

News from Fanjeaux

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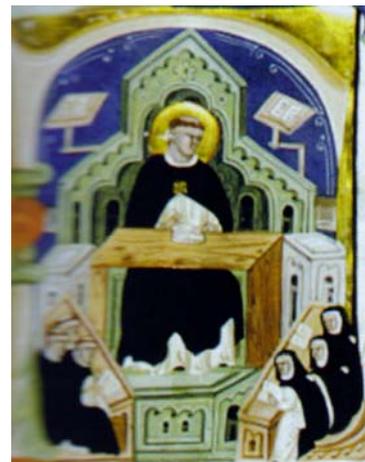
N° 14

EASTERTIDE

2014

WAS DOMINICAN STUDY ALWAYS INCLUSIVE?

When people ask me in the course of lectures or visits to Dominican places “Did the early sisters of the Order study like the friars?” I usually reply “Not in the sense that we understand study today, and certainly not at universities—simply because that was not possible for any woman, lay or religious, before the late 19th century.” Notwithstanding, on the whole Dominican nuns were better educated than their lay counterparts in the early centuries of the Order. For the purposes of celebrating the Divine Office, many would have learnt to read and write, at a time when most of the population was illiterate; some nuns would have learnt Latin as well. Many developed artistic skills for illuminating manuscripts. In fact it has been said that in the 14th century, a Dominican monastery was the best place for a woman to acquire an education. And so it was interesting to discover recently, in a book * newly acquired by the S.H.O.P. library, these two miniatures in a 14th century manuscript illuminated by Dominican nuns in Bologna and preserved in the Museo Civico Medievale of that city.



These two miniatures show St Thomas Aquinas teaching, and who are his students? A mixed assembly of Dominican friars and nuns! They are not sharing the same benches but both are at the foot of the master, and the nuns seem to be taking notes just as much as the friars. This may of course not be the representation of an actual scene that took place—but then again it might be! And at very least, it reveals on the part of the nun artist, a desire for study and teaching from Dominican masters. We clearly still have much to learn from the study of ancient MS.

* *Psallite sapienter, codici musicali delle Domenicane bolognesi* by Stefania RONCROFFI, Olschki Editore, Florence, 2009. The manuscript referred to is n° 545 in the Museum catalogue.

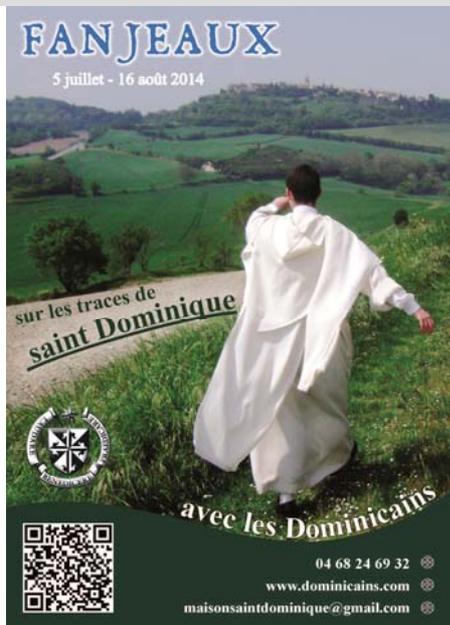
Sr Barbara Beaumont o.p.

STUDY THE HISTORY OF DOMINICAN WOMEN : FOLLOW S.H.O.P.

DISTANCE LEARNING COURSES ON DOMUNI

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DOMINICAN FRIARS PLAN A PROGRAMME OF VISITS AND LITURGY THIS SUMMER



It is indeed good news for visitors to Fanjeaux this summer that the Dominicans of the Province of Toulouse are planning to be present in the House of St Dominic for six weeks from 6th July to the 16th August. Their programme includes, besides visits of the house itself, a tour of all the Dominican holy places in Fanjeaux on offer three times daily. The friars will celebrate mass daily at 11.30 am and vespers and adoration every evening at 6 pm. The liturgies will take place in the former convent of the Dominican friars in Fanjeaux. Sunday mass and the feast of St Dominic will be celebrated at Prouilhe.

More details and a preparatory video clip can be viewed on the website of the Dominican province of Toulouse at <http://dominicains.com>

A NEW SISTER HELPER AT S.H.O.P. HEADQUARTERS

It was a joy to welcome recently Sr Myriam Ana o.p. from the Monastery of Queen of Peace, Squamish, near Vancouver, Canada to join the S.H.O.P. team in Fanjeaux for about a year. We hope she will enjoy her time spent in St Dominic's village, and it will also—with her help—be an opportunity to advance with the cataloguing of our library, which has acquired many, many more books since the catalogue was last updated.



Sr Myriam Ana is on the left of the photo which was taken during the Easter Vigil at her monastery in Canada

RECENT VISITORS TO FANJEAUX



Shortly before Easter a group of twenty-two pilgrims from Australasia visited Fanjeaux; these were women involved in one way or another with Dominican educational establishments, either as religious or laywomen. It is wonderful that the desire to encounter the authentic Dominican charism inspires people to travel to the other side of the world. This particular journey began in Spain with Caleruega and after Toulouse, Fanjeaux and Prouilhe continued to Vence and then on to Italy—three weeks in all.

< *Sisters from the Solomon Islands enjoy the spring sunshine in the garden of the House of St Dominic.*

Then on 1st May it was the turn of a group of twenty five sisters of the French congregation “Dominican Missionaries of the Countryside” founded in 1907 to work in dechristianized rural areas. They were rediscovering their own history too, because they previously had their novitiate house at nearby Bram, and the present owners of the property allowed them to make a “nostalgia trip”.



On the afternoon of the same day, Brothers of the Congregation of the Lamb accompanied Mgr Xavier Goma, Bishop of Solsona, Catalonia, who had brought a bus load of the faithful of his diocese to visit Fanjeaux and the mother house of the Congregation at Saint-Pierre.

All of these groups requested “history input” from S.H.O.P.—which helps make us feel useful!

S.H.O.P. LIBRARY GETS A NEW LOOK



It is now seven years since the Sister Historians’ project was launched in Fanjeaux on a very tight budget. And so the books were housed on the very cheapest, flimsiest of bookcases. Now with a greatly increased stock, and thanks to the generosity of a benefactress, it has been possible to refurbish the library with new bookcases—still modest ones from IKEA—but offering better protection for the book stock.

The Portuguese “azulejo”^{*} picture in the background was commissioned in Fatima. The artist appropriately enough chose to depict “St Dominic of Fanjeaux” with a detail of the house of St Dominic to the left and a view of the Pyrenees to the right.

(* Glazed terra cotta tiles)



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**Become a member of
the S.H.O.P.
Association!**

It is easy! Send us a note of your name and address (by e-mail or by post) and send 20€ (by post - cash or cheque - or by bank transfer). You will then receive our newsletter regularly and be informed of publications and events. You can also make use of the facilities—accommodation and library — at Fanjeaux.

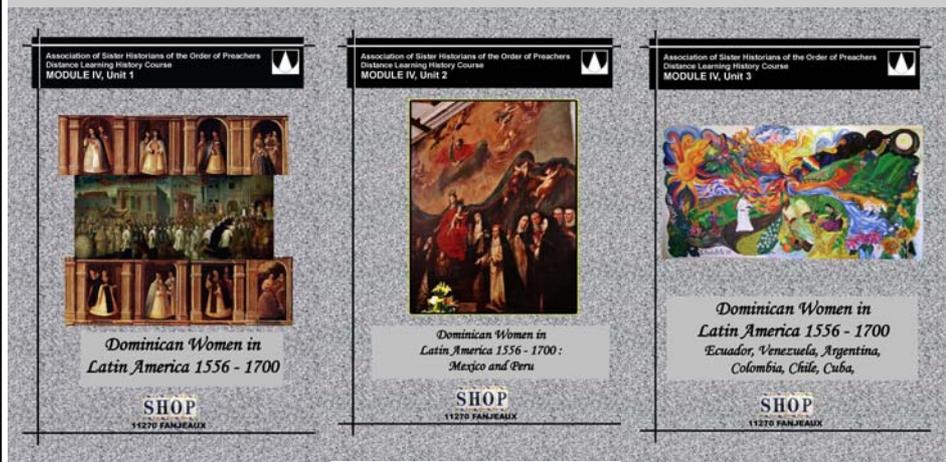
All donations are most gratefully received — they go towards acquiring new books for the library devoted to the history of Dominican women.

**For donations and subscriptions :
Sœurs Historiennes Ordre des Prêcheurs
La Banque Postale, Montpellier— please
contact us for details.**

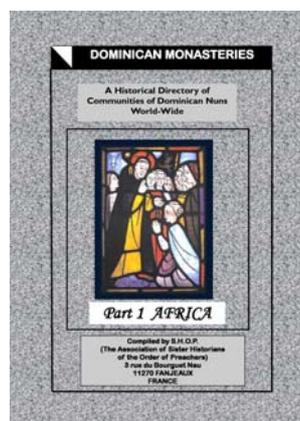
The Association of Sister Historians of the Order of Preachers is defined in its statutes as: “a resource for documentation, communication and formation at the service of Dominican women, religious and lay, through the study of their histories.” *Statutes*

Dominican Women in Latin America 1556 - 1700

Module IV of the S.H.O.P. distance learning course on Dominican history is now complete (3 course units). You can still register for it : 35 € for private study, 55 € with written assignments read by a tutor. (Payment online by PAYPAL is now possible.)



HISTORICAL DIRECTORY OF DOMINICAN MONASTERIES - first 3 parts available on line



The first three parts of a long-term ongoing S.H.O.P. project have recently been posted on our website <http://shop.op.org> This directory aims to list all currently existing Dominican monasteries. They are arranged by continent, and alphabetically within the continents. Those monasteries that existed in previous times but for one reason or another ceased to exist —through revolution, war or lack of vocations—are not included in the body of the directory. However a list of suppressed monasteries is given for each geographical area where possible. Parts 1-3 now consultable on line cover Africa, Asia and North America. Central and South America should follow shortly.

**We're on the web!
<http://shop.op.org>**