

CHALLENGE



Jubilee Mandate: Listen to, and Preach, the Word

The General Curia of the Dominican Order recently decided—in tune with the year of St Paul

(*Woe to us if we do not preach the Gospel!* 1 Cor. 9:16)—to give the theme and focus of “preaching” to

the decade of Jubilee celebration. The 2009 subtheme is *St Dominic, Preacher of Grace*.

Master of the Order, Br Carlos Azpiroz Costa, OP, has invited Dominicans around the world to reflect on St Dominic this way: “His entire life, lived in intimate union with the Word of God, invites us into a profound contemplative listening to the Word and a bold commitment to preach that very same Word in our world today.”

Since Advent of 2006 the Dominican Family worldwide has been celebrating the 800th anniversary of the confirmation of the Order of Preachers. The journey started first by commemorating the founding of the first Dominican community in Prouilhe, the birthplace of the *Holy Preaching*. And in the past year, the Holy Rosary was celebrated as having an important place in the history and tradition of the Family.

Until 2016, the Jubilee subthemes will feature various aspects of preaching.

Jubilee Preaching Themes Now Set

**2009 - In the beginning was the Word (Jn 1:1):
St Dominic, Preacher of Grace**



2006 - 2016

**2010 - How can people preach unless they are sent? (Rom 10:15):
The Mission of Preaching**

**2011 - We hear them speaking in our own tongues of the mighty acts of God (Acts 2:11):
Preaching and Culture / Community Preaching**

**2012 - Go and tell my brothers... (Jn 20:17):
Dominican Women and Preaching**

**2013 - Do unto me according to your Word (Lk 1:38):
Mary: Contemplation and Preaching of the Word**

**2014 - Your sons and daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions (Joel 3:1):
Lay Dominicans and Preaching**

**2015 - If you remain in my word, you will truly be my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free (John 8:31-32);
For freedom Christ set us free (Gal 5:1):
Dominic: Government, Spirituality, and Freedom**

**2016 - Woe to us if we do not preach the gospel! (1 Cor 9:16):
The Order of Preachers: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow**

From the President

by Ruth Kummer, OP

Reflecting on the Lenten themes may bring up memories of the message your mother may have given you when she served a special meal.



She would announce, “Hold onto your fork—something better is coming!” Yes, Lent is a time to wrestle with one’s weaknesses (in a positive way), in preparation for the feast of Easter and ultimately Pentecost.

Easter can be a symbol of transition and a time of being present to Jesus’ redemptive love. Though centuries have passed since He died to redeem each and every one of us, we may use this time to prepare for the call that comes on Pentecost.

The fact that Pentecost originally occurred in a communal setting, provides food for thought. Discerning one’s mission, or next step in life, is not

Continued on Page 8

Peace, Justice, and Care of Creation Corner

Fasting Encouraged to End ‘Trail of Hatred and Resentment’ Here and Everywhere

The Iraq Coordinating Committee has invited the Dominican Family to a *Lenten Fast and Action* on behalf of the 4 million refugees that are displaced as a result of the war in Iraq, reports *DomLife.org*.

Recently Fr Barnett, OP, said to *DomLife*, “I invite you to join [this] action which has come from *Pax Christi USA*. It’s a campaign called *It Is Time to End the Trail of Hatred and Resentment*, and it focuses on the present plans to escalate the war in Afghanistan.”

The leadership of *Pax Christi* has been able to have dialogue with people in the Obama administration, he said, and “their statement claims that change in US administrations opens the possibility for a new approach to overcoming terrorism and ensuring peace and security for all nations. To continue to rely upon failed military strategies will only lead us further down the ‘trail of resentment and hatred.’”

In September of 2002, Dominicans Fr Jim Barnett, Sr Jane

Abell, Fr Brian Pierce, and Sheila Provencher took up a water-only fast in Union Square, NYC, and on Sept. 28 the four broke their fast on the front lawn of the United Nations with Fr Carlos Azpiroz, OP, Master of the Dominican Order. Their time of prayer and fasting was called *There Must be Another Way Fast* for peace and nonviolence.

Fr Barnett says, “Our prayer and fasting did not prevent the invasion of Iraq nor the six years of horrendous destruction

and death for our family in Iraq. Nonetheless some personal and communal conversion *has* taken place.” Now he is calling for a moment when our nation may experience a “metanoia”—a conversion—when we turn around, change direction and chart a new course. As church, as people of faith and good will, we must raise our voices and create the public groundswell that makes real change possible—here, in Afghanistan, in Iraq, in Palestine/Israel, and everywhere.”

Preaching with Plates And Other Creative Means

by Laura Dejmek, OP,
Co-Promoter of Preaching

As Dominicans, we are called to *embrace* our charism of preaching. It defines who we are. *We are preachers*. Say it to yourself: *I am a preacher*. Now, do you believe it?

I think sometimes—particularly as *Lay* Dominicans—we see ourselves as Dominicans, but not necessarily preachers. Oftentimes, we presume preaching is only liturgical preaching (often dubbed “pulpit preaching”). While canonically there are provisions for lay people to preach (evening prayer, stations of the cross, when deemed necessary by the pastor/bishop, etc.), many Lay Dominicans do not have the opportunities for liturgical preaching, nor feel called to liturgical preaching. It is interesting to note that our European ordained brothers feel that preaching *outside* of the liturgy is of vital concern.

How can we preach, outside of a “pulpit”? As Dominicans, we are called to embrace the role and lifestyle of a preacher, and preach in all that we say and all that we do. The saying attributed to St Francis of Assisi, applies well to all Dominicans: “Preach the Gospel always, and when necessary, use words.” For myself, I know that my preaching can come in my encounters with people after church—discussing issues of the day, and

“preaching the Gospel” on these issues. I also decided to preach via my auto license plates.

In the state of Illinois, one can order “vanity” plates and/or “personalized” plates. Personalized plates have a number at the end, vanity plates are all letters. I have a sporty two-seater convertible; it would not be unusual to have a vanity or personalized plate on my type of automobile. While trying to come up with a letter/number configuration, I stumbled upon a combination that made me pause—as it spoke to *me*, and challenged me. The first rule of preaching, is that the preacher is the first person to whom the message is preached. I originally envisioned preaching through my license plates to *others*, now I will preach—first to myself, every time I enter my car—and then to others.

How are you being called to preach? It could be as simple as through your answering machine message, a wreath with a message on your front door, conversations with your grandchildren, even your email address or a Scripture passage under your signature—either on your checks, or on your e-mail signature (that can be set so it is done automatically). Be creative! PREACH!

Help Wanted: A Few Good People

by Jill O'Brien, OP
Nominating Committee Pro Tem Chairwoman

Nominating committees seek your recommendations for elective officers for the Lay Provincial Council at this time. This includes prospective names for President, Vice President, and Inter-Provincial Council Delegate, plus first and second alternates. We are also looking for candidates for the appointive positions of Treasurer; Formation Committee Chair and members; Co-Promoter of Preaching; Recording Secretary; Corresponding Secretary; Promoter of Justice, Peace, and Care of Creation; Publications Editor; and Chair or member of the Ad Hoc Committee on Liturgy and Celebration.

Providing service at this level provides a great way to meet brothers and sisters from across the Midwest and to deepen one's giving, whether for new or more experienced members. Travel and lodging expenses to attend

the Provincial Council meetings in Michigan are paid through Provincial funds.

Forward name, telephone, and email contact information, as well as a paragraph of information about candidate qualifications or rationale for the nomination to Jill O'Brien at JOB631@aol.com. All nominees will be interviewed (via email or telephone) by the respective screening committees concerning their willingness to serve, whether in elected or appointed positions.

New Editor Wanted by June 1

by Marlene Laurendeau, OP
Publications Editor

This issue of the *Challenge* marks the 50ieth year of publishing, according to available records. A new Provincial logo on Page 1, is a kind of celebratory mark that gives a defining image to, not only

Continued on Page 8

Congratulations to St Louis and Kansas City Members



L-R: Fr Jim Motl, Kimberly Naegele, Robert Hughes, Sebastian Mahfood, Donna Chesaneck, Eleonore Stump, and Moderator Michael Porterfield of Queen of the Holy Rosary Chapter, St Louis. (Final Profession: Naegele, Hughes, and Chesaneck.)



L-R: Tom Bogdon, Mark Radziejewski, Moderator Tom Smith, and John Heuert of the St Martin de Porres Group of Greater Kansas City. Mark Radziejewski made his First Profession in March. (See Page 8 for others.)

The Dumb Ox Medley



2009 Jubilee Theme: 'St Dominic, Preacher of Grace'

Now as he approached Jericho a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging, and hearing a crowd going by, he inquired what was happening. They told him, 'Jesus of Nazareth is passing by.' He shouted, 'Jesus, Son of David, have pity on me!' The people walking in front rebuked him, telling him to be silent, but he kept calling out all the more, 'Son of David, have pity on me!' Then Jesus stopped and ordered that he be brought to him; and when he came near, Jesus asked him, 'What do you want me to do for you?' He replied, 'Lord, please let me see.' Jesus told him, 'Have sight; your faith has saved you.' He immediately received his sight and followed him, giving glory to God. When they saw this, all the people gave praise to God. Luke 18: 35-43.

by Fr Brian J. Pierce, OP

This year, 2009, as part of our ongoing celebration of the Jubilee, will focus on "St. Dominic, Preacher of Grace." Dominic was a preacher of grace because Jesus was a preacher of grace, a preacher who communicated the gratuitous love of God. Jesus announced that all we have is a gift from God. This is grace, this is gratuitousness.

In this Gospel passage from

Luke, we see that Jesus gives a perfect example of what it means to be a preacher of grace, and in this way Jesus models for us what it means to be a Dominican today. As he walked along the road toward Jericho—like a good itinerant preacher—in the midst of all the busy activity and noise, Jesus heard the cry of a blind man who was seated on the edge of the road. The Gospel of Luke tells us that "Jesus stood still ..."

"Jesus stood still ..."—something so simple. In the midst of everything that was happening, Jesus was able to hear the desperate cry of the blind man and stop. (In the Gospel of Mark he is called Bartimaeus.) Jesus had within himself a deep interior silence that prepared him to be receptive and open to hearing the cries that no one else heard. He was able to hear the voice that was inaudible to the rest of the world. This is the sign of a true contemplative heart. Dominic also had a heart capable of hearing the cries of the world, symbolized so well in his encounter with the innkeeper in Toulouse.

After he heard the cry of the blind man, and after coming to a stop along the road, Jesus asked him a question: "What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus' few words—so

simple, yet so deeply human—were Good News for the blind man, not because they were words that expressed profound theological concepts, but because they were words that allowed the blind man to discover anew his own dignity. No one had ever asked this man a question. No one had ever recognized that he was able to speak for himself. No one. He was simply an object—never a subject, never a person. When Jesus asked him the question, he opened up the way for him to become a human being once again. He was no longer just the blind man over there on the side of the road. He was a human being again. Was this not the famous cry of the first Spanish Dominicans who went to the

No one had ever asked this man a question. No one had ever recognized that he was able to speak for himself. No one. He was simply an object—never a subject, never a person.

Americas at the beginning of the 16th century: "Are these not human beings?"

What kind of words do we speak? Do we speak words at people as if they were ignorant? Do we speak words aimed at making ourselves feel more important? Or do we speak words that help the other person rediscover his or her own dignity as a son or daughter of God? To speak in this way is to announce the Good News of Christ.

To be a preacher of grace, it seems to me, means to speak words that express the gratuitous love of God.

We live in a time in which we are inundated by words, but who will speak words of grace? Dominic spoke words of grace. It was grace, the gratuitous love of God that gave new life to the blind man. He was healed, thanks to the words that Jesus spoke to him, words that allowed him to become a human being once again. I think this is the grace of preaching that God gave to Dominic, and this is the grace that Dominic gives to us, his family.

This article can be found at curia.op.org/jubilee.

Las Casas: The Father of Universal Human Rights

He is considered the first public advocate of indigenous rights, the father of what today is called universal human rights: He is the Dominican, Bartolome de las Casas. He was born in Spain in 1484 and raised in a merchant family closely connected to Christopher Columbus. According to a recent article in *National Catholic Reporter*, his case was advanced for canonization by Spanish bishops in 2002, and in 2005 the US bishops' conference supported that proposal.

He cuts a striking figure who argued eloquently and knowledgeably for the dignity of the Indians of Hispaniola, now modern-day Haiti and the Dominican Republic. But before he became their advocate to popes and kings (and queens) in Spain, he himself profited from this adventure in the New World.

In between his studies for the priesthood, he joined his father there in 1502 for five years. "While working holdings of lands and Indians, his own and those of his merchant father, he also traveled the island as a provisioner to the Spanish soldiery," explains Fr David Orique, OP, in his article, "Bartolome de Las Casas: A Brief Outline of His Life and Labor."

Orique continues, "During this early period, while accompanying two different military expeditions of Governor Ovando, he observed the tragic massacre of a large group of Indian leaders on the island. The young Las Casas deplored all the killings and was horrified by what he witnessed of

these atrocities. Moreover, while traveling as a provisioner he also began to see first-hand the conditions to which the Indians were being subjected and the disruption of native life caused by the Spanish enslavement of the indigenous to mine for gold."

He returned to Spain and finished his studies, receiving a degree in canon law. He then traveled back to Hispaniola. Orique says, "He took up his task as Indian *doctrinero*, the official catechist to the Indians, but remained a holder of Indians and property, a contradiction his conscience could not sustain much longer." It took the arrival of the first Dominicans to Hispaniola to challenge him: Fr Anton Montesino delivered, on Dec. 21, 1511, "his famous speech on behalf of the Indians. Along with his Dominican confreres he denounced as a mortal sin the *encomienda* system of forced labor."

Orique continues, "It took Las Casas several more years and additional witnessing of the abuses and atrocities of the conquest to have the first of what scholars call his two great conversions. On Pentecost of 1514, he renounced his ownership of Indians and the inter-island provisions business. He then started to preach his own provocative sermons against the wrongs of the conquest, particularly the *encomienda* system."

He went back to Spain in 1515 and tried to convince Church and royal leaders alike to redress the abuses of conquest, but met with several failures. "In the depths of dis-

couragement, he left his work and entered the Dominican Order on the Island of Hispaniola in 1522 at the age of 36," Orique says.

"Scholars call his entrance into the Dominican Order the second conversion of Las Casas. He spent his initial years studying theology and law, after which he was appointed Prior of an outpost on the north coast of the Dominican Republic—Puerto de Plata—where he founded a new community." He resumed his fight against the slave trade, but was soon silenced by government officials. He turned to writing his monumental *History of the Indies*, a valuable resource, upon which he based a later work, which became "a landmark in anthropology."

"About the year 1530 he began writing a Latin treatise, *De Unico Vocationis Modo Omnium Gentium ad Veram Religionem*, which became one of the most significant missionary tracts in the history of the Church. Basically, it was a blueprint for his own later missionary experiments: the spread of the Gospel by peaceful means alone, the need for understanding of doctrine and clear catechesis prior to conversion, the need to respect and utilize native cultures as part of the missionary enterprise."

His intimate knowledge of the land and its people plus his scholarly training made him a formidable advocate for his cause. He convinced Pope Paul III to issue the landmark papal bull, *Sub-*

limis Deus, often called the *Magna Carta* of Indians' rights, acknowledging Indians to be human, capable of receiving faith, and having the right of liberty and property.

"In 1540 Las Casas returned to Spain and joined other churchmen and laymen to lobby Charles V for protection of the Amerindians. His nearly 40 years of experience in the Americas made him an informative and convincing source for the king to trust. As a result of this ... the New Laws of 1542 were enacted, a striking combination of political reality and humanitarian idealism, that abolished slavery and the *encomienda* system," Orique says. "This effort ranked as the supreme achievement of his career."

His enemies tried to prevent his further influence on the court; they encouraged the Church to make him a bishop somewhere far from the king. His friends saw the benefits of this also, because he could then use his ecclesiastical powers to enforce the New Laws. Las Casas chose the poor diocese of Chiapas, Mexico.

"Even before starting for his distant diocese, Las Casas undertook his first duty as bishop by securing the liberation of Indians held as slaves in Seville, Spain. His action aroused much enmity against him, but he was indifferent: The text of the New Laws was explicit, leaving no opening for false implementation," Orique says.

Continued on Page 6

Studying: A Must for Every Lay Dominican

Then Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, 'If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.' John 8:31-32.

Lay Dominicans take the road to freedom through their commitment to the pillar of study. It is an important part, and one of the four pillars of Dominican life. Fr Paul Murray, OP, devotes a chapter to this in his book, *The New Wine of Dominican Spirituality*. He says that in order to awaken to God, there must be an awakening that comes from study: "...whereas goodness may indeed be the holiness of the heart, truth is the holiness of the mind."

Sometimes the mistake is made to associate holiness with the heart and less with the mind. There is a dualism that is set up by this, a false separation, and Murray says that this is foreign to Dominicans. "[T]hinking, serious thinking about the Gospel, and about the world we are living in itself can be a form of holiness—and a necessary form." Yet study has been suspect through the ages.

Countering Criticism

Learning was a sacred activity from the very beginnings of the Dominican community, starting with St Dominic, and it soon became a distinctive characteristic. His primary goal was to gain knowledge of scripture and right doctrine so as to counter the heresies of the day. But later, inspired by Albert Magnus, Dominican study also included philosophy and the sciences. In his com-

mentary on Matthew's Gospel, St Albert wrote: "The whole world is theology for us, because the heavens proclaim the glory of God."

St Thomas Aquinas advocated for the necessity of Dominicans to pursue study and new sources, even though he was aware of its temptations. Murray points out that Thomas acknowledged that knowledge or science could certainly lead to pride if it were not accompanied by charity. He quotes St Thomas as saying: "If we are to avoid knowledge because it leads to pride, we ought, on the same grounds, to desist from any good work." We must always ask, Is it in the service of the *Holy Preaching*?

St Thomas' studies—involving the teachings of Aristotle—were considered dangerous for his time, and were banned at the university in Paris for several years. Thomas is known to have said in his own defense: "Do not heed by *whom* a thing is said, but rather *what* is said you should commit to memory." Murray also quotes Thomas as saying: "When taking up or rejecting opinions, a person should not be led by love or hate concerning who said them but rather by the certainty of truth. He [Aristotle] says we should love both kinds of people: those whose opinions we follow, and those whose opinions we reject. For both study to find the truth and, in this way, both give us assistance." Nonetheless, for a time his work was condemned by the Church.

The Dominican exegete and theologian M.J. Lagrange also attracted controversy within

the Church. He did his studies sometimes reluctantly, telling a friend in the words of St Jerome: "Knowingly and prudently I put my hand into the fire." In more modern times Yves Congar was another Dominican theologian who played with fire. Yet he also submitted to Church authority. Murray says that from "beginning to end he stood firm in what Barthelemy calls the 'double mission' of the theologian: 'that of maintaining freedom of theological research and that of remaining fully rooted in the midst of the Church.'"

Study and Neighbor

The final goal of study must be to help our neighbor. The Dominicans preserved a quote from Dominic to stress this idea. Murray writes, "According to the report of Brother Stephen, when Dominic 'was still a student, he sold his books and fed the poor during a time of famine.' The reason Dominic gave for his action is worth noting. 'I refuse,' he said, 'to study dead skins while men are dying of hunger.'" Nonetheless, Dominic is often pictured with a book in hand. Thinking and study was part of his spirituality, as it was for those that followed.

Relying only on the power of grim self-will to study is not enough. "In the case of St Thomas, what explains the extraordinary driving force behind his commitment to study was, first and last, his desire to know God, and to know the things of

God," says Murray. There must be a joy to learning, he says, and amplifies this with words from Simone Weil: "The joy of learning is as indispensable in study as breathing is to running. Where it is lacking there are no real students, but only poor caricatures of apprentices who, at the end of their apprenticeship, will not even have a trade. It is the part played by joy in our studies that makes of them a preparation for spiritual life."

It is a challenge to continue the path of study when it is rocky. But the difficulties encountered in study can help us understand the difficulties of our neighbors. "Sometimes, Aquinas tells us in the *Summa*, our own particular difficulties help us to grieve over others' misfortunes as if they were our own," Murray says.

Dominican tradition also tells us that we must study our times, the "*luctus et angor* [the grief and anguish] of our time. "Humbert of Romans, in his treatise on preaching, says that all creation is itself 'a book' and that 'those who know how to read this book will draw from it many things which are very serviceable for helping people to grow.'"

Dominicans are also called to be an *open book* to others. "[A] Dominican of the 13th century, an Englishman, had boldly suggested that the preacher's life should itself be a 'book' and that, in this book, all those who see the preacher should be able to

Continued on Page 6

De Las Casas

Continued from Page 4

In 1545 Las Casas was back in the New World and he had the largest missionary contingent ever assembled: 45 Dominican friars and a lay staff of five. But it was not long before he gained enemies there too. Orique says, "His life threatened and his efforts to enforce the New Laws thwarted by the local government officials, he went ... to the gathering of bishops in Mexico City. There he convinced secular authorities to respect ecclesiastical immunity and along with support from Church officials produced a series of strong pro-Indian statements. He even persuaded the Viceroy to convoke a separate meeting of friars who denounced Indian slavery."

Las Casas left behind for his Vicar General and select group of friars 12 secret rules for confession outlined in his *Avisos y Reglas Para Confesores*. "Las Casas' *Confesionario*

was designed to enforce all the New Laws. The confessor was to deny absolution to any one who profited from Indian life and land. Moreover, since these rules asserted the illegality of the *encomienda* system and the conquest—a defiance of royal authority, because it was the king who had granted them—he was questioning royal authority. This amounted to his questioning the divine rights of kings."

Orique says that he would surely have been charged with treason if the secret manual had been leaked. "This is true because it seems that Las Casas wrote his *Confesionario* partially in response to the Emperor's revocation of important parts of the New Laws on Nov. 20, 1545. Nonetheless by his final return to Spain in 1547, his manual became known and "raised an ecclesiastical storm."

Las Casas was accused of high treason, and his defense reached a climax when he de-

bated humanist Juan Gines Sepulveda. "In his counter-attack Las Casas challenged Sepulveda's *Democrates Secundus*, a tract that justified waging war in the process of the conquest in order to 'christianize' the peoples of the Americas." No verdict was handed down, but "as a result of Las Casas' refutation of his opponent, he was successful, not only in stopping the publication of Sepulveda's work, but also in making a stronger case than ever for his peaceful and just means of evangelization."

Orique reports that Las Casas had one last great battle of his career at age 80, against the Peruvian Indian holders who wanted to buy Indians in perpetuity from the crown for eight million gold ducats.

He and his comrades made a successful argument against it.

Las Casas continued to be very active at court, fighting for indigenous rights until his death at the age of 82. Enjoying remarkable freedom to criticize the crown and its policies, even though alienated from and the object of hostility of many of his countrymen, he was never silenced," Orique concludes.



Study

Continued from Page 5

read and study the things of God."

Murray ends the chapter explaining that joy can result from study, when it leads to love of the Gospel: "One of the sure signs that we have begun, in an authentic way, to read and study theology is when our reading and study lead us, not only to new knowledge and information concerning the Gospel, but also to a new depth of wonder and praise, a new song of thanksgiving."

Dominican Liturgical Calendar - Second Quarter, 2009

April

5-St Vincent Ferrer (M)
10-BI Anthony Neyrot
12-Easter
13-BI Margaret of Castello
14-BI Peter Gonzales
17-BI Care of Pisa
-BI Mary Mancini
19-BI Isnard of Chiampo
-BI Sibylline Biscossi
20-St Agnes of Montepulciano (M)
27-BI Hosanna of Kotor
28-St Louis de Montfort
29-St Catherine of Siena (F)
30-St Pius V (M)

May

4-BI Amelia Bicchieri
7-BI Albert of Bergamo
8-The Patronage of the BVM over the Order
10-St Antoninus of Florence (M)
12-BI Jane of Portugal
13-BI Imelda Lambertini
15-BI Giles
-BI Andrew Abellon
19-BI Francis Coll Guitart
21-Ascension (S)
-BI Columba of Rieti
-BI Hyacinth-Marie Cormier
24-Translation of the Body of Our Holy Father Dominic (S or OM)
27-BI Andrew Franchi
28-BI Mary Bartholomea

29-BIs William Arnaud,
-Bernard of Roquefort,
-Garcia de Aure
30-BI James Salomonio
31 -Pentecost (S)

June

2-BIs Sadoc & Companions
4-St Peter of Verona
8-BIs Diana d'Andalo
-Cecilia Cesarini, Amata
10-BI John Dominici
12-BI Stephen Bandelli
18-BI Hosanna of Mantua
20-BI Margaret Ebner
23-BI Innocent V

(S) Solemnity (F) Feast
(M) Memorial
(OM) Optional Memorial

Promoter's Corner

by Fr Jim Motl, OP,
Provincial Promoter

For the Church, the Lenten and Easter seasons are a time for renewal, beginning with a call to repentance for past failures and ending with a rededication at Pentecost to using the gifts God has given us. This is a good time to think about the gifts we have received and how we might use them for others, especially in the context of the Lay Dominicans of our Province.



In October the Lay Dominican Provincial Council of 2009 will decide the leadership for the Province for at least the next three years. There are many positions to be filled. The 2008 Council approved five members who had volunteered to be members of a Nominating Committee with the responsibility of providing a selection of candidates who have the abilities, the time, and the willingness to fulfill each of the open jobs (see Jill O'Brien's article on Page 2). Not all of these positions must be replaced this year, but President Ruth Kummer has completed two terms, and must have a successor. The three elected positions must be chosen by the Council from its own membership. The appointed positions can be filled by any Lay Dominican in the Province, who has made profession and has the necessary qualifications for the job.

The Committee's work has been delayed by the serious illness of

its Chair, Dorothy Suazo, for whom I ask your prayers. Jill O'Brien, past Recording Secretary of the Provincial Council and a member of the Nominating Committee, has asked and received the approval of the Executive Committee to act as Pro-Tem Chair of the Nominating Committee and to ask several others to help with the work in the months ahead. Their task will be to call those they think could fulfill these positions and ask if they would be willing to do so.

One reason for my using my column to share this with you is that I think that all Lay Dominicans of the Province ought to be aware of, and interested in, what is happening on the provincial level. Another is that I want as many members as possible to contribute to building up Lay Dominican presence in the Midwestern Province. I believe there must be strong local communities of active Lay Dominicans contributing to their local churches and societies. I also think that, as much as possible, those who have the ability and availability should be willing to help on the provincial level.

Some members have worked hard during my tenure as Promoter to advance the identity of Lay Dominicans of St Albert's Province. Ruth Kummer has dedicated a great part of her life during the past nine years to projects meant to foster new groups and new life in old groups, most notably the 2008 Leadership Workshop and the production of consistent new versions of our *Rule*, *Guidelines*, *Provincial Council By-Laws*, and *Leadership Handbook*. Norm Laurendeau, Michael Andrews, and Jill O'Brien all

helped to produce these documents, as did Karen Sabourin, our Corresponding Secretary. Mary Lee Odders has helped us design and maintain a system for administering our financial resources—our ordinary funds and the Irvine Fund for educational purposes. Harvey Newcomb has tried several initiatives to increase membership by getting more diocesan recognition for Lay Dominicans.

Ed Shea has headed the Strategic Planning Committee that has given direction to the work of Provincial Councils in past years, ensuring a consistent vision in the work of the past four Provincial Councils, a vision that has led to the new Formation Program and the emphasis on leadership training. Tom Ryba, as Formation Committee Chair, provided leadership in putting together our new Formation Program, along with Beatriz Cisneros, Cyndi Ricard, and Michael Porterfield. Michael now administers the Formation Website. Norm Laurendeau worked hard at Interprovincial Council meetings to represent the interests of our Central Province and to achieve a consistent translation of the *Rule* for all the provinces of the United States.

Jill O'Brien has served as Recording Secretary and now as Co-Promoter for Preaching on the national level. Cindy Richard has taken over as Recording Secretary for the past several Provincial Council meetings. Laura Dejmek has served a Co-Promoter of Preaching at regional meetings. Marlene Laurendeau has given

a new look to the *Challenge* and made it available on-line, as well as serving as our Promoter for Peace, Justice, and the Care of Creation. Joe Komadina has recently produced an already much-visited new Lay Dominican Provincial Website for the Central Province at www.laydominicancentral.org. Ed Kolodziej has worked quietly to update and maintain our membership files.

I am deeply appreciative of the work of these people and of others that I'm sure I haven't remembered. There will be an official recognition of their contributions during the 2009 Provincial Council. Now is the time to look for those who will replace at least some of these officials, and that is the task of the Nominating Committee. I ask you to pray for them in the months ahead, as I will. I also ask you to consider Lay Dominicans you know, who may be able to fulfill these positions. If either individuals or chapter/groups think of someone in the next month or two, talk with the person to determine if he or she is able and willing to fulfill a provincial position. Jill will be asking your assistance in the nominating process, or you can **c o n t a c t h e r a t** JOB631@aol.com.

By the time you read this you will probably have heard that surgery to remove my lung cancer, which seemed localized, showed that the cancer has spread, and so further therapy may be necessary. I will appreciate your prayers during this time.

Membership Dues Are Now Due

----- CUT & MAIL -----

**Please make checks (of \$33 each or \$43 for husband/wife or siblings)
payable to DOMINICAN LAITY and mail to:
Lay Dominican Office, PO Box 085451, Racine, WI 53408-5451.**

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

Other Professions Around the Province

At **Mother of the Rosary Informal Chapter** in Joliet, Ill., Leticia Azar, Kay Corcoran, Melba Keith, Stasia Knox, Rev. Michael Lane, Mary Lou Schuster, Sarah Turk, and Marianne Whitemiller have been received, and also, Veronica Moreno. ... At **Blessed Sacrament Chapter** in Farmington Hills, Mich., Alberto Diaz-Montemayor was received and Angelina Griggs and James Knivel made their Final Professions. ... At **Sacred Heart Chapter** in Springfield, Ill., Amy Penne, Michelle Simone, and Paul Casel were received.

New Editor

Continued from Page 2

this newsletter, but in the near future, all official stationery of the Province of St Albert the Great.

The next *Challenge* issue, summer 2009, will be my 12th and last issue as your volunteer Editor. On June 1, when I start preparing for it, will some one step up to the plate to help me and possibly become the next Editor? If you can do this, just check with the Nominating Committee first, as spelled out in the article on Page 2, and then we can proceed with a smooth transition.

This newsletter is done in *MS Publisher*, a very user-friendly program. Much of the information comes from the groups and regular column writers, and much of it is also available through Internet research of Dominican websites. Discern with the Holy Spirit whether this is for you.

President Ruth

Continued from Page 1

done in complete solitude. Mary and the apostles in the Upper Room waited together in fear and trembling. They were finally called forth, filled with the Holy Spirit, and their response was "yes," even in the face of their continuing human doubts.

How often do we spend time in a personal Upper Room looking within to discover a calling? And how often do we do it communally, with the support of our fellow Dominicans? Take the opportunity to discern your next step, whether it involves final promises, a new ministry, or some other act of renewal. And remember, as Dominicans we have a compelling call to take the Gospel message to the world in our own "neighborhoods," just as the first apostles did, fired up with the fire of Pentecost. A

blessed Easter, and may you be open to catch the fire and spirit of Pentecost!

Other notes and reminders:

*On April 14 in St Louis there will be a day of celebration marking the foundation of the Dominican Sisters of Peace. Congratulations may be sent to: Rosemary Loomis, OP, 2320 Airport Drive, Columbus, OH 43219.

*Please include in your prayers members attending the DLIPC Meeting, Oct. 1-4, 2009. The Canadians will host the meeting.

*The Provincial Council Meeting will be Oct. 22- 25, 2009, at St John Retreat Center. Please review your documents for your responsibility for Delegates. Verify names with Karen Sabourin: kfsabourin@sbcglobal.net, and me, Ruth Kummer: rkummer@att.net.

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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ADDRESS SERVICE CORRECTION