



CHALLENGE

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

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From the President

Leadership Workshop a Great Success

by Normand Laurendeau, OP,
Cyndi Ricard, OP

Moderators, formation directors, and spiritual assistants from all communities within the Province of St Albert the Great met on Nov. 1- 4, 2007, at the St John Retreat Center, Plymouth, Mich., to unveil our new formation program and to establish common governance practices for all groups, pro-chapters, and chapters within the Province. The theme of the conference was "Lay Dominican Life in Community and the Call to Preach." The primary focus of the workshop was dissemination and discussion of our the formation program.

The conference began on Thursday, Nov. 1, with Evening Prayer and Mass, conducted by our Provincial Promoter, Fr James Motl, OP. In his homily for the Feast of All Saints, Fr Motl referred to the saints as the "coalition of the willing," as they followed God's will. Similarly, those who worked many hours to put the workshop together and to establish our new formation program should also be recognized and appreciated as the coalition of the willing. Mass was followed by humorous chapter cases, performed, scripted, and costumed by Recording Secretary Cyndi Ricard. Fun was had by all, although the seriousness of making Dominican communities work, despite many different personalities and agendas, certainly became clear to everyone.

Fr Robert Staes, OP, opened Friday, Nov. 2, with Morning Prayer and Mass. His moving homily on All Souls Day helped all of us reconnect with those in our own lives who have been called to the Lord. After breakfast, Provincial President Ruth Kummer welcomed the attendees, focusing particularly on lay identity and the importance of our faith journeys within our various secular roles. Cyndi Ricard followed with a presentation on typical

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by Ruth Kummer, OP

Our November Leadership Workshop at Plymouth, Mich., was enriched by members from the whole Dominican Family—friars, a brother, sisters, nuns (through prayer), and many Lay Dominicans from the Province of St Albert the Great.

A copy of Helen Mallicoat's reflections on Ex 3:13-15 opened the gathering. One phrase, "My name is I AM," became the framework for the proceedings. We live in the present, with a rich past that gives us the kernels of our mission. The present calls us to live out our vocation, and becomes an answer to tomorrow's question of "What is a Lay Dominican vocation?"

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From left to right: Beatriz Cisneros, President Ruth Kummer, Cyndi Ricard, Fr Jim Motl, Mike Porterfield, and Tom Ryba at the Leadership Workshop in Plymouth, Mich., Nov. 1- 4.

Montana Friar Becomes Vicar to Master of the Order

On Aug. 15, 2007, Fr Carlos Azpiroz Costa, OP, Master of the Order, appointed Fr Edward Ruane, OP, of the Province of St Albert the Great, to be Vicar of the Master over the whole Order of Preachers, thus filling the office left vacant by the sudden death of Fr Dominique Renouard, OP.

IDI: Who is Ed Ruane?

Fr Ed: Like any person, I am a bit of a mystery to myself, not to mention others. I was born in the United States (in 1942) and raised in a small town, Anaconda, Montana, in the heart of the Rocky Mountains. My father was a lawyer as well as active in local and state politics. Coming from poor Irish immigrant parents, he always demonstrated great concern for the poor and less fortunate. He died when I was 18 years old, leaving my mother to raise my three younger siblings.

Growing up in Montana at that time was great. I remember working in the local grocery store as a delivery boy during the school year, and then during the summer helping on a ranch herding cattle and sheep in the mountains. Once I turned 16 I was able to work on the railroad. I most enjoyed horseback riding, water skiing, and hiking in the mountains.

From the beginning of my elementary school days, through the first two years of university, I spent my entire life in Montana. All of my education took place in Catholic schools. I was taught by the Sinsinawa Dominican Sisters who had a significant influence on my eventual desire to become a Dominican. They were very much part of our lives, excellent teachers, and manifested joy in us as well as with one another.

IDI: How did you come to know the Dominicans? What led you to join the Order?

Fr Ed: As I mentioned, I came to know the Dominicans through my secondary school teachers. The friars also came through the area preaching parish missions. In some ways, I think I always knew I would be a priest. I began university with the diocesan priests, but soon realized I wanted religious life. While the idea of preaching terrified me early on, the elements of community life, common prayer, teaching, and a certain itinerancy attracted me. I could never have said it in that way at that time. I believe I have an adventurous spirit and, indeed, Dominican life has been a great adventure for me.

IDI: Where did you study? What branch did you specialize in?

Fr Ed: At 20 years old, I entered the Central Dominican Province of St Albert the Great in Winona, Minnesota. After a year of novitiate, I studied philosophy in River Forest, Illinois, and theology in Dubuque, Iowa. During my theology years, I was most interested in ecclesiology. I entered the Order in 1962, just before Vatican II began and I was ordained in 1969. While the first few years of my formation were calm, the last three or four years were a time of great turmoil. Many of my

professors and classmates left the Order. For others of us it was a time of re-examining and deepening our commitment.

IDI: What was your main pastoral work and offices you occupied in your province?

Fr Ed: I began my ministry teaching at St Edward's University in Austin, Texas. Teaching was what I most loved to do. It enabled me to study, to think, and to influence the young. Later on, after finishing my Doctor of Ministry degree in the area of preaching, I was asked to help in the development of our preaching curriculum at our studium, Aquinas Institute in St Louis, Missouri. That was a very rewarding experience. We were able to integrate the different philosophical and theological disciplines around preaching. The entire faculty took this on as significant project that eventually resulted in a book that won a publishing award for its originality and contribution to a theology of preaching. Also, Aquinas Institute has become well known for its strong preaching program, being the only Catholic school that offers a doctorate in preaching. What could be more Dominican!

Another area of ministry that I need to mention, especially during this year of Jubilee, has been the opportunities I have had to work with our cloistered nuns. I have served as vicar at some of our monasteries, as well as visitator and retreat director. Knowing the prayer of our nuns has sustained me at difficult times and been a real blessing. I have great appreciation for the life of our nuns.

Much of my life has consisted of ministry within the order as novice master, provincial, and now as Socius for the United States and the Vietnamese Vicariate, and even more recently, after the most unfortunate death of our brother Dominique, as Vicar of the Master of the Order. I also serve with Sr Rose Ann, OP, as co-director for Dominican Volunteers International. While she does most of the work, I am happy to have a hand in this missionary outreach of the Order. At the moment, I expect to keep these different offices.

IDI: What is the job of Vicar of the Master? What are your feelings, and what are your hopes?

Fr Ed: The job of Vicar is one that I have yet to learn. Obviously, it means that I am to be at the service of the Master as best I can in his service to the whole Order. The Master spends most of his time in the provinces and vicariates throughout the world. During those times of visitation, his energy must be focused on the life of the brothers and the wider order in that particular location. Meanwhile, there is a great deal of work that comes to Santa Sabina. Chapters are

being held all the time and Acts need to be reviewed. Calendars must be planned. Meetings of the General Council continue. Provincials and Vicars present concerns. Letters have to be written. Socii and Promoters need to be coordinated and supported. And of course, there are occasional crises that need response. While all of this work rests on the shoulders of the Master, the Vicar is also involved along with the help of the General Council.

My feelings are mixed. There is genuine sadness over the death of Dominique who was a most gracious and effective Vicar. He worked quietly and efficiently, freeing us to do what we had to do. Only now am I realizing how much Dominique did. I am surprised and humbled that Carlos asked me to step into this position upon the death of Dominique. I have some fear that I might find the demands overwhelming. I greatly lack ability to speak languages other than English. My Italian can only be a pain for our Italian brothers to hear, not to mention, my struggle to understand. I am happy to do what I can for the Master and our Order. So there you have this mixed bag of feelings. I hope to grow into the position with some degree of grace.

IDI: Through this interview you will be speaking to the whole Dominican Family. Would you like to send a message in your present capacity?

Fr Ed: Yes, I would like to urge our brothers and sisters to always be thankful for their vocation to the Order of Preachers. If one is grateful, then one will be generous in what is asked of them by the Lord in and through the community and its superiors. Our life as Dominicans is a constant challenge to live the Gospel in community and proclaim it to the world. It is an adventure into the heart of God; it is to become like Jesus the preacher; it is for us to become a word from the Lord for his world. If we have gratitude, we are quick to forgive, eager to build up, never arrogant or cynical. If we have gratitude, we will eagerly and joyfully invite others to join us in this salvific mission. Thank you for this interview and for these thought-provoking questions. And thanks to all the readers, especially for your prayers.

IDI: Thank you, Bro Edward, we will help you with our fragile prayers and support.

This interview in the October, 2007, issue of IDI, and other articles, can be found at <http://www.idi.op.org>.

Awaken: Peace and Justice Issues for Your Advocacy!

by Marlene Laurendeau, OP

Lay Provincial Promoter of Justice, Peace, and Care of Creation

There is no lack of emergency issues all over the globe. Dominican activists have communicated to us regarding some of them below. They ask for your help in writing to legislators and persons holding positions of power to help the poor and those working for the poor.

Immigration Reform: 'No' to HR 4088

Dominican justice promoters are urging the Congress to vote *against* HR 4088, the Secure America through Verification and Enforcement Act (SAVE), introduced by Representatives Heath Shuler and Tom Tancredo, among others. This proposed legislation takes an enforcement-only approach to immigration reform, with no path for the undocumented to gain legal status. There are now 12 million undocumented immigrants living and working in this country because our economy beckons them. The Shuler-Tancredo bill does nothing to address the exploitation of workers, the thousands who die in the desert, and the more than 3 million US citizen children who live in constant fear that their parents will be deported. Many are instead advocating for Rep Luis Gutierrez's STRIVE Act, HR 1645.

Help Support 4.7 Million Iraqi Refugees

The world's fastest-growing humanitarian crisis is the displacement of 4.7 million Iraqis. In late September, the US Senate passed the Refugee Crisis in Iraq Act as an amendment to the Defense Reauthorization bill. Originally introduced by Senators Ted Kennedy and Gordon Smith last June, it provides up to 5,000 special immigrant visas yearly for Iraqis who worked with the US and protection or immediate removal from Iraq of applicants who are in imminent danger. It also establishes mechanisms for processing refugees from within Iraq, Syria, Jordan, and Egypt. The EPIC Ground Truth Project has worked on building coalitions of support for this bill. It also is working to advance even stronger legislation in the House, including Rep Earl Blumenauer's Responsibility to Iraqi Refugees Act (HR 2265).

Fr Carlos Advocates for Pakistan

Master of the Order Fr Carlos Azpiroz, OP, and Sr Marie Fabiola Velasquez Maya, OP, International Coordinator of Dominican Sisters International (DSI), sent out an alert to the Dominican Family regarding the difficult situation in Pakistan after President Pervez Musharraf declared a state of emergency. They urged us to ask our governments to directly contact him and his staff and insist on "a return to constitutional democracy in Pakistan, that basic human rights are assured, that the judiciary is restored, and that people are not deprived of access to media, whether local or international. As people of faith, we find the consequences of the current State of Emergency and the suspension of the Constitution unacceptable."

Dominican in Brazil Receives Death Threats

A French Dominican, Fr Henri Burin des Roziers, OP, who has been working in Brazil for years and strongly supports landless people in that country, has incurred the wrath of major landlords. He recently received very serious death threats. (A US sister of Notre Dame de Namur, Dorothy Stang, was killed in 2005 under similar circumstances.) Letters can be sent to the Brazilian ambassador of our country or to the Land Pastoral Commission in Brazil.

Global Climate Change Conference

At *Challenge* press time, UN representatives are meeting and working in Bali on the renewal of the Kyoto Accord to reduce global warming. And recently there was a conference on Al Gore's film on climate

change in Santa Sabina, Rome. While there, Dominican Sisters International (DSI) interviewed some Dominican sisters who work for justice and peace in the US. Sr Anne Lythgoe, OP, Editor of the electronic magazine, Dominican Life (domlife.org), said: "As an American citizen I am very happy that Al Gore received the Nobel Peace Prize for his work on the environment and climate change. His effort to raise this issue is an important step on several levels, one of which is to recognize that to care for the earth is to care for the poor, who are always the victims of unfair and harmful energy and economic policies. Mr Gore's work exposes the present administration's failure to respect the rest of the world's needs. His work, and the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), uncovers the truth that many in the US have been slow to see."

Help Reduce the Impact of Commodity Subsidies on the Poor

Dominicans of the Western Province have promoted supporting Sen Lugar's Farm, Ranch, Energy, Stewardship and Health (FRESH) Act, S 2228. It reduces trade-distorting, crop-specific subsidies in favor of a true safety net that will provide a viable crop insurance and alternative for all agricultural producers. Sen Lugar's proposal would fully fund the Farm Bill's nutrition title, including the Food Stamp program, the Seniors Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, and The Emergency Food Assistance Program. In addition, savings generated by the FRESH Act would be directed to specialty crops, conservation programs, and renewable energy. Co-sponsor Sen Susan Collins says that it will also leave the Milk Income Loss Contract intact and would reduce the deficit by \$4 billion.

Omnibus Bill in Negotiation at Press Time

At *Challenge* press time, the US Congress is still trying to negotiate an "omnibus" spending bill that will fund the federal government. NETWORK (a national Catholic social justice lobby), and others are advocating for adequate funding for human services programs such as nutrition (WIC, The Emergency Food Assistance Program); housing (Section 8 vouchers, hurricane recovery); child care and child support; and education programs. President Bush is threatening to veto anything that he considers excess spending.

Dominican Spirituality For Contemporary Seekers

June 9-12, 2008

A Retreat at St John's Center
Plymouth, Mich.

Speakers:

Fr Timothy Radcliffe, OP
Sr Barbara Cervenka, OP
Fr Donald Goergen, OP
Sr Nancy Murray, OP
Sr Suzanne Noffke, OP
Sr Margaret Ormond, OP
Sr Patricia Walter, OP

From Around the Province . . .

Queen of the Rosary Chapter in St Louis, is continuing to read Fr Don Goergen, OP's article, "Jesus Christ, Itinerant Preacher," from Fr Michael Monshau OP's volume of collected articles, *The Grace and Task of Preaching*. Next the group will be studying *He Taught Them as One Who Had Authority*, by Timothy Radcliffe. . . . **Holy Rosary Chapter in Minneapolis** is currently reviewing Vatican II documents concerning the Liturgy of the Hours. They are also planning to have their Dec. 30 meeting be their annual Epiphany Party and invite other members of the Dominican Family to join them for food, fellowship, prayer. . . . **Nuestra Senora de las Montanas Group in Albuquerque** is reading a book written by Fr Timothy Radcliffe, OP, *What Is the Point of Being a Christian?* . . . At **Queen of the Rosary Chapter in Milwaukee**, Mary Alice Loomis made her Temporary Profession in November. The new chapter study is *Praying with Dominic*. . . . **Blessed Fra Angelico Group in Norridge, Ill.**, studied and discussed the last four chapters of Timothy Radcliffe's book, *Sing a New Song*. They have started studying the documents, *Dei Verbum* and "Fulfilled in Your Hearing: the Homily in the Sunday Assembly" (USCC), 1982. . . . **Denver's St Dominic Chapter**, with 20 active members, recently received three new members: Chris Hines, Leo Fua, and Darlene Kaskie. . . . At **St Mary Magdalene Pro-Chapter in West Lafayette, Ind.**, in lieu of the usual book discussion, December's meeting will focus on information presented at the November Leadership Workshop in Michigan.

St Catherine of Siena Group of Grand Blanc joined the **Blessed Sacrament Lay Dominicans** in Farmington, Mich., for their annual Day of Recollection, held at the Monastery of the Blessed Sacrament. During Evening Prayer in the Monastery Chapel, joined by the nuns and monastery chaplain, Kimberly Boismier, Judith Green, and Loxi Hoskins were received into the Order. The Editor apologizes for an error in the autumn issue: Janet Cassidy is from the St Catherine of Siena Group in Grand Blanc, Mich., not Joliet, Ill.

Dominican Volunteers Preach the Gospel

by Anthony Butler

Dominican Volunteers USA

This year Dominican Volunteers USA (DVUSA) has 11 women and men serving in five cities in a variety of ministries. This spectrum of ministries is representative of the many ways of preaching the gospel to which we've been called to as members of the Dominican Family. Two missionaries are in parish ministry in Hispanic-dominated parishes. Two volunteers are aiding the education of refugee and immigrant children in Atlanta. Two women, one in Chicago and one in Houston, are advocating for the rights of low-wage, most often immigrant, workers. We have a woman working alongside Sr Eileen Gannon, OP, at the United Nations. One woman is working with preschool children with learning defi-

cits, while her housemate is currently ministering with the elderly. In another community, there is a young woman ministering to the educational needs of formerly incarcerated individuals, while her housemate works in a learning center for homeless women. And we've been involved with many other ministries in the past.

In 1973, Sr Marcella Connolly, OP (Sinsinawa), founded the Apostolic Volunteers. This program was solely funded and administered by the Dominican Sisters of Sinsinawa. Later, Dominicans in the South and West began programs. In the late 1990's many East Coast communities wanted to begin a program, and there was a coming together to look at possibilities. A new program came forth in the spirit of

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President Ruth

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Mallicoat's reflections provided a mindset for the weekend. Though the Order was founded 800 years ago, the call to our charism has a present-day agenda. Today's Lay Dominicans have tools to carry the Gospel that our predecessors did not have, such as easier access to liturgy, quicker means of travel, and a vast presence in the world, to name a few. In our small gathering in Michigan, there were at least four languages represented—Spanish, Vietnamese, Chaldean, and English. Where will the future call us to preach?



The theme of the Leadership Workshop was "Lay Dominican Life in Community and Call to Preach." The program was a long time in development. Back in 1983 at the Dominican Family Meeting, an outline of the present formation program was given to Fr Olivier, OP, former Lay Promoter in Rome. The efforts of your delegates during the workshop, 24 years later, ended up enhancing that outline and giving the material a 21st century presentation (more thoughts on the content throughout this newsletter).

We know that preaching takes many forms. Even the symbol of the simple Dominican shield has a way of preaching to the world without a word, until a curious person asks, "What does that shield mean?" A large poster of the shield was held up to locate Dominican arrivals at the airport. While waiting at the airport, a gentleman asked about it. Since the flight had arrived, the brief explanation was that the white on the shield pierces the darkness. Understood was the message that change can happen when one brings light to the situation. In a past conversation with Fr Vincent De Couesnongle regarding the proceedings of an earlier meeting that did not seem to move forward, I asked him a question and he responded, "There is always great darkness before there is light." His response returned to me often as I prepared the notebooks for the meeting.

Yes, the Lay Dominican Leadership Workshop of the Province of St Albert the Great, USA, happened with enthusiasm. Many sacrifices were made—a few came with canes, and also a wheelchair. Many thanks to the Chaldean community, which brought wonderful apples, the special treat of baklava, and a donation for the Irvine Fund for future programs. Even an enfant attended, a future Lay Dominican! (He accrued numerous nannies.) Thank you to all.

Best wishes for a peaceful Christmas season.

P.S. I would like to remind you that the next Provincial Meeting is tentatively set for Oct. 23-26, 2008. Your delegate must be elected (not appointed), and his/her name, address, phone, and e-mail, sent to me at rkummer@att.net or by regular mail. And even sooner, the officers and our Interprovincial Delegate (Norm Laurendeau) must prepare for the Dominican Laity Inter-Provincial Council (DLIPC) Meeting, which occurs April 10-13. This time it meets in Plymouth, Mich., because the Province of St Albert the Great is hosting it (last year's was in New Orleans). Please consider a year-end donation (see Page 7) to help extend this gift of hospitality to the other provinces.

Three New People Fill Lay Provincial Offices

by **Laura Dejmek, OP**
Co-Promoter of Midwest Preaching

I had long been drawn to the Dominican Order because of its charism of preaching. A primary reason I attended Catholic Theological Union was to become a better (as well as “credentialed”) preacher. When I was asked to take on the ministry of co-promoter of preaching for the Lay Dominicans (Central Province), I was both honored and humbled. After prayer and discernment, I felt God was inviting me to begin this ministry. I am still in the process of learning “the ropes” of this position. I am blessed to be paired with Dr Jill O’Brien, OP, who is gifted in so many ways. Jill attends the national meetings, and I will be attending the regional meetings.

I have attended my first meeting—which was both a regional and national meeting. I was awed to be in attendance with so many gifted preachers from other ‘branches’ of our Order. This ministry already has helped me to have a better understanding of the many branches of our Order, and feel a part of the larger family of Dominicans.



I have been blessed to have had opportunities in those forms of liturgical preaching available to the laity about

which Fr Motl wrote eloquently in the last issue of *The Challenge*: preaching at Stations of the Cross, pet blessings, Liturgy of the Hours, etc. I hope as our province’s co-promoter of preaching to be a resource to our chapters. It is my dream that Lay Dominicans fully embrace our charism of preaching. While it is true that we preach effectively through the example of our lives, I share the concern of the apostolic sisters of our Order that preaching for the non-ordained in our Order has been relegated to the back burner.

How can we effectively preach? Certainly through words—spoken and written, through media, music, and the arts. Our modes of preaching are only limited by our imaginations!

Laura Dejmek lives and works in the Chicago area and is a member of the Bl Fra Angelico Group. She is a classically trained vocalist, with a Masters Degree in Music, who teaches elementary-school music. In addition to her teaching career, she is also a guest preacher at St Helena’s Episcopal Church, and a regular preacher on the Dominican website (www.word.op.org). She also cantors at a Chicago Roman Catholic parish. She graduated from Catholic Theological Union in 2007 with an MDiv. She is the first person to have graduated from CTU with a double concentration in this degree. Her concentrations were word and worship (preaching and liturgy) and Biblical studies. She is the proud rescuer of a beautiful four-year old collie girl (now) named Siena. Laura loves to travel, and will be spending this New Year’s Eve in Antarctica.

by **Marlene Carlos Laurendeau, OP**
Lay Provincial Promoter of Justice, Peace, and Care of Creation

Being the new Promoter of Peace, Justice, and Care of Creation (JPCC) for the Lay Dominicans of St Albert the Great Province is a privilege. I am slowly learning the ropes.

The “justice pros,” as they call themselves, keep track of Congressional efforts in such areas as refugee status, immigration, and the death penalty. Their priorities also include global warming (“climate justice”), nuclear disarmament, the Israeli/Palestine conflict, Iraq, Africa, Colombia, and human trafficking. They put out alerts regarding pending United States legislation and United Nations work that is important to all of us. I’ll pass them on to you via the *Challenge*.



In a time when international cooperation is vital, the Dominicans believe wholeheartedly in the work of the UN. The Dominican Leadership Conference (DLC) represents the worldwide Dominican Family at the UN in New York, and the Dominicans for Justice and Peace represent us in Geneva. We get “alerts” from them often.

In addition, the General Promoters of Justice and Peace in Rome alert us. They have recently directed our attention to Pope Paul VI’s encyclical, *Populorum Progressio*, at its 40th anniversary. An important aspect that they have pointed out concerns the issue (and Catholic social teaching) of *solidarity*. In their recent newsletter, they report the Pope as saying that “[A]varice—the exclusive pursuit of possessions—is for nations and individual persons ‘the most evident form of moral underdevelopment.’ For this reason, he could strongly assert: ‘The world is sick’—a sickness shown in a lack of sisterhood and brotherhood among individuals and peoples. Today, *solidarity* has become a common word, if not a common reality.”

That, I must admit, is something I have to work on! This job will help me do that.

Marlene Laurendeau is Editor of the Challenge, and became fully professed at the St Mary Magdalene community in West Lafayette, Ind., in 2006. She lived there for 35 years. Marlene now lives in both Maine and in California, where she was raised as the daughter of Portuguese immigrants. She finds it providential that in the late ‘60s at her Catholic high school in Oakland, Calif., she was taught by the Dominican Sisters of Adrian, Mich. After a career in communications, she became a practicing clinical social worker, and has a recent diploma in spiritual direction (DASD, Class of 2005) from San Francisco Theological Seminary.

by **Michael Andrews, OP**
Chairperson of the Liturgy and Celebration Committee

Even in preaching, there are times when words are not enough. Worship, reconciliation, and celebration are times when the spoken word must be transcended by mystery. This reality is expressed wonderfully in the artistry of our brother, Fra Angelico (Bl John of Fiesole) and by Thomas Aquinas himself, when he dismissed his own writings as “so much straw” compared to seeing the mystery of Christ.



I hope to gather a team that will help bring to the fore the great richness of the Dominican liturgical tradition. Our particular spirituality is at once intensely active and intensely contemplative. We must be one with Christ and then preach Christ to others.

We are already in the midst of the 800th anniversaries of the foundation of the Order of Preachers. The first such anniversary occurred last year, marking the founding of the “cradle” of the Order—the Monastery of Notre Dame de Prouilhe by St Dominic (1206). Such momentous occasions in the life of the Church should not be missed. These celebrations will culminate on Dec. 22, 2016—the 800th anniversary of the approval of the Order of Preachers by Pope Honorius III.

I believe that a series of years, each taking its theme from one of the four pillars of the Order, would be a magnificent way to reinvigorate our commitment to the Dominican charism, and perhaps draw others to see its beauty. Along with such major celebrations, the more routine occasions and transitions in the life of the province should be marked with fitting ceremonies to the honor of God.

Michael E. Andrews is the new Chair of the Liturgy and Celebration Committee for the Lay Provincial Council of the Province of St Albert the Great. He made first promises April, 14, 2007, and is a member of St Catherine of Siena Group in Grand Blanc, Mich. He is also Diocesan Director of the Office of Catechesis for the Diocese of Lansing, Mich. He was born and raised in Michigan; has a BA in philosophy from St Charles Borromeo Seminary in Philadelphia; and an MDiv in systematic theology from Mount St Mary’s University in Emmitsburg, Maryland.

Leadership Workshop

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problems that can occur in communities. Michael Porterfield then discussed the development of our new formation program, and the significance of having Tom Ryba as the Formation Director for our Province. Cyndi provided guidance on different types of formation sessions. Her take-home message was that variety is important, as not everyone learns in the same way. She also asked for feedback on what works in each community.



At the November Leadership Workshop, folks had fun at an ice-breaker. Rear: Jim Steffans as rain cloud (Dr Eeyore), Penny Knoll in lace mantilla (Miss Grace Rosaria). Front: Harvey Newcomb in prayer shawl (Mr Aaron Moses), Fr Bob Staes in seaweed (Jonah Ninevah), Kim Nae-gle in wild wig (Diana Jordan), and Bess Torralba in hippie wig (Ms Starshine Relativiti).

The Vietnamese and Chaldean chapters were introduced by Ruth Kummer right before lunch. The Vietnamese brought a photo album of their recent reception and profession ceremonies; the Chaldeans brought squash, apples, and baklava for everyone. At later meals, the Chaldeans led the Lord's prayer in Aramaic and the Vietnamese sang grace in Vietnamese.

After lunch, Beatriz Cisneros introduced a shortened Myers-Briggs psychological survey that can be used to help communities understand themselves, including different preferences for working together. A video was shown demonstrating the major personality types in any community.

President Kummer then discussed chapter management, including the importance of maintaining chapter files. Sample copies of important documents and checklists were handed out to all attendees. Ruth indicated that all essential documents will eventually be posted on our Provincial website, for easy printing and dissemination. Our *Guidelines* still need approval by Fr Michael Mascari, OP, the Provincial of our Province. The *Leadership Handbook* and formation documents need further corrections and should be posted on the website by the end of the year. Michael Porterfield preached during Evening Prayer, reminding us that "all souls" includes us, because we have lost loved ones and we also grieve and need support and prayer.

Following an introduction to lay preaching by Fr Motl, Norm Laurendeau discussed venues for lay preaching, with clarifications from Canon Law regarding lay preaching, when and where it is permitted, and the importance of obtaining the local bishop's permission before preaching in a church. Norm then led a workshop on lay preaching. The lay attendees broke into groups and each determined a theme for lay preaching based on a common scriptural text. Each group came up with a different theme, underlying the fact that there is no single way to preach on the same scriptural passage.

Saturday, Nov. 3, began with Morning Prayer and Mass, presided over

by Fr Jim Barnett, OP. In his homily, Fr Barnett spoke of Martin de Porres on his feast day, and the need for social justice. He used the story of a town that cared for all babies that somehow came down the river in baskets. When we ask why rather than how, we begin doing social justice rather than social service. Babies can only stop coming down the river when the original problem has been solved by the community.

After breakfast, the new formation program was presented in detail by Tom Ryba. Sufficient time was available for Tom to answer questions regarding the formation document. The attendees were then divided into moderators, formation directors, and spiritual directors. The moderators were led by Beatriz Cisneros and Ruth Kummer, the formation directors by Tom Ryba, and the spiritual directors by Fr Motl. Each group met for three hours, with a break for lunch. In this way, moderators, formation directors, and spiritual directors were able to discuss their roles in implementing the new formation program.

During Evening Prayer, Kathy Wagner preached on the importance of humility in our lives and in our roles as Lay Dominicans. She reminded us that we are most humble when guided by the Holy Spirit. Mike Porterfield and Cyndi Ricard conducted the evening session, which was concerned with specific details on our new Provincial website, which will be the main source for eventually getting documents related to the Formation Program. The website is being made available through the Aquinas Institute in St Louis, Missouri. In thanks to the Institute, attendees were asked not to give out user names and passwords to others. Mike Porterfield must be contacted if members wish to have their own accounts at the Provincial website. All accounts must be given only to Lay Dominicans associated with the Central Province, as confirmed by moderators for each community.

Sunday, Nov. 4, began with Morning Prayer and Mass, conducted by Fr Peter Witchousky, OP. In his homily, Fr Witchousky provided wonderful humor in discussing the story of Zacchaeus, who was a small man and



During the workshop: spiritual assistants in the background, formation directors in the foreground, and moderators, not visible.

thus climbed a sycamore tree to see Jesus. But Jesus surprised both Zacchaeus and everyone else by inviting himself to his home. How would we respond if Jesus invited Himself to our home?

After breakfast, a panel discussion on preaching was moderated by Norm Laurendeau. The panelists were Br Kevin Carroll, Kathy Wagner, and Steve Smith. Each told stories of their preaching experiences, in chapters, at Bible studies, and at Eucharistic services. Many questions, comments, and suggestions underscored the many opportunities for preaching by Lay Dominicans, but all agreed that the process should start in our local communities. The conference ended with a summary of workshop highlights, conducted by Mike Porterfield. Attendees left the workshop enthusiastic and renewed by the energy created through our new formation program.

Promoter's Corner

by Fr Jim Motl, OP

Advent is a season of hope. Our Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, issued an encyclical letter on hope, *Spe Salvi*, to help us consider what Christian hope should look like today. I urge you to read this letter. (For those with Internet access the letter appears under Papal Archives, Benedict XVI, Encyclical Letters, *Spe Salvi*, Nov. 30, 2007.) What caught my attention



was his emphasis on hope as a performative virtue in contrast to a solely intellectual virtue. What I think he means is that hope for some people is dreaming or speculating about what the next life will be like. The Pope reminds us that true hope

involves action. He clarifies that what gives us hope is not principally what we do, but what God is doing in us and through us. Too often in our dissatisfaction about what is going on in our lives and in our world we neglect to recognize what God might be doing or wanting to do. Does physical or emotional suffering hold a prominent place in our lives at present? God has accomplished great things through human suffering, beginning with the suffering of His own Son and continuing through the sufferings of martyrs even to our own day.

We should also find reason for hope in what God is accomplishing through our living out faithfully His vocation for us. For Lay Dominicans that means being aware of how prayer, study, community, and service are functioning in you to bring the promised Kingdom closer to reality in our world. I am filled with hope for Lay Dominicans in our Province after our Leadership Workshop at the beginning of November. That so many came from almost every local chapter and group in itself is a real sign that many local communities of Lay Dominicans are eager for new ideas that will help them grow in the spirit of the Dominican Order and be better prepared to carry the preaching mission of the Order to our world through their lives.

Another reason I find for hope in this event is the hard work many people were willing to do to make it happen. In the fall issue of *Challenge* I expressed my appreciation for the work of the Formation Committee in developing the new formation program that was introduced at the Workshop. I again want to thank Thomas Ryba, for his leadership in this project. I also want to express my appreciation to the Aquinas Institute and Michael Porterfield, the media technician at Aquinas for providing Internet access to the program. If you want access to the website and do not yet have it, contact Michael at tech@ai.edu. Identify yourself as a Lay Dominican. The website is not open to the general public because of the site's limitations, not because we wish to keep the program a secret. If you know someone other than a Lay Dominican of our Province who wants to see the program, refer that person to me (motljr@slu.edu). Tom Ryba is preparing an e-mail version of the program that I will be able to send on request.

The success of the Leadership Workshop was due in great part to the

hard work of Ruth Kummer, President of the Lay Dominicans in St Albert's Province. She made the arrangements for the meeting, prepared the notebook that everyone attending the meeting received, spoke about leadership skills during the sessions, and provided transportation between St John's Center and the airport. The workshop was in a way the culmination of her dream of providing a workshop to help our chapters and groups meet the problems of survival and growth in our world today. I am very grateful to her and others for their help in sponsoring the weekend. (Mary Lee Odders, the Provincial Treasurer, is handling the financial side. If you have not done so, send her your reimbursement requests for travel to the Workshop.)

Cyndi Ricard presented an amusing introduction to the Workshop and gave suggestions about how different chapters might want to implement the new program. Michael Porterfield explained how to use the website that carries the formation program, and Beatriz Cisneros presented a method for assessing the gifts of members. Provincial Vice President Harvey Newcomb and Provincial Corresponding Secretary Karen Sabourin also lent helping hands. All these contributions add to my sense of hope for the future of the Lay Dominicans in our Province.

Another reason there is hope for the future of Lay Dominicans in our Province is the enthusiasm for promoting awareness of Dominican lay life among others at meetings like the one we had in November and at Provincial Council meetings. In the past five years under Ruth's leadership we have seen the number of chapters and groups grow from 13 to 20. The new groups and some of the old as well, have younger members enthusiastic about their Dominican identity. I want to see this enthusiasm and growth continue.

In less than two years Ruth's tenure will end. In the meantime I hope that local chapters and groups will be discussing who the next Provincial officers should be. (A nominating committee to suggest candidates will be elected next October.) According to the *Bylaws*, the Provincial Council must elect a President, Vice President, and Inter-Provincial Delegate from the voting members of the Council. This means that as local communities elect delegates to the Provincial Council of 2008 and 2009, they should think of choosing not just delegates, but possible candidates for those jobs. I urge each community to review the job requirements for these positions and consider who from their own group could be eligible. I understand that some communities have already elected their delegates. Those who haven't, should either select someone who could provide leadership for the Province for three to six years, or carefully instruct their delegate about the qualities they think the Provincial officers should have. This information should also be shared with the nomination committee when it is requested. I realize that this may be early to begin thinking about an election, but given the somewhat cumbersome nature of the process, I don't think it is too early to start thinking about it.

I wish you all a blessed Christmas season. I will offer Mass for you during Christmas week. I ask for your prayers as I consult with a spinal surgeon about what can be done for increasingly troublesome back and leg pains.

Volunteers

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uniting with the entire US Dominican Family. We have been continually, since our birth, working in a spirit of collaboration.

We would invite you to think of college-age, especially graduating seniors, whom you know that have demonstrated a desire to be of service. We have found that in the almost 35 years of Dominican volunteering, an average of 75 percent to 80 percent of program participants link to the program because of a pre-existing connection with someone in the Dominican Family. If you would like to nominate an individual you believe would be right for our program, you can request a nomination form, download one from our website, or simply contact the office. For more information on how you can be involved, for more information about the program, to join our mailing list, or to just chat about the joy of sharing the preaching, please feel free at any time to contact our office. We look forward to hearing from you at 708-524-5985; or at <http://dvusa.org>; or by e-mailing us at dominicanvolunteers@gmail.com.

Consider a Year-End Donation

-----cut and return -----

Consider donating to your 2007 Fund Drive. (This is in addition to dues.) In gratitude, your name will be included in a contributors' listing featured in the next *Challenge*, unless you indicate otherwise below.

() I do NOT want my name included in the listing of contributors. I prefer to remain anonymous.

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Make check payable to: Dominican Laity of St Albert the Great.

Mail to: Lay Dominican Office, PO Box 85451, Racine, WI 53408-5451

Dominican Liturgical Calendar—First Quarter, 2008

January

- 1 - Blessed Virgin Mary (S)
- 3 - The Most Holy Name of Jesus
- Bl Stephanie Quinzani
- 4 - St Zedislava Berkiana (Lay Dominican)
- 6 - Epiphany (S)
- 7 - St Raymond of Penafort (M)
- 10 - Bl Gonsalvo of Amarante
- Bl Ann of the Angels
- 11 - Bl Bernard Scammacca (M)
- 15 - St Francis Ferrandez de Capillis (M)
- 18 - St Margaret of Hungary (M)
- 19 - Bl Andrew of Peschiera
- 22 - Bl Anthony della Chiesa
- 23 - Bl Henry Suso
- 27 - Bl Marcolinus of Forli
- 28 - St Thomas Aquinas (F)
- 29 - Bl Villana delle Botti (Lay Dominican)

February

- 3 - Bl Peter of Ruffia
- Bl Anthony Pavoni
- Bl Bartholomew Cerveri
- 4 - St Catherine de Ricci (M)
- 6 - Ash Wednesday
- 7 - Anniversary of deceased
mothers and fathers of Dominicans
- 12 - Bl Reginald of Orleans (OM)
- 13 - Bl Jordan of Saxony (M)
- 16 - Bl Nicholas of Paglia
- 18 - Bl John of Fiesole (AKA Fra Angelico) (OM)
- 19 - Bl Alvarez of Cordoba
- 20 - Bl Christopher of Milan
- 24 - Bl Constantius of Fabriano
- 25 - Bl Ascension of the Heart of Jesus Nichol Goni

March

- 23 - Easter (S) (S) Solemnity (F) Feast
(M) Memorial
- 31 - Annunciation of the Lord (S) (OM) Optional Memorial

Provincial Promoter: Fr Jim Motl, OP; **President:** Ruth Kummer; **Vice President:** Harvey Newcomb II; **Recording Secretary:** Cynthia Ricard; **Corresponding Secretary:** Karen Sabourin; **Treasurer:** Mary Lee Odders; **Formation Director:** Thomas Ryba; **Inter-Provincial Council Delegate:** Norm Laurendeau; and **Challenge Editor:** Marlene Carlos 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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