



## INTERNATIONAL DOMINICAN COMMISSION FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE

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Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Our Brother Carlos, Master of the Order of Preachers, called us to ten years of Jubilee in observance of the foundational period of the Order, 1206 - 1216. In his 29 April 2006 letter, he urged us to "walk faithful to the love we had at first." The anniversary of the foundation of the Order can be lived in a profound way as a time of Jubilee and not just as a mere celebration. A Jubilee is a time of joy and of renewal in the gift received. The *jobel* was an instrument and the sound that indicates the joy of this time of feasting and of grace. We desire to celebrate not blowing horns, but renewing our roots. It is a time to rethink our mission in a new way and the task which is entrusted to us.

The mission of Dominic is a mission of compassion. Today we live in a world that is becoming more lacerated and marked by profound divisions, conflicts and fractures, economic and social inequalities, difference of opportunities for persons and peoples, and disparity in the possibility of using the goods of the earth. To live compassion today means to welcome migrants, to be near the victims, willing to dialogue with all those who live a different religious faith or way of thinking different from our own. In the context of a globalization that produces injustice and separation, we are called to recover compassion as a fundamental character of the spirituality of our Order.

This Jubilee of the Order coincides with another important anniversary: forty years from the publication of the document *Populorum Progressio* (March 26, 1967). In the drafting of this encyclical our brother Louis Joseph Lebreton (1897-1966) collaborated in a fundamental manner. Lebreton was the founder of a research center for action in the economy and for social development in the world, "Economie et Humanisme," which had as goal to put emphasis on the economy in the service of persons.

During the next year we invite you to find a way to re-read the text of *Populorum Progressio*, a document wherein we can find the traces of that profound spirituality of compassion witnessed by Lebreton in his reflections and economic and social actions.

Each community might choose a concrete way to read together the text of *Populorum Progressio*. This study may bring about attention and a renewed compassion for the weakest and most fragile of our time. Let us make the entire year, beginning March 26, 2007, an observance of this fortieth anniversary. Meetings, events and initiatives can therefore be organized in different ways, in local communities, and in different countries. Research and study seminars can also be encouraged and as well as discussions on one or more points from this encyclical. Concrete actions of solidarity and peace can also be organized, for example, making March 26<sup>th</sup> a day for development, vigils of prayer, publication of articles and statements, interviews through mass media. Campaigns of denunciation and awareness and signature campaigns can be prepared according to situations and problems present in the local community.

The goal of all this is to create awareness inside our communities and to extend this awareness to those among whom we live and minister.

We ask you to send us at the Justice and Peace Office (Santa Sabina, Roma) materials and documents (texts, videos, pictures...) of what you have done and we will share this information on our website.

We propose a reading of *Populorum Progressio* in order to re-think what "development" means today and what it means for integral development in the sense of a real humanism. The questions linked to development and to human dignity are challenges not reserved to experts in economy or in the field of human rights, rather they constitute a fundamental dimension of our spirituality, a spirituality of the incarnation, which asks us to be present to our history. We offer some particular points of the encyclical to reflect upon and questions for reflection. They are only some points to discuss together. You can eventually add more or choose other passages of the *Populorum Progressio* on which to concentrate your attention.

Let us live this observance as a time of grace and of compassion.

Fraternally in Saint Dominic and St. Catherine,

  
Fr. Prakash Lohale, OP

  
Sr. Toni Harris, OP

General Co-Promoters for Justice and Peace

30 January 2007  
59<sup>th</sup> Death Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi

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*From Populorum Progressio*

✱ P.P. 6: Today we see men trying to secure a sure food supply, cures for diseases, and steady employment. We see them trying to eliminate every ill, to remove every obstacle which offends man's dignity. They are continually striving to exercise greater personal responsibility; to do more, learn more, and have more so that they might increase their personal worth. And yet, at the same time, a large number of them live amid conditions which frustrate these legitimate desires. Moreover, those nations which have recently gained independence find that political freedom is not enough. They must also acquire the social and economic structures and processes that accord with man's nature and activity, if their citizens are to achieve personal growth and if their country is to take its rightful place in the international community.

✱ P.P. 76: Extreme disparity between nations in economic, social and educational levels provokes jealousy and discord, often putting peace in jeopardy. As We told the Council Fathers on Our return from the United Nations: "We have to devote our attention to the situation of those nations still striving to advance. What We mean, to put it in clearer words, is that our charity toward the poor, of whom there are countless numbers in the world, has to become more solicitous, more effective, more generous."  
When we fight poverty and oppose the unfair conditions of the present, we are not just promoting human well-being; we are also furthering man's spiritual and moral development, and hence we are benefiting the whole human race. For peace is not simply the absence of warfare, based on a precarious balance of power; it is fashioned by efforts directed day after day toward the establishment of the ordered universe willed by God, with a more perfect form of justice among men.

What does it mean to build peace today not only as an absence of war? In what way that working for development can build peace? How can our mission as preachers be strengthened by working for development?  
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✳ P.P. 67: We cannot insist too much on the duty of giving foreigners a hospitable reception. It is a duty imposed by human solidarity and by Christian charity, and it is incumbent upon families and educational institutions in the host nations.

Young people, in particular, must be given a warm reception; more and more families and hostels must open their doors to them. This must be done, first of all, that they may be shielded from feelings of loneliness, distress and despair that would sap their strength. It is also necessary so that they may be guarded against the corrupting influence of their new surroundings, where the contrast between the dire poverty of their homeland and the lavish luxury of their present surroundings is, as it were, forced upon them. And finally, it must be done so that they may be protected from subversive notions and temptations to violence, which gain headway in their minds when they ponder their "wretched plight." (58) In short, they should be welcomed in the spirit of brotherly love, so that the concrete example of wholesome living may give them a high opinion of authentic Christian charity and of spiritual values.

✳ P.P. 69: Emigrant workers should also be given a warm welcome. Their living conditions are often inhuman, and they must scrimp on their earnings in order to send help to their families who have remained behind in their native land in poverty.

**How can we build a culture of hospitality towards foreigners who are present in the context in which we live? What are the actual challenges of integration of migrants in our region and in our country?**

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✳ P.P. 26: These concepts present profit as the chief spur to economic progress, free competition as the guiding norm of economics, and private ownership of the means of production as an absolute right, having no limits nor concomitant social obligations. This unbridled liberalism paves the way for a particular type of tyranny, rightly condemned by Our predecessor Pius XI, for it results in the "international imperialism of money." Such improper manipulations of economic forces can never be condemned enough; let it be said once again that economics is supposed to be in the service of man.

✳ P.P. 58: It is evident that the principle of free trade, by itself, is no longer adequate for regulating international agreements. It certainly can work when both parties are about equal economically; in such cases it stimulates progress and rewards effort. That is why industrially developed nations see an element of justice in this principle.

But the case is quite different when the nations involved are far from equal. Market prices that are freely agreed upon can turn out to be most unfair. It must be avowed openly that, in this case, the fundamental tenet of liberalism (as it is called), as the norm for market dealings, is open to serious question.

✳ P.P. 59: The teaching set forth by Our predecessor Leo XIII in *Rerum Novarum* is still valid today: when two parties are in very unequal positions, their mutual consent alone does not guarantee a fair contract; the rule of free consent remains subservient to the demands of the natural law. (57) In *Rerum Novarum* this principle was set down with regard to a just wage for the individual worker; but it should be applied with equal force to contracts made between nations: trade relations can no longer be based solely on the principle of free, unchecked competition, for it very often creates an economic dictatorship. Free trade can be called just only when it conforms to the demands of social justice.

✳ P.P. 34: Organized programs designed to increase productivity should have but one aim: to serve human nature. They should reduce inequities, eliminate discrimination, free men from the bonds of servitude, and thus give them the capacity, in the sphere of temporal realities, to improve their lot, to further their moral growth and to develop their spiritual endowments. When we speak of development, we should mean social progress as well as economic growth.

It is not enough to increase the general fund of wealth and then distribute it more fairly. It is not enough to develop technology so that the earth may become a more suitable living place for human beings. The mistakes of those who led the way should help those now on the road to development

to avoid certain dangers. The reign of technology—technocracy, as it is called—can cause as much harm to the world of tomorrow as liberalism did to the world of yesteryear. Economics and technology are meaningless if they do not benefit man, for it is he they are to serve. Man is truly human only if he is the master of his own actions and the judge of their worth, only if he is the architect of his own progress. He must act according to his God-given nature, freely accepting its potentials and its claims upon him.

*In the context of globalization and of economic neo-liberalism in what way can we face toward the ideology of the market? (Recall the reference to globalization by the 2001 Providence General Chapter.)*

*How can we concretely live our religious life in this context, in our communities, in the way we use and share our goods.*

*Do you think that the forces of the market contribute to a real development in the world? Elaborate a critical analysis.*

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✳ P.P 47: But these efforts, as well as public and private allocations of gifts, loans and investments, are not enough. It is not just a question of eliminating hunger and reducing poverty. It is not just a question of fighting wretched conditions, though this is an urgent and necessary task. It involves building a human community where men can live truly human lives, free from discrimination on account of race, religion or nationality, free from servitude to other men or to natural forces which they cannot yet control satisfactorily. It involves building a human community where liberty is not an idle word, where the needy Lazarus can sit down with the rich man at the same banquet table.

On the part of the rich man, it calls for great generosity, willing sacrifice and diligent effort. Each man must examine his conscience, which sounds a new call in our present times. Is he prepared to support, at his own expense, projects and undertakings designed to help the needy? Is he prepared to pay higher taxes so that public authorities may expand their efforts in the work of development? Is he prepared to pay more for imported goods, so that the foreign producer may make a fairer profit? Is he prepared to emigrate from his homeland if necessary and if he is young, in order to help the emerging nations?

✳ P.P. 51: A further step must be taken. When We were at Bombay for the Eucharistic Congress, We asked world leaders to set aside part of their military expenditures for a world fund to relieve the needs of impoverished peoples. What is true for the immediate war against poverty is also true for the work of national development. Only a concerted effort on the part of all nations, embodied in and carried out by this world fund, will stop these senseless rivalries and promote fruitful, friendly dialogue between nations.

✳ P.P. 53: Is it not plain to everyone that such a fund would reduce the need for those other expenditures that are motivated by fear and stubborn pride? Countless millions are starving, countless families are destitute, countless men are steeped in ignorance; countless people need schools, hospitals, and homes worthy of the name. In such circumstances, we cannot tolerate public and private expenditures of a wasteful nature; we cannot but condemn lavish displays of wealth by nations or individuals; we cannot approve a debilitating arms race. It is Our solemn duty to speak out against them. If only world leaders would listen to Us, before it is too late!

*What concrete measures can we take to become responsible and active subjects of peace?*

*What concrete projects can we undertake to sustain the fulfillment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG)? (See <http://www.millenniumcampaign.org> .*

Also, note "Call from Fanjeaux" <http://jp.op.org>)

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✳ P.P. 14: The development We speak of here cannot be restricted to economic growth alone. To be authentic, it must be well rounded; it must foster the development of each man and of the whole man. As an eminent specialist on this question has rightly said: "We cannot allow economics to be separated from human realities, nor development from the civilization in which it takes place. What counts for us is man—each individual man, each human group, and humanity as a whole."

✳ P.P. 43: Development of the individual necessarily entails a joint effort for the development of the human race as a whole. At Bombay We said: "Man must meet man, nation must meet nation, as brothers and sisters, as children of God. In this mutual understanding and friendship, in this sacred communion, we must also begin to work together to build the common future of the human race." (47) We also urge men to explore concrete and practicable ways of organizing and coordinating their efforts, so that available resources might be shared with others; in this way genuine bonds between nations might be forged.

*How can we as Dominicans elaborate a theology and a spirituality of integral development?*

*How can we strengthen the evangelization movement in the perspective of an integral human development in our divided world, with the spirit of St. Dominic, in the year of this jubilee?*

*In what way can we move the attention from development as purely economic to an integral development that gives freedom to persons and can be for all humanity (PP 42.43). Suggest some ways to actualize concrete experiences in your communities and in the contexts in which you live.*

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Useful Resources:

- 1) Live Simply Website: <http://www.livesimply.org.uk/>
- 2) *Economie et Developpement: Repertoire des Documents Episcopaux de Cinq Continents [1891-1991]* Berthouzoz, Roger, OP, Roberto Papini, Carlos J. Pinto de Oliveira, OP, Ramon Sugranyes de Franch editors. Economie et Developpement: , Fribourg: University of Fribourg Press, 1997