOSTOLICAM ACTUOSITATEM***

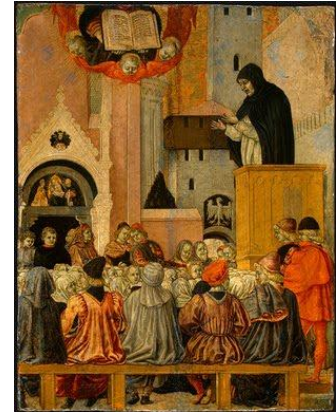
The *Guidelines* refer us to *Apostolicam Actuositatem, Decree on the Apostolate of Lay People*, for further elaboration which answers the question: how shall I do my preaching? Of course, the first manner is to preach by example. Is this enough? It could be for a few but not for most of us, especially, as Lay



Dominicans. We witness Gospel values to others by the way we practice our Faith. Some of us witness to our family, relatives, friends and even strangers; some, in nursing homes or hospitals; some, in CCD classes; etc.

“There are innumerable opportunities open to the laity for the exercise of their apostolate of evangelization and sanctification. The very testimony of their Christian life and good works done in a supernatural spirit have the power to draw men to

belief and to God; for the Lord says, "Even so let your light shine before men in order that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16).



“However, an apostolate of this kind does not consist only in the witness of one's way of life; a true apostle looks for opportunities to announce Christ by words addressed either to non-believers with a view to leading them to faith, or to the faithful with a view to instructing, strengthening, and encouraging them to a more fervent life. ‘For the charity of Christ impels us’ (2 Cor. 5:14). The words of the Apostle should echo in all hearts, ‘Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel (1 Cor. 9:16).’ (#6)

## FORMATION CONFERENCE

In November 1-4, 2007 a Central Province meeting was held at St. John Retreat Center, Plymouth, Mi., for Moderators, Formation Directors and Spiritual Assistants. The theme was: *Lay Dominican Life in Community and Call to Preach*. A major part of the meeting promoted the idea of the use of preaching in our Chapter meetings. Since we are members of the Order of Preachers, it was advanced that we should devote a small portion of each meeting to preaching or reflecting on an appropriate Scripture passage, e.g. the Sunday



readings. Fr. James Motl OP, our Promoter at the time, and Dr. Normand Laurendeau OP conducted the training sessions.



It must be said that we are not trying to be imitation-Friars but to reflect on what the Scripture means to us and to share this reflection. This fulfills what is asked in *A Handbook for Lay Dominican Leadership, Community Life*, p. 110:

“In some communities, a ‘Faith Sharing’ session has been added...”

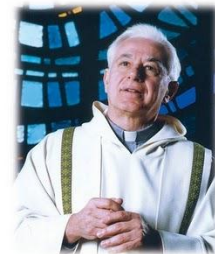


This is exactly what preaching, or reflecting if you prefer, accomplishes. You simply reflect on the passage and tell what it means to you. Scripture is so rich and so full of meaning that when you peel off your meaning, which may not be the same as mine, in fact, it probably is not, I cannot help but be enriched.

## SUGGESTIONS

Here are a few thoughts to make the process go smoothly. Read, study and meditate on the Scripture passage. The actual preaching should take about five minutes and should not cover too much. Pick out the *main point* to you; this is what you will develop. With this in mind, in order to facilitate the process, the following pages are included:

- Some thoughts garnered from two books by Bishop Kenneth Untener on Preaching. These could improve most of the preaching you hear. It is so important to discern a core thought, a *pearl*. Without this you will wander over many disparate thoughts and confuse and bore your listeners. Also, with it your job will be easier.
- Next we provide a template for preaching. This makes the process so much easier. It's even *Aristotelian*, in that it has a *beginning*, a *middle* and an *ending*.
- Finally, we have a homily preached by Bishop Untener on Trinity Sunday. The topic of the Trinity has bogged down many a preacher. But by following his own advice he does an excellent job.



# PREACHING

(SOME THOUGHTS GARNERED FROM BISHOP KENNETH E. UNTENER)

## ***THE PRACTICAL PROPHET (2007):***

### **The threefold task of a Homilist:**

1. To discern what the Lord is doing/speaking through this event;
2. To help illuminate this for the Assembly;
3. To do all this on behalf of the Church.

### **Method:**

1. Study the Scripture text;
2. Discern a core thought (a pearl);
3. Do some writing;
4. Do some editing;
5. Get control of your finished product



## ***SUNDAY LITURGY CAN BE BETTER (1980):***

- 1) Stick with one thought.
- 2) Preach on the Scriptures we just heard.
- 3) Don't take forever to end it by endless repetition.
- 4) Use everyday language.
- 5) Keep it short.
- 6) Use examples.
- 7) Make it personal.
- 8) Don't talk down to people.

**MAIN THOUGHT (ONE SENTENCE)**

**INTRODUCTION:**

**BODY:**

**1.**

**2.**

**3.**

**CONCLUSION:**



# Bishop Untener's Homily

## (How Do You Preach on the Trinity?)

Since the 14th century the Church has celebrated, once a year, Trinity Sunday, to remind us of this great truth of our faith.

Sometimes it can seem as complicated as one of Einstein's equations, and even then, you can't get the equation to balance.

**There's the story of the young priest**, fresh from his theological studies, who, on Trinity Sunday tried to explain all the doctrinal intricacies, and he went on and on, getting more and more tangled in the complex distinctions of theologians. After the homily an elderly woman leaned over and said to the person next to her: "You know, I've always believed in the Trinity . . . until now..."

**Instead of trying to reason our way through the Trinity, we do much better to try to appreciate how the Trinity affects us, and how it helps us relate more closely to God.**

I'm going to point out two ways in which this great truth - the Trinity - affects us and helps us.

### (Observation #1 on the Trinity)

**First, the Trinity helps us realize how personal God is, and how loving God is.** God is not a blind force, a blank, staring, monotonous power out there somewhere. Nor is God some solitary, lonely, isolated, stern, rigid, austere, being... Nor is God like a person who is above anyone else - and knows it - a person without equal, thinking only of himself, haughty, arrogant, aloof, pompous. God is not an isolated person. God is *three* persons, all three of them equal. Which means that God is, at the core, something like a family, which involves mutual love, relationships, and interaction.

Now this gives us a great insight into God. We can't comprehend how there can be one God who is three persons. But we can understand something about what God is like because of this.

Because God is a living, loving, relational God, this God goes outward, beyond the divine sphere. God, if I can put it this way, spilled over into creation, and created human beings in God's own image. God didn't do this for sport. God did this out of love, so that God could love us and we could love God, and God could enjoy this relationship. At the Last Supper table, Jesus said to his disciples: "Those who love me will keep my word, and my Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. In today's Gospel we heard Jesus say: "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life."

So, the doctrine of the Trinity teaches us what kind of God we've got - a loving, living, personal, relational God, who is like a family, and whose love spills over to include us as part of the family.

### (Observation #2 on the Trinity)

## INTRODUCTION:

Here he uses a story to capture attention at the beginning. You could also use a question, a paradox or a quotation. Grab them early. You only have one chance to make a first impression.

## MAIN IDEA:

Nicely stated in one sentence.

## BODY:

1. God is personal.

That's one way in which this great truth - the Trinity - affects us and helps us relate to God. The second way is this. ***I wonder if you and I don't sell short God's presence to us.*** In trying to talk about this living, loving, relational God, we speak of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Well... God the Father sent the Son, and then when the Son died, rose and ascended to heaven, the Son sent the Holy Spirit upon us. I wonder if we don't, unconsciously think of the Spirit as sort of the third string God. God the Father is way up there, and Jesus has gone to sit at the right hand of God... and so we get one of God's high-ranking ambassadors: the Spirit. Now, we know enough to get it right on a religion test that the Spirit is God. But I wonder if we don't sell short the presence of the Spirit within us.

The truth is, our doctrine of the Trinity teaches us that you can't have one Person of the Trinity without the other two Persons being present as well. You can't have one without the other two.

At the Last Supper table, Phillip said to Jesus, "Lord, let us see the Father and then we shall be satisfied." Jesus said, "To have seen me is to have seen the Father ... I am in the Father and the Father is in me." Then Jesus told them that he was going away, and they would see him no more, but he would send the Spirit, and would be with them through the Spirit. So, if you have Jesus you have the Father, and if you have the Spirit, you have Jesus.

I think we need to be more aware that the whole, great God, is with us through Jesus, and through the Spirit. At Communion, for example, I don't simply receive Jesus. I receive the whole, great God. When I am going through a regular day, and realize that the Spirit is within me, it is the whole, great God who is within me wherever I am.

In just a few moments ***I will baptize Caleb Timothy McCoy.*** And I shall baptize him "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." When we make the Sign of the Cross upon ourselves (which, perhaps we should do now and then during a given day - it's a way of pronouncing a blessing upon ourselves), we bless ourselves "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." When we pray the fundamental prayers of the Church, we pray to God the Father, "through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives with you in the unity of the Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen"

We need to think in those grand terms as we go through any given day. It's not 'just' the Spirit who is with me. You can't have one without the other. It is the 'whole, great God' who is with me.

On this Trinity Sunday, we celebrate this wonderful truth. It is the whole, great God who is with me, within me, every second of every day. When I go to sleep, and when I wake up. It's the 'whole God.' Not a delegate. Not a 'third string' God. It's all of God, the fullness of God, the whole God.

Trust me. To think that way, makes a great, great difference. Try thinking that way now and then as you go through the rest of this day. ***Try thinking that way the rest of your life.*** And trust me. It will make a great, great difference.

**PEACE BE WITH YOU**

**2.** Do we sell God short?

**3.** An example is given.

### **CONCLUSION:**

Wrap it up succinctly.

Give them something to take home and think about during the day and week. Challenge them.