



CHALLENGE

News from the Dominican Laity, Province of St Albert the Great

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Dominicans Meet for Common Understanding on Immigration

This past August, for the first time, Dominicans from Latin America and the United States, including six Lay Dominicans, gathered to explore immigration issues. One of several goals for the seminar held in Juarez, Mexico, was to strengthen common understanding and build solidarity among Dominicans who are working on behalf of immigrants.

Fr Chuck Dahm from St Albert's, who is North American Co-Promoter of Justice and Peace, said, "The conference was enormously successful in several ways: It provided US Dominicans with the inspiring opportunity of getting to know personally our Dominican Latin American sisters and brothers working with the immigrant poor. It heightened the urgency for all of us to work for reform of the unjust immigration system in the United States. Finally, it emphasized our need to understand the global

economy and its devastating impoverishment of millions of families." After this conference, they issued this statement:

The Dominican Family is called to renew its commitment to accompany all people and communities forced to migrate within or outside their national territory. We commit ourselves: To relate our pastoral work to civil society in solidarity with migrants in their departure, transit, and settlement; to promote the development of migratory policies that respect the human rights of migrants; to monitor human rights violations of migrants and displaced peoples; to strengthen the role of the Dominican Family in its attention to and accompaniment with migrants; to incorporate the knowledge of migration in the area of religious formation as well as in public education; and to work jointly through networks to defend the human rights of migrants.

Sources: Domlife.org and Domcentral.org

Dominican Promoters Probe the Meaning of Preaching

Jill O'Brien, OP

Co-Promoter of Preaching

On Wednesday, Sept. 24, the national meeting of Dominican Preaching Promoters convened in Louisville, Ky. As part of the proceedings, religious and lay Promoters from all regions of the country shared their "Best Practices," i.e., the preaching projects, approaches, and outreaches that their congregations, provinces, or branches developed in order to share the Word with others or to probe the meaning of preaching. They follow.

St Peter's Church in Memphis, Tenn., now records Sunday homilies and places them on their website [www.stpeterschurch.org]. The parish also burns discs and makes complete copies of the 11:00 AM Sunday Mass [music, Mass prayers, homily, etc.] for homebound parishioners. This is a preaching ministry of Tom Condon, a Southern Province friar, and his parish priests.

The Columbus Dominicans sponsored a 10-part preaching series that paired issues which can impact decision-making in the upcoming national election with the Beatitudes. Thus, for example, "Blessed are the merciful" was paired with the death penalty. Other issues included immigration, human trafficking, poverty, and life. Through ritual, music, visuals, symbols, and reflections participants meditated on the meaning of the Beatitudes and their applications to contemporary concerns. This was a popular and much-appreciated series.

The Preaching Promoters in the Western Region sponsored a three-day Preaching Workshop, *How Do You Preach Parables?*, built around Barbara Reid's highly accessible book, *Parables for Preachers: The Gospel of Luke, Cycle C*. Participants read the first two chapters of the book on the first night, then each person selected a particular parable for special study and as the focus of a mini-preaching on the third day. During the second day additional preaching resources were explored and time for prayer, study, and composition occurred. This three-day

mini-retreat and preaching workshop proved highly fruitful and enjoyable for attendees, who acquired both preaching skills and benefits from the preaching of others.

The Springfield Dominicans are exploring the nature of preaching through weekly questions posted on their listserv. Each Monday a "Coffee Talk" posting appears designed to elicit conversation by community members. For example, a posting might be: "How do I understand hospitality as preaching? If I do, why? If I don't, why not?"

The Dominican Family in the Western Region collaborated in 2008 to create a Lenten Reflection Book. The book offered reflections on the daily Gospel readings and was formatted/printed in hardcopies, as well as a PDF file for electronic transmission. This was so popular that a repeat collaboration is anticipated for 2009.

Sr Cathy Hilkert, OP, who serves on the International Preaching Commission, asked Promoters to ponder "whether everything that Dominicans do is to be named 'preaching' (in the broad sense) or whether Dominicans are called to focus on ministries that involve some aspect of explicit proclamation of the Word (not necessarily pulpit preaching)."

From the President

by Ruth Kummer, OP

While searching for a topic for fall, St Albert the Great came to mind. He is the patron saint of our Lay Dominican Province and also patron of the natural sciences.



He was born between 1193 and 1206 at the castle of Lauingen near Ulm (now Germany). Those who knew him said that silence and solitude were his hallmarks, but he was also sociable. A fondness for singing implies a joyous friar. Though he was large in stature, his skill in dissecting tiny insects suggests that his fingers were nimble and slender so as to work on such delicate specimens. His physical stamina was evident, as he often walked the countryside to get to his destinations. From childhood, his curiosity and love of the outdoors gave Albert the opportunity to study his surroundings and conclude that even in nature there were differences from region to region.

The friars give us a sense of his humorous side, as shown by Albert's comment regarding Aristotle's commentators: "They all agree that Aristotle spoke the truth; but they cannot agree as to what he actually said, and they all have different explanations of what they think he said."

A rival of Albert was his contemporary, Francis Bacon. While Albert did his work observing, describing, and classifying, Bacon's

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The Mary Nona McGreal Center for Dominican Historical Studies Invites the Dominican Family to an Open House!

Saturday, Oct. 11, 2008

2:00pm – 4:00pm

Albertus Magnus Hall (Room 103)

Dominican University

7900 W. Division St

River Forest, IL 60305

RSVP to Mary McNulty, OP - Call 708-524-1749 or email mmcnulty@dom.edu

El Salvador Visit Reveals a People of Hope

Teresa Cecil is a resident parishioner of St Thomas Aquinas, the Catholic Center at Purdue in West Lafayette, Ind. She is a mother of two boys and a speech-language pathologist in private practice working in early intervention with children birth to age three.

by Teresa Cecil, OP
St Mary Magdalene Pro-Chapter

While many students were leaving school to find summer jobs, a small group of Purdue University students and resident parishioners of St Thomas Aquinas left for El Salvador for a week. We were accompanied by Fr Jim Barnett, OP, who did missionary work there from 1983-1989.

When we arrived in San Salvador, we were met by Gene and Guadalupe Palumbo and we settled in at the Jesuit-run Loyola Guest House, about a mile away from the Universidad de Centro Americana.

We began our first day by learning the history of the civil war that had torn the country apart from 1979-1991, and the violence that still affects so many of its citizens, both on the side of the government and of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN)—the side against the government and for agrarian reform. We visited the church where Archbishop Oscar Romero was assassinated and the cathedral where he was buried. We saw the Dominican church, El Rosario, where some protestors had sought sanctuary after the army had opened fire on a group of civilians who had gathered in the Plaza de Libertad.

We went to a town called Suchitoto where we listened to a farmer and catechist talk about how the war has affected his family. He lost two daughters and three sons. One of his sons committed suicide over what he had witnessed, in spite of his family getting him psychological help. He picked up an M-16 and shot himself.

On another day, we talked with Rick Jones from Catholic Relief Services who told us about the immigration problem. Today it costs \$3,000 to \$5,000 to get to the United States. The people use “coyotes,” who help them make the journey. Once they get here, often the young men stay unemployed and uneducated, and almost inevitably join gangs. They get caught and are deported. On their return, they use the street smarts of L-A to recruit the unemployed and uneducated boys of El Salvador.

Fr Luis Salazar, responsible for 35,000 people in his parish, spoke to us about the horrible problem of gangs and drugs. He had just been at a

funeral the day before for a boy killed by a gang member. He was hacked by a machete, and his mother could only identify him by one body part which had a tattoo on it.

We visited a school, Fe y Alegria (Faith and Happiness) in Maria, Madre de los Pobres (Mary, Mother of the Poor) Parish. Sr Marcos told us stories about some of the children who attended the school. Some of them had been “gifted,” meaning that if a family couldn’t afford to raise a child, they gave that child away as a “gift” to a relative or neighbor to help with housekeeping. Sometimes those children are abused.

When parents leave for the United States without their children, they may or may not send money back. If grandparents raise them, they must struggle to work in order to feed another mouth. And parents who leave for the United States, may or may not return to El Salvador.

And then we heard Guadalupe’s story of when she was a child during the civil war. The FMLN believed that if you were not for them, you were against them. So when they asked members of the community to join them, her father, a respected man, did not. He had two families to take care of. After several killings of family members, her father decided they had to leave town. Guadalupe, the oldest of her siblings, was 10 and was watching over the younger children, and her mother was eight months pregnant; they had to leave with only the clothes on their backs. They often slept outside and were constantly on the run.

When the war was over, Guadalupe went to work so that her sisters could get an education. The baby lived, and is now a doctor. Another one of her sisters became a lawyer, and Guadalupe is now going to school herself.

Theologian Sr Peggy O’Neil of the Sisters of Charity also spoke to us on one of the days. One of her most thought-provoking questions was, “Who do you belong to, and to whom do you cast your lot?” As I think of this now, I believe that we need to cast our lot with the poor. We need to belong to the God of love, the Source of all love and healing.

The people of El Salvador are a wounded people in need of healing, but they are a people of hope. They live and work right along side those who killed their loved ones. If they can forgive and live among their enemies, then I can forgive the wrongs that have been done to me. We all need to strive to forgive the hurts that we feel are caused by others. It is part of our duty as Catholic Christians.

Trip Reveals India-Chicago Relationship and Visible Faith

by Marlene Laurendeau, OP, and
Norm Laurendeau, OP

We traveled to India this summer on the trip of a lifetime. India was the only country in Asia that we both had ever wanted to see, and the opportunity finally arrived in the form of an invitation from friends in Bangalore. Besides the beauty of the people and their customs, there was an interesting Chicago-India connection we encountered there, much to our surprise.

After visiting many Hindu shrines and other monuments in Southern India, at the end of our stay we spent a few days on a houseboat traveling the levee and farm areas of Kerala on the Western coast. We entered the long, roomy covered houseboat and were greeted by the owner himself, who although not part of the crew, gave us a tour of it. We observed that on a wall, above a sink, there was a large picture of Mother Teresa. We asked the owner about its significance. He said that the boat was dedicated to her, and that he and his family are Catholic.

He had been able to buy the houseboat, and several others, because he had spent quite a few years in the Chicago area running a gas station and convenience store. His whole extended family had worked at that enterprise. You might have visited his business or the many others that are owned and operated by Indian nationals in the USA. It was a profitable business for them, but when it became too expensive to own any longer, he sold it, and he and his family returned to India and invested their earnings in the tourism trade.

He was very open about his Catholic faith. The display of Catholic icons in a business is not something that you see every day; it would be

comparable to seeing Catholic icons at a Holiday Inn in our country! Yet, the pictures and crucifixes were there on the houseboat for all his guests to see, in a land dominated by Hindus and Muslims (14 percent are Muslims and 2.5 percent are Christians).

On the other hand, wherever we went in the countryside we also were struck by the piety of Hindus and their tradition of offering *puja* (prayer and ritual) at temple altars on city sidewalks, in fields, and in their homes. We would also hear the Muslim call to prayer broadcast over loudspeakers in almost all areas that we visited. So Hindus, Muslims, and Christians co-existed, visibly demonstrating their faith.

During our July visit, our host in Bangalore had assured us that peaceful co-existence has been more the rule than the exception in recent Indian history, although Northern India has had its troubles. In August, when a Hindu leader was killed and Christians were blamed, violence erupted in a bigger way in Orissa, and has now spread to three states across India. In September, violence even spread to Bangalore, a Southern area, where two churches were desecrated.

US media coverage of these events has been superseded by coverage of the US elections and economic downturn. However, Pope Benedict XVI has condemned the violence, and Catholic bishops have urged the European Union to treat the situation as a humanitarian emergency. Today we must offer *puja* for all.

Correction Box

On Page 8 of the last issue of the *Challenge*, the figures should read: 27,000 sisters and 144,000 (not 732,000) Lay Dominicans.

The Dumb Ox Medley



Was Martha Contemplative Before Mary?

Could St Dominic's sadness turned into a blessing for the Dominican Family? Fr Donald Goergen, OP, believes so, as he expresses in the article, "The Passion for God in the Early Dominicans."

He says, "As we ponder the years 1208-1215 ... I do not see Dominic as discouraged, which is a loss of courage, but as disappointed, even disillusioned." The Catholic Church's "holy war" was raging, yet Dominic did not join this crusade, and instead he remained committed to a mendicant, itinerant, and evangelical way. With death and destruction all around him, how did Dominic remain joyful?

"One of the most significant challenges in our spiritual lives is how to reach out and embrace someone, something, that disappoints or hurts us," Goergen says. "Teilhard de Chardin wrote that all the raptures of the world are not as effective as the 'icy chill of a disappointment' in teaching us that it is God alone we seek."

The answer lies in Dominic's search for truth. "When we read the early Dominicans, it is not so much a passion for God that is first noticeable but a lack of passion, in contrast to the writings of someone like Bernard of Clairvaux. Even with the Rhineland mystics, save perhaps Suso, there was remark-

able restraint, a sobriety in both Eckhart and Tauler. The passion for Dominic and the early Dominicans seems to have been a passion for truth. This is the underlying Dominican passion. I do not know who said it anymore, I attribute it to Augustine, '*Plato amicus, sed magis amica veritas*' (I love Plato, but I love truth more), but this is very Dominican, '*amica veritas*', my friend Truth. It is no accident that '*Veritas*' became one of the mottos of the preaching friars."

Goergen hastens to add that just as it is possible to be passionate about truth, it is also possible for that passion to be misguided. Looking back with our present-day mindset we can say that the Dominicans' involvement in the Inquisition was how a passion for truth was misled.

Culture Blocks Cultivating Passion for Truth

"It is hard to be passionate about God when the most interesting thing in life is one's self. We are not only the only superpower in the world but we are also the most self-absorbed people in human history," Goergen says.

The antidote to this obsession with self, is the development of our contemplative side, he writes. "The contemplative dimension of life is not a life of leisure and spiritual consolation but

rather a radical confrontation with one's false self, one's narcissism, one's emptiness and nothingness." To put it in Jungian terms, it's coming to terms with our shadow side. When that happens, the first fruit of confronting the shadow is melancholy, Goergen says. But one must not stop there.

The Prayer of Martha

For contemplative practice Goergen offers Meister Eckhart's interpretation of Martha in the sermon on the text from Luke (10:38): "Traditionally Martha had been seen as the exemplar of the active life and Mary that of the contemplative life. For Eckhart, there was in Mary an unspeakable longing for God. Martha, however, manifests a more matured spirituality. When Martha says of Mary, 'Lord, tell her to help me,' it is said out of affection and concern for Mary. Martha understood Mary better than Mary knew Martha for Martha had been where Mary now is. Mary was stuck, still attached to spiritual consolations. Christ was not rebuking Martha but reassuring her that Mary would come eventually to the spiritual maturity out of which Martha lived. A mature spirituality engages the world and does not withdraw from it. A truly Spirit-filled person, grounded in the ground of his soul but active in the world, is living a deep communion with

God. Martha is not simply 'in the world,' she is present in the world in a different way, a grounded way that has broken through narcissism.

"Martha was maturely grounded and wanted her sister to be [also] ... Martha was so well grounded that she could take the risk of leaving her sitting. Mary had just entered the school of Dominican contemplation and had not yet graduated from it. Mary had in one sense been a 'Martha' of the popularly understood sort before becoming Mary, but now was being grounded more deeply in order that she might truly be a Martha, a Preacher."

Bernard McGinn says, "Eckhart not only abandoned the notion of tension-filled oscillation between action and contemplation, but daringly asserted that a new kind of action performed out of a 'well-exercised ground' was superior to contemplation, at least as ordinarily conceived. Activity is seen as the fulfillment of contemplation. A Dominican might see himself or herself as "active in the midst of contemplation," Goergen says. And it is from that foundation that we, like Martha, can preach.



Catherine's Activism Was Grounded in Christ

by Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone,
Vatican Secretary of State

[T]he secret of the sanctity of Catherine of Siena lies in her being “inflamed with divine love” and in having “united contemplation of the crucified Christ with service to the Church,” a contemplative life full of apostolic fervor.

She could carry out an immense amount of wide-ranging activities and courageously and resolutely intervene in delicate situations because she was immersed in God. This made it possible for her to write and leave us such lofty mystical and spiritual writings. Because of her marvelous *Dialogue of Divine Providence* and above all because of the 381 Letters she dictated to her secretaries with impressive ability and speed, she occupies an important place in the history of literature. She achieved this only because she walked in the light of God, following in the footsteps of a great master, St. Dominic, of whom it was said, as we all know, that he only spoke with God or of God. . . .

Catherine of Siena lived in an historic period charged with controversies; she was a burning flame of love for Christ crucified and for the Church. During these late medieval times in which she lived, Europe appeared torn by internal conflicts both in the civil and the ecclesiastical fields, by wars between states and cities, by famines and plagues. Historians tell us that in 1347, because of the Black Death, the number of inhabitants in Siena . . . was reduced from about 80,000 to 15,000. In the Church, divisions and schisms that put at risk the survival itself of the Catholic civilization in the face of the ever present danger of invasions by the Saracens were recorded. The Pope was absent from Rome and living in Avignon. This drama made the great poet Dante write that the Church “was married to the kingdom of France.” In this climate of intense anguish for the Church, Catherine, touched by a special grace, recognized her vocation.

In her biography we read that her childhood was marked by a vision she had of Christ from whose heart a ray of light shone forth and wounded her. Another episode marked her deeply when she was 20 years old and had already chosen to live as a Dominican Tertiary. During carnival of 1367, one evening she prayed ceaselessly to Jesus: “Mary me in faith.” The Lord appeared to her and said: “Now while the others are enjoying themselves, I agree to celebrate with you the feast of your heart.” Suddenly, biographers tell us, the heavenly court, together with the saints Catherine loved most appeared: Mary, the Virgin Mother, took the girl’s hand and united it with that of her Son. Jesus put a luminous ring on her finger (a ring only Catherine saw during all her life) and told her: “Now I wed you to Me in faith, to Me your Creator and Savior. You will keep this faith pure until you come to heaven to celebrate with Me the eternal wedding.” Jesus gave this 20-year-old girl one of the most intense mystical experiences any creature might go through. For Catherine the divine Lover became a constant presence, and for this great

love she challenged the world, even when the world seemed deaf and distracted.

After this experience Catherine lived only 13 more years physically spending her energy and committing herself to the mission of reforming the Church and the world by meeting popes, cardinals, kings, and princes. She wrote strong letters in which she frequently used the expression “I want,” and as a conclusion, “Sweet Jesus, Jesus love,” which was later called “the code of love of Christianity.” The desire to bring the Pope back to Rome was fulfilled by Gregory XI, but the Great Schism broke out and Catherine continued to act very strongly against the anti-pope and in favor of the legitimate Pontiff Urban VI. . . .

From the life and the writings of Catherine of Siena we all learn something that is very important in our days, namely, the priority of praying and working for the salvation of souls. Was not this the only goal and passion of her entire existence? Excessively influenced by modern culture, sometimes one has the impression that our pastoral work risks to be seen preoccupied, to say it paradoxically, nearly only with making people live well on earth rather than to guide their hearts positively to meet Christ, the only Redeemer of man!

In the *Dialogue of Divine Providence*, Catherine writes that, wanting to remedy the many evils of humanity the merciful God the Father gave us “the bridge” of his Son “so that crossing the river you will not drown, and the river is the stormy sea of this gloomy life.” For this reason what should interest us most is to “please God” and remain united with Him, as she did with her “celestial Spouse.”

Those who live in Christ, the Friend, the Master, the Spouse, do not know confusion or fear. Rather, they become strong in faith, fervent in love, and constant in hope. This is what happened to our Saint. Before her, it happened to the Apostles, to the women who at the tomb, astonished, saw the risen Lord. It happened to the travelers of Emmaus who, disappointed, were repeating among themselves: “We thought He would be the one to save us!” Only the Lord can save and redeem us. All along the centuries he associates saints to his redemptive work, persons who accept his will and faithfully follow his Gospel; people like this young girl Catherine of Siena, who dreamt of a holy Church, of whom she felt she was both “daughter” and “mother,” with bishops and priests that were zealous. She wanted a Church like this not because she had a triumphalist vision of Christianity, but rather in order to become “yeast” of social renewal, communicating to men “the blood” of Christ that generates peace. . . .



This article consists of excerpts from a homily by Cardinal Bertone, which appeared in International Dominican Information (IDI), June, 2007.

Radcliffe on Polarization in the Church

This is Part 2 of an interview conducted earlier this year by Bill McGarvey, editor of and is reprinted here with permission from both McGarvey and Fr Timothy Radcliffe, OP. Part 1 appeared in the last issue of the Challenge.

Busted Halo: In your lecture in Los Angeles on polarization within the Church, you characterized the split as a fear of chaos versus a fear of stagnation. The insight that we are a faith that is founded upon conversation/dialogue in the person of Jesus is important, but, unfortunately, it sometimes seems as though some in the Church don't even want to enter the conversation. How can we transcend this sort of polarization if dialogue itself isn't possible?

Father Timothy Radcliffe, OP: I always reject being characterized myself as either progressive or traditionalist! I think that Catholics must always be both, loving the tradition of the Word of God and the teaching of the Church, and also progressive reaching out for the Kingdom of God's justice and peace. And so one of the first steps, I believe, is just to refuse the labels. They derive from the Enlightenment which was very anti-Catholic. The Enlightenment posited an opposition between tradition, which it believed to transmit the prejudices of the past, and most especially the dogmas of the Church, and progress, which it identified with free rational thought. So you were either for tradition (and dogma) or progress (and rationality). What they failed to see was that their own position was also dogmatic! So it is a sort of defeat to accept these labels for ourselves. Secondly, when one meets someone with whom one might have a disagreement, then we must open our hearts and minds to them, get them to talk, and try to learn their language. Yesterday I had a visit from an American seminarian who arrived dressed in full cassock and so on. I was dressed in my usual dirty old trousers, and I wondered how we would manage to talk. My approach is to begin by getting him to talk, to try to enter his way of thinking, his language, his sensibility. And then we can begin a conversation that might make sense to him, and

open up a space that is larger enough for what I care about too.

BH: Your extensive travels as the Master of the Dominicans must have given you a sense of what the universal Catholic church looks like. How has that shaped your perception? What do those of us in more developed nations need to know/understand about the rest of the Church? What is their perception of Western Europeans and Americans, etc? How can we respond better to both those in developed and undeveloped nations?

TR: It has been a wonderful blessing to have spent most of 10 years traveling around Asia, Africa, Latin America, and Eastern Europe. We have to ask in every continent what we may learn. Too often we begin by asking what we may give, and it is usually money! Just take Africa. Many countries there are struggling to survive, and are racked by poverty, much of it due to unjust trade barriers imposed by the West, but also with civil war, drought and so on. Often I would make trips to Africa thinking, 'What can I do to help?' Usually I came back thanking God for what I had received. Most Africans have a deep faith, a wonderful joy and an extraordinary resilience. I have wonderful memories of sitting in the African night, often in quite dangerous places, and yet my heart filled with joy as I laughed with my Dominican brothers and sisters. Asia is so vast and diverse that it hardly makes any sense to talk of it as a continent! Pakistan and Japan are as different from each other as either are from England or the United States! But one thing that is a great gift of the Asian Catholics to us is a certain sort of humility. In every country, except the Philippines, we are a tiny minority, and that teaches us a simplicity and humility that is deeply Christian. I could go on about the other continents too, but given that the Dominicans are in 106 countries, you might get rather bored!

BH: You've been criticized by some—and praised by others—for comments you've made regarding homosexuality, specifically with regard to the priesthood. How do you think this divisive issue could be better approached?

TR: We have to see that behind much of



the furor is fear and these fears are comprehensible. There is a fear among straight priests of becoming a member of a small minority in what is perceived as a "gay" vocation. There is a fear among some homosexual priests of being found out, a feeling of guilt and so on. We have to reassure people so that the issue can be faced calmly. If there is a fevered anxiety about all this, then it does not help people mature and face their own complexity. It is not the case that there are just these two groups, homosexuals and heterosexuals. People are complex, and have contrary motions in their hearts. Straight people may be tempted to strangle the little bit of them that responds to people of the same sex and fear gay people. But that is a disguised form of fearing themselves. And gay seminarians may be tempted to deny who they are, adopt an anti-gay rhetoric, and all that is highly unhealthy and deforming. It is important also that someone's sexual orientation is not the most important thing about them, as if everyone was a sexual maniac, endlessly wanting to get other people into bed. The most important thing about anyone, regardless of whether they are gay or straight, is that they be able to love, and that they are helped to love well, deeply, honestly, transparently.

BH: You've mentioned that one of human beings' deepest needs is to be at home. For someone who travels as much as you do, where do you now find that deepest need met?

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Radcliffe

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TR: I travel with a lot of books: my breviary of course, but also novels, poetry, and so on. When I travel, these are sometimes my home. When I go to bed, then I may always be in a different bed, but I am with the same prayers, the same people in my novel, the same poems. Also, of course, I go back home to Blackfriars, Oxford, where I have a lovely community, young and vibrant and that is a great home for me between trips.

BH: You've said that "thinking that morality is all about commandments is a relatively new way of thinking, since the Reformation." What has that thinking evolved from? Is the post-Reformation way of thinking too limiting? What would be a better way to think of morality?

TR: This is a really complex question! A lot of people put the blame on Dun Scotus. Whether that is fair or not, I do not know. He believed that morality is about doing God's will, however arbitrary that may appear to be, and so we look for laws that tell us what is God's will, and we obey. If God tells us that we must plant cabbages upside down, then so be it! The Middle Ages had what I think is a healthier approach, which was a morality of the virtues. Let us take the example of murder. The newer morality which came to dominate after the Reformation, based on commandments, would maintain that that we must not murder people because it is forbidden by God. The virtue ethics would form us as people who are in touch with our deepest desires, and these are not to murder people. Of course we need the Ten Commandments, because these help us to be in touch with the deep desires of our God-given nature.

There are a lot of books written recently which have given virtue ethics a new prominence. The most famous North American to write about them is Alasdair MacIntyre in his wonderful book, *After Virtue*. Morality is about becoming a certain sort of person who finds delight in God and who freely seeks God. It is less about what you do than who you are. Throughout the world there is a return to virtue ethics, especially in the US, but it has yet to make its way through to popular consciousness.

BH: You've commented that "today there is little respect for Christianity as a source of moral teaching about goodness." Why do you think that is? What can be done about it?

TR: Few people will accept to do something just because their local priest or bishop tells them to, especially if he has not gained their respect because of his own honesty or goodness. Authority is not given automatically. It must be won. And this will only happen if people see that we are honest, and that we face the complex issues that our people have to live instead of just proclaiming things from the pulpit as if everything was simple. Secondly, they will only recognize us as having any authority if we recognize them too, and accept the authority which lay people have because of their baptism and experience. Jesus recognized the people whom he met on the road. He recognized Nathaniel under the fig tree, and Mary Magdalene in the garden after the Resurrection. He saw them, and understood them, and so they recognized him. He said to her "Mary," and so she could reply, "Rabboni." If we grant to others what Pope Benedict calls, "the look of love for which they crave," then they will recognize us.

Dominican Liturgical Calendar

October

- 3-BI Dominic Spadafora, priest
- 4-Holy Father Francis of Assisi, deacon (F)
- 5-BI Raymond of Capua, priest (OM)
- 6-BI Bartolo Longo, lay Dominican
- 7-Our Lady of the Rosary (F)
- 8-BI Ambrose Sansedoni, priest
-BI Matthew Carreri, priest
- 9-St Louis Bertrand, priest (M)
- 11-BI James of Ulm, religious
- 13-BI Magdalen Panatieri, lay Dominican
- 14-BI Marie Poussepé, lay Dominican
- 19-BI Agnes of Langeac, lay Dominican
- 21-BI Peter of Citta de Castello, priest
- 25-BI Peter of Geremia, priest
- 26-BI Damian of Finale, priest
- 27-BI Bartholomew of Vicenza, bishop
- 28-SS Simon & Jude
- 30-BI Benvenuta Boiani, lay Dominican

- BI Terence O'Briend, bishop &
-BI Peter Higgins, priest, martyrs

November

- 1-All Saints (S)
- 2- All Souls*
- 3-St Martin de Porres, religious (F)
- 5-BI Simon Ballachi, religious
- 6-BIs Francis de Capillas &
Alphonsus Navarette, priests,
companions, martyrs (M)
- 7-All Saints of the Order (F)
- 8-Anniversary of all Deceased of the
Order*
- 14-BI John Liccio, priest
-BI Lucia of Narnia, religious
- 15-St Albert the Great, bishop/doctor of
the Church (S)
- 19-BI James Benefatti, bishop

- 24-St Catherine of Alexandria

- St Ignatius Delgado, bishop, martyr
- St Vincent Liem, priest, martyr
- St Dominic An-Kham, lay Dominican and their companions, martyrs
- 25-BI Margaret of Savoy, religious

December

- 1-BI John of Vercelli, priest
- 8-Immaculate Conception (S)
- 16-BI Sebastian Maggi, priest
- 25-Christmas (S)

(S) Solemnity (F) Feast
(M) Memorial (OM) Optional Memorial
*Office for the Dead is prayed

Promoter's Corner

by Fr Jim Motl, OP
Provincial Promoter

I am thinking about Matthew's story about why Jesus designated Simon Peter to be the rock on which His Church is built. The key is Peter's answer to Jesus' question, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter alone was able to answer, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Since that time the key to our understanding of our place and mission in the Church has remained our ability to answer the same question, "Who do you say that I am?"

To be part of Christ's Church we must be able to echo Peter's answer and add the words of the Creed we profess every Sunday at Mass. We should also have a personal answer based on our relationship with Jesus Christ. For many Dominicans that answer would include, "the Savior to be preached to the world." It would typically also include the Jesus we experience through prayer, study, and our local Dominican communities. In other words, our image of Jesus should be shaped by the four pillars of Dominican life. It is from this image that our personal answers to Jesus' question about His identity for us will come.

Jesus' question, "Who do you say that I am," needs to focus not only our individual lives as Christians and Dominicans, but also our group identity. From the beginning Dominicans have relied on regular regional and world-wide meetings as a means to find communal answers to Jesus' question in an on-going way. The friars have called these meetings "chapters." The Laity term them "provincial council meetings," and it is only recently that Lay Dominicans have begun to have world congresses to provide an international forum for discussion of Lay Dominican identity.

I am sure that you know that our Province of St Albert the Great will be having a Provincial Council Meeting Oct. 23-26. That meeting, to which each local chapter or group sends a delegate, will discuss issues pertaining to who Jesus is for you as Lay Dominicans in the Midwest. When it is necessary, decisions affecting all the local communities and members currently inactive with a chapter or group will be made. A very important matter for me is the selection of a nominating committee to suggest candidates who would be qualified, suitable, and able to take on the office of Provincial President after Ruth Kummer completes her term in 2009. The use of a nominating committee was adopted by the previous Provincial Council meeting. It is most important for each chapter and group to be represented.

President Ruth

Continued from Page 1

scientific preference was for experimentation. This difference in approach caused Bacon to overstep what the Church accepted at that time. And as Europe was changing from feudalism to nationalism, Albert and others struggled with the idea of separation of church and state.

After joining the Dominican Order he studied and taught in Padua, Bologna, Cologne, and other German convents. In 1241 he was sent to Paris where he read a new translation of Aristotle in Arabic and Greek. This was a period when Christian Europe was coming to terms with knowledge of the ancient Greek philosophers. Thomas Aquinas, his former student, was writing his *Summa Theologiae*.

In 1248 Albert left Paris and set up a new "stadium Generale," a Dominican University in Cologne, and became its Regent. Thomas Aquinas was appointed Master of Students until he returned to Paris. Albert also became the Superior of the Dominican Province of Teutonia (Germany).

By 1260 Albert was appointed Bishop of Ratisbon, despite Humbert de Romas' effort to keep Albert's work in the Order. In 1274 Pope Gregory required Albert to attend the Second Council of Lyon. He took part in discussing questions of doctrine, administration, discipleship, etc. Thomas Aquinas died on the way to this same Council.

Three years later certain factions tried to condemn Thomas' teachings on the grounds that he was favorably disposed to non-Christian philosophers. Albert was an older man now, but he traveled in 1277 to Paris to

Discernment of how we image Jesus in our lives as Dominicans requires continuing study and prayer. Lay Dominicans of our Province are fortunate to have new resources for their lives of study in several resources being made available by Aquinas Institute, the school of theology sponsored in St Louis, Missouri, by the friars of our Province. The first of these resources is The Fisher's Net, the blackboard webpage which carries our new formation program. By this time all members who have Internet service should be enrolled through their local chapter/group. We are still in the process of building this website. The outline of the new formation program for the Province is now posted there with the bibliographies of suggested books and articles. Much of this material is available online. We need to complete references for each item in the bibliographies as to where the material can be found online or where it may be purchased. There also are to be study questions for each item. Anyone who can help complete these missing parts of the program should contact Michael Porterfield (porterfield@ai.edu) to offer your services. At the Provincial Council meeting I hope each delegate will include in the chapter report an item about how the chapter/group is coming in implementing this program and suggestions for improving the site.

A new feature has just been added to The Fisher's Net website under the course for Dominican Laity. It is a discussion board that allows any enrolled member to post a note on any subject to begin an online discussion among Lay Dominicans of the Province. I have just initiated the feature by posting an introductory message. To access this feature just click on "General Conversation – add your two cents" on the Course Documents page. Instructions for using The Fisher's Net website should be available from your group's delegates to last fall's Leadership Workshop. If they can't help you, contact Michael Porterfield at the address above.

Another resource Aquinas Institute is proposing for Lay Dominicans is a summer workshop on topics of interest to members of our Province. I hope that there will be a definite proposal for the time, shape, and funding of this proposal to present to the council in October. I have asked the delegates from each group to ask for input from their respective communities about what subject matters would be of interest to them. I hope Delegates will forward this information to me during the next few weeks so it can help Aquinas come up with a program that will attract participation from across the Province.

I am delighted about the increasing opportunities for the Laity of our Province to deepen their understanding of Jesus and His Church as well as of the Order of Preachers. I hope that you will use these resources to augment your spiritual growth and be better able to answer Jesus' question to Peter, "But who do you say that I am?"

You can reach Fr Jim Motl at: motljr@slu.edu.

defend Thomas Aquinas' teachings on Aristotle. By the following year, his memory began to fail him. Over the next three years he declined mentally and physically.

At his funeral, crowds attended the ceremony, and Archbishop Siegfried von Westerburg presided. Over his tomb a simple stone slab bear the words:

In the year of our Lord 1280, on the 15th day of November, died the Venerable Brother Albert, former Bishop of the Church of Ratisbon of the Order of Preachers and Master in Theology. May he rest in peace.

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Around the Province ...

Members of the **Bl Fra Angelico Group in Norridge, Ill.**, is studying the *Gospel of St Matthew and St Dominic and the Dominican Way* by Richard Woods, OP, on CDs. ... At **Blessed John Dominici in Bay City, Mich.**, Jason Griffor, a college student, made his first profession. Blessed John Dominici members also hosted the third annual celebration of St Dominic's feast day by inviting all the chapters of Michigan to share the day in community, and every chapter was represented. ... **Blessed Sacrament in Farmington Hills, Mich.**, received Mary Kay McClorey and Patricia Shea into the Dominican Family, and Christopher Sas made Temporary Profession. ... **Rosary Chapter in Grand Rapids, Mich.**, continues to lead a Bible study class in the Muskegon prison once a month. ... Members of the **Queen of the Holy Rosary in St Louis** are studying *Light for the Church* by Liam Walsh, OP. The chapter reports that Fr Monshau has moved to Rome and that the Prior is now Fr Donald Goergen. ... **Sacred Heart in Springfield, Ill.**, has new officers: Peggy Lindsey as Moderator; Gail Eck as Vice Moderator; Barbara Hattes as Secretary; Ruth Lewis as Treasurer and Provincial Council Delegate; and Nini Saner as Alternate Delegate. Making Final Profession: Jenae Brown, Barbara Hattes, Debbie Norris, and Mary Clara Johnson. ... **Queen of the Rosary in Milwaukee, Wis.**, celebrated Everett and Esther Byrne's 65th wedding anniversary on Aug. 16 at a restaurant breakfast. Esther has served as provincial Recording Secretary, as well as Chapter Moderator, Secretary, and Provincial Council Delegate. Bernie Terrien made Temporary Profession. The chapter is studying *Praying with Dominic*, while members in formation are studying Pope Benedict XVI's *Spe Salvi*. ... The present chapter study of **St Rose Lima in Dubuque** is *Fire of Love: Encountering the Holy Spirit* by Fr Donald Goergen, OP. The chapter is now finalizing the paperwork for its new apostolate of volunteer work at Stone Hill Care Center. ... The members of **St Vincent Ferrer in River Forest, Ill.**, had a "Come and See" Dominican event and 100 people showed up. Also, Dolores Sullivan and Michael Pollard made Final Profession; Gene Bender made his Temporary Profession; and Mary Schramm, John Lennon, and Rick Reyes were accepted into the community. ... **Nuestra Senora de las Montanas in Albuquerque** recently gained four new members; they are now reading Erik Borgman's *Dominican Spirituality*. ... **St Martin de Porres Informal Group of Greater Kansas City** celebrated the first profession of Tom Bogdon, Joe Bradley, and John Heuertz; Mark Radziejeski was received as a Candidate. ... Teresa Cecil of the **Mary Magdalene Pro-Chapter in West Lafayette, Ind.**, participated in a mission trip to El Salvador with Fr Jim Barnett (see story on Page 2); the group has been studying *The Dumb Ox* by G. K. Chesterton.

+++ In Memoriam +++

+Miss Mary Elayne Breitbach, OP, St Rose of Lima Chapter, Dubuque, IA, Dec. 16, 2007

+Mrs Josephine Campbell, OP, St Rose of Lima Chapter, Dubuque, IA, May 17, 2008

+Mr Ambrose Dolan, OP, a private member, Grand Island, NE, Sept. 16, 2007

+Mrs Marion Keegan, OP, a private member, Crofton, MD, April 27, 2008

+Dr Jacqueline Lougheed, OP, Blessed Sacrament Chapter, Farmington Hills, MI, Nov. 8, 2007

+Miss Margaret Mary Luke, Queen of the Rosary Chapter, Milwaukee, WI, on Sept. 10, 2008

+Mrs Isabel McGibbon, OP, Holy Rosary Chapter, Minneapolis, MN, in December 2007

+Mrs Gladys Rudzianski, OP, St Rose of Lima Chapter, Dubuque, IA, on Aug. 22, 2007

+Mr Walter Stadelman, OP, Holy Rosary Chapter, Minneapolis, MN in July 2007

Provincial Promoter: Fr Jim Motl; **President:** Ruth Kummer; **Vice President:** Harvey Newcomb II; **Recording Secretary:** Cyndi Ricard; **Corresponding Secretary:** Karen Sabourin; **Treasurer:** Mary Lee Odders; **Formation Director:** Thomas Ryba; **Inter-Provincial Delegate:** Norm Laurendeau; and **Challenge Editor:** Marlene Laurendeau (e-mail: marlenelauren@aol.com). **Our Mission:** Called to a deeper relationship of love and service to God, we are members of the Dominican Order, who commit to live the Dominican charism as lay people. In collaboration with the Dominican Family, we work to promote social justice and peace in society. Supported by prayer, study, community, and ministry, we fulfill our vocation to proclaim the Gospel wherever we, as individuals, live and work.

Marlene Laurendeau, Challenge Editor

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