

MONIALIBUS

Nuns

Order of Preachers



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Happy Easter!

Fr. César Valero, op



Dear sisters:

I am writing this greeting to you from the land of Africa. The sisters have gathered, as in many other places in the world, in order to find paths of communion for their future. In the midst of these yearnings of fraternal encounter and collaboration, other harder and more complex realities have continued to splatter a life of bitterness: destructive natural catastrophes, wrenching violence, movements of disintegration, wounds of the past that continue to bleed in some hearts.

And covering everything, the horizon of Easter. Celebrating the Risen Lord has to light our lives in the splendor of victory. It has to lead us to renew our commitment to life.

To lay down one's life means to commit all our strength, in communion with the Risen One, to create and recreate each day among us the love that He showed us and taught us. Only with this commitment will we grow in the single heart and in the single soul that Dominic de Guzmán wanted for his daughters and sons. How beautiful and necessary that the Risen One help us to understand and live that so that together we are stronger and better and more authentic witnesses of his in the very heart of his Church!

To lay down one's life means living with all the senses open, attentive, vigilant. Suffering is often discreet, shy, ashamed of oneself. It is necessary to detect it and approach it with its same discretion, but overflowing with kindness, tenderness, understanding.

To lay down one's life means keeping the fire lit of dreams that seem impossible. The Living One is there, in our midst; and what seems unfeasible He begins to make it present in our history. Yes, a better world is possible. Yes, we can grow as a family with all humility. Yes, we can dignify those prostrate by any type of oppression. Yes, we can make our monasteries a haven of peace, of fraternal love, of the presence of the Mystery, of the expression of His Beauty.

To lay down one's life means learning our lessons. To assume the wisdom that the past transmits us, but without getting stuck in it, rather adapting it to this present that we are given to lead to open a radiant and hopeful future.

To lay down one's life means not allowing negative feelings, grudges of yesterday, destructive regrets to grow inside of us. It is asking the Lord to go through the depths of our being, to heal the wounds that bleed, to banish from us any outbreak of selfishness, to make us humble, to

free us from spite, to give us a glance that is new and clear every day, full of his love and tenderness.

To lay down one's life means wearing it with joy.

The Risen One always comes to meet us. **"Do not fear, it is I."** Yes. The Evil is there, strong, powerful; and powerfully destructive. But he has been defeated. And everything will converge, in Him Who is the Principle and the End, the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last. And the spring of joy gushes up, persistent even in the darkness and in the midst of the tears that come from pain.

To lay down one's life means that we always carry within us the tireless hope that allows us each day to take to the road. It is true that gray days arrive; that sadness, without having invited it, sits by our side; what disguises of what could have been and what is not, upsets and confuses us... But He is there, Victor-of-all-evil. He is there, as Life-inexhaustible. He is there, and always with soft sweetness whispers to us: **"Trust me. I'm with you. And I wait for you there where everything is Life, Light and Love without end "**.

Happy Easter of the Risen Lord 2019!

With brotherly affection:

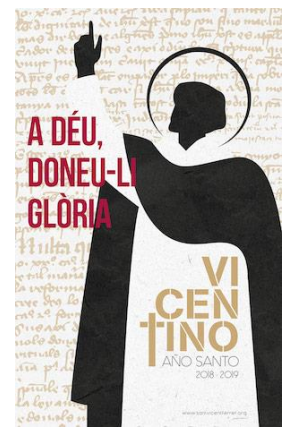
Fr. César Valero Bajo, OP
Promoter of the Nuns

(Original: Spanish)



Year Dedicated to Saint Vincent Ferrer

Part II



Without any doubt, St. Vincent had an extraordinary psychological intuition. Brother Vincent preached before a diverse audience: religious, dignitaries, but most of the time to a mixed group of peasants and simple people. His mastery in preaching allowed him to make a deep impact on his audience. This explains the many folklore traditions throughout the centuries that have come down to us in the territories where he preached and worked miracles.



He suffered greatly because of the Western Schism. After the death of Pope Gregory XI, - who had returned to Rome after 73 years of stay of the Popes in Avignon - Urban VI was elected Pope in a conclave full of pressures and tumults. It seems also that the intemperance of Urban provoked rebellion and the flight of the French cardinals, Cardinal Orsini and Cardinal Pedro de Luna, who a few months later declared the election of Urban null, claiming that they had done it out of fear, The French Cardinals choose the Frenchman Clement VII. Christendom was again divided into two sectors, the Avignon and Roman obedience. The Aragonese Cardinal Pedro de Luna asked Vincent to mediate in favor of the cause of Clement VII in Valencia and possibly this was the cause of his resignation as prior of his convent in Valencia where he had been elected in 1379. His term as prior lasted only a few months.

In 1394, Pedro de Luna, who had taken the name Pope Benedict XIII, called Vincent to his side naming him his confessor and theologian. How did Vincent feel about this new situation in his life? Possibly it was not what he wanted. His health suffered and he fell seriously ill. On October 3, 1398 he had a supernatural vision that would change the course of his life. Christ, accompanied by Saint Dominic de Guzman and Saint Francis of Assisi, commissioned him to go throughout

the world to preach the Gospel. This event was decisive for him, although he would not often allude directly to that day or speak frequently of it or the change of his life. At first the only thing he gets is to leave the papal palace and stay at the Dominican convent of the city. It seems that then Pope Luna offers bishoprics and cardinalates, which Vincent rejects. It is from November 22, 1399 when he free, that is dedicated to apostolic itinerancy as a legacy of Christ, always walking on foot, while he had strength, almost all of Western Europe. His preaching insisted on interior renewal and conversion, on the reform of institutions and on the unity of the Church, whose division was a great sorrow for him. Christians, in their bewilderment and good will, were on the side they thought was authentic or indicated by their authorities. Thus, St. Catherine of Siena and St. Catherine of Sweden were with the Pope of Rome, while St. Vincent Ferrer and St. Colette were with that of Avignon. Taking as reference the plagues of Egypt in the Bible Vincent said "... what darkness, what darkness so strong ... men did not see each other then and do not see now, - turning to the schism -, each of the popes has great doctors and saintly persons who have each one as pope and do not know which one is the real one."

But in 1416 in Perpignan, Vincent Ferrer withdrew his obedience to the pope of Avignon, Benedict XIII, Pedro de Luna. The following year, Martin V was elected and recognized as the only pope of Christendom. Master Vincent never revealed the secret of his personal change, but perhaps it was due to a gradual disenchantment with the line of Avignon and Benedict XIII. His heroic gesture of humility and courage, was recognized and reassured many.

Many times, illustrious people invited him to attend the Council of Constance, where an attempt was made to choose a pope to whom all would obey and finally it was achieved with the election of Martin V, but Vincent did not attend. Father Alfonso Esponera, OP is inclined to think that Vincent old and tired of so many political and ecclesial issues to which he had dedicated himself, believed that his preaching mission was more urgent, to help men to return to God.

Vincent, loved his Order and gave himself to the mission received from God through St. Dominic. In a letter he wrote much earlier to the Master of the Order, Fray Juan de Puynoix, he expressed the necessity of preaching: "The main cause I found for their heresies and errors was the lack of preaching. For I knew with certainty that in thirty years nobody had preached to them, except the Waldensian heretics of Puglia who customarily visited them twice a year. Consider therefore, Reverend Master, how much of this is the fault of the Prelates of the Church and of others, to whom because of their office or profession it is incumbent to preach to these souls ..." He also explains how his life happens: "without time for almost nothing, because he is dedicated to preaching and so the signature: "useless and humble servant of Christ your son. Vincent, preacher. "



The reference made by St. Louis Beltrán, (Valencia 1526 + 1581) of Vincent, is also moving: "... blessed Father Saint Vincent, native of Valencia, religious of our habit and of my house ... who was sent by God to awaken the world, which in those days was very asleep, with his example and



preaching." We cannot fail to highlight the connection of "awakening the world", which Pope Francis is also asking of us today.

St. Vincent continued his preaching. In 1417 he met St. Colette of Corbie, the great reformer of the Order of St. Clare, to whom he gave the mission cross he was carrying, which is still devoutly preserved by the Poor Clares of that place. Already old and sick, he had to stay in the city of Vannes, accepting the hospitality of the Dukes of Brittany. With the awareness that his end was approaching he wanted to return to Valencia on a donkey with part of his "company", that group that accompanied him in his apostolic excursion. But when dawn came they found that they were in the same place they had left. Vincent interpreted this as a divine design that he should remain in Vannes and die there. His passage to eternity was on April 5, 1419, Wednesday of Holy Week. He was buried in the cathedral of this city where his remains still rest.

Vincent died, but his miracles and his fame are still alive. Soon after there were petitions to begin his process of canonization and for two years interviews were held with abbots, friars, authorities and ordinary people. His process has 400 statements collected in Naples, Toulouse and the Vannes region. It was the Valencian pope, Calixto III, who probably knew him, who received the minutes of the investigation and who canonized him on June 29, 1455.

Vincent took the rule of great men: "To add, not subtract; attract people to a cause and not repudiate it. He always worked for unity and harmony." That was the goal of Father Vincent, in the light of his characteristic greeting: Bona gent! Good people! The iconography represents him almost always with the raised right arm and the index finger pointing to the sky and with the legend "Fear God and give him glory," a phrase of the angel of the Apocalypse, but it can be interpreted as the gesture of the one who is going to bless and invites one to look at the sky and he says: God It is the greatest of your life, aspire to eternity, because God loves you, and you . Vincent was not an apocalyptic preacher as has sometimes been said, what stands out in him is the passion to make God known, who awaits man in the paths of life, as he said in one of his sermons on Saint Mary Magdalena, "*the long wait of Love*" for every man, until it dawns on you that God is waiting for you to enter into a dialog of friendship. Despite living in

a difficult time, Vincent was not a worrier, but courageous and confident man. This was the joy he received from God which made him compose a sentence that encapsulates his message:

*Grant me, Lord, to adore and humbly recognize you
as your creature and give you thanks
with great heartfelt thanks
for all the benefits you've given me.
Give me Lord, too, the grace that always blesses you,
praise you and glorify you with the supreme joy and joy of my soul "*

Fr. Carlos Azpiroz Costa, Master of the Order, wrote a letter on May 29, 2005, to the entire Dominican Family on the 550th anniversary of the canonization of St. Vincent, in which he supported what could be done to offer the Church a new doctor in the person of St. Vincent. It said: "The celebration of the 5th Centenary of the canonization of Vincent Ferrer is a moment in which the interest for his life and mission increased, the archbishop of Valencia, D. Marcelino Olaechea in a pastoral letter requested that the Church declare him Doctor of Peace, for his pacifying and evangelizing work in the history of Europe.

Fr. Michael Browne, Master of the Order, in 1955 addressed the entire Order in a letter highlighting "the freedom of St. Vincent in preaching, clarity in proposing the truth, compassion in the face of the needs of his time, and that his life was an example and presented a challenge to the current era."

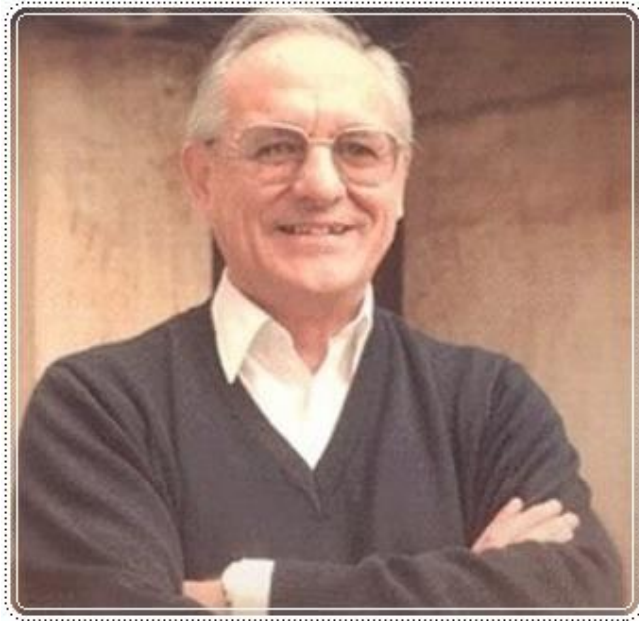


We also remember Fr Carlos at the General Chapter of Caleruega in 1958. A commission was formed in order to pursue the title of Doctor of the Church for Saint Vincent, because as St. Dominic his preaching is for all times. On all continents an echo of his memory is perceptible. A Province is dedicated to him in Central America; a Pontifical Faculty in which the Order is involved; there are countless churches and altars at which he is venerated. The Vincentian Jubilee Year which officially began on April 9, 2018 and will run until April 29, 2019, will be a time of grace for the Church and for the Order. A joint Commission of the Archdiocese of

Valencia and the Province of Spain has been created to further investigate his life and make his message known and resume the assignment of working toward St. Vincent becoming a Doctor of the Church.

Note: This paper is a compilation of different authors, connoisseurs and admirers of St. Vincent Ferrer, own there are only a few lines and love this soul brother.

Sor M^a Teresa de Jesús Gil, op
*Monastery of the Immaculate
Federal Hous and Novitiate
Torrent, Valencia (SPAIN)
(Original: Spanish)*



Blessed Pierre Claverie OP, bishop and martyr, 1938 - 1996

I was asked to introduce one of the new blessed, fr. Pierre Claverie, one of the 19 martyrs of Algeria killed between May 8th, 1994 and August 1st, 1996. They were beatified on December 8th, 2018, in Oran (Algeria), in the presence of numerous Muslims.

Why speak of him? The Dominican family in France and its numerous friends throughout the world have been touched by the profound and joyful personality of this friar and by the power of his word. His assassination on the evening of August 1st, 1996, overwhelmed us and left a great emptiness. The homily he gave on June 23, 1996 at the monastery of Prouilhe, the cradle of the order, while visiting there for the first time was quickly circulated as a spiritual testament. His life and the teaching he gave through retreats, conferences, and articles continue to challenge us. In 1998 we considered placing our newly merged federation of monasteries under his patronage, but instead chose Our Lady of Preachers. If the date for the feast of the Blessed Martyrs of Algeria is kept, we will celebrate the feast of Pierre Claverie on the same day as Our Lady of Preachers, the 8th of May!

Pierre Claverie was born on May 8th, 1938, in Algiers (French Algeria), as a member of the fourth generation of Frenchmen living in Algeria. He had a happy childhood, living with his parents and then also Anne-Marie, his junior by six years. At a very young age he joined a troop of scouts connected to the Dominican convent in Algiers, and he maintained profound ties with several of its members. When he left the family nest in 1957 to continue his studies in Grenoble, in the mother country, he discovered that the legitimacy of a French Algeria was being questioned. *"Surprised at first, then disconcerted, I had the feeling of seeing the world in which I had learned to live and believe collapse."*¹ A weekly familial correspondence which would continue until his death would help him to open himself to the world around him and its questionings. Encouraged by his father, he would listen to others.

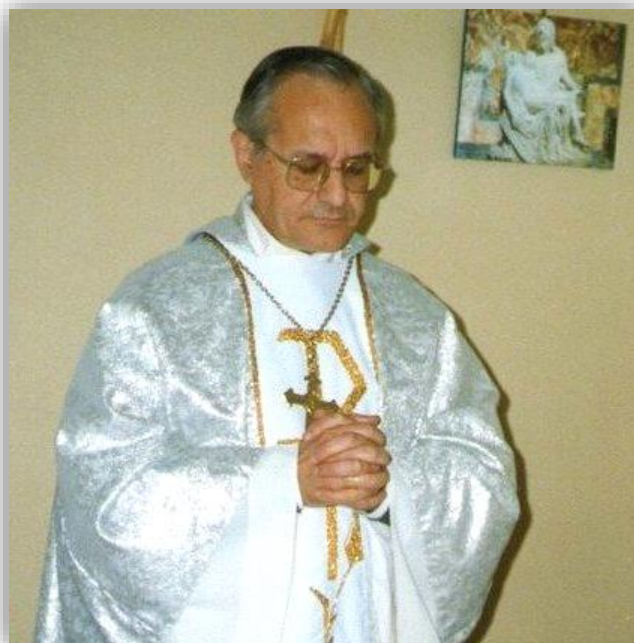
"I spent my childhood in the 'colonial bubble': not that there were no relations between the two worlds, far from it, but in my social environment I lived in a bubble, ignorant of the other, only encountering the other as part of the landscape or of the scene that we had set in my collective existence. Perhaps because I ignored the other or because I denied his existence, one day, he

¹ Internal letter from 1978 – archives of the Dominican province of France.

leapt out at me. He exploded my closed universe, which disintegrated in violence – but could it have been otherwise? – and he affirmed his existence.”²

Many peoples have known similar tragedies throughout the world. Economic or political migrants are received in a land, work for its prosperity, and then, generations later, are rejected by the original inhabitants and poorly received in their land of origin ... Their place has been taken by others. This intense and painful upheaval was the origin of Pierre Claverie’s religious vocation. He began his novitiate at Lille in December of 1958 and then continued his studies at the Saulchoir convent in the Paris region. Marked by the Algerian War, but also by the Second Vatican Council, this was a tumultuous and exciting period.

From the time of his novitiate, Pierre discovered prayer and understood that the Trinitarian God *“is the essential point of Christianity: above and beyond the life of Jesus, his teaching, and his Church, he reveals God to us, not simply as a God who is Father, and gives us an image of what we are called to be: participants in the current of love which unites the Father to the Son through the Spirit.”³* At every stage of his life, witnesses were struck by his attachment to times of prayer and to communal prayer. The parable of the grain of wheat that dies was already orienting his Christian life.



Very quickly, he dreamt of returning to Algeria, of learning Arabic and studying Islam. He felt that *“It was necessary to break down walls, to bring men, peoples, and cultures into communication with each other.”⁴*

He spent some months of military service at a chaplaincy in Algeria at the time of the country’s independence (July 1962) and helped his father pack up their apartment, while his mother and sister were already in the mother country. In July of 1967, after his priestly ordination and the completion of his studies, he was assigned to the convent of Algiers, now belonging to the new country of Algeria, while at the same time being approached about the possibility of becoming student master. *“This community [in Algiers] gave me the opportunity to Arabize myself, thereby allowing me to see my country with new eyes and to enter into a new kind of relationship with the Algerians.”⁵*

² Pierre Claverie, *Humanité plurielle*, article published January 1996, reproduced in *Humanité plurielle*, Cerf 2008, p 137 and following.

³ Letter of May 24th, 1959, cited in Jean Jacques Pérennès, *Pierre Claverie, un Algérien par alliance*, Cerf 2000, p. 66.

⁴ Letter to the friars announcing that he would be a bishop, published July 1981, *Ut Sint Unum*, bulletin of the Dominican province of Paris.

⁵ Internal letter, 1978, op.cit.

Pierre would quickly learn Arabic, notably with the help of Lebanese and Syrian Sisters. He would travel to the Middle East and then, in 1970, would spend a year assisting Mgr. Scotto, bishop of Constantine, and discovering southern Algeria from him. In 1973 Cardinal Duval, the archbishop of Algiers, suggested to him that he take over direction of the Centre des Glycines, ensuring *“instruction in Arabic, introductory classes and conferences in Arabic-Muslim civilization, in the Algerian reality, theological reflection on the meaning of the Christian presence: three centers of research where Christians and Muslims, foreigners and Algerians would collaborate.”* Later, groups of Algerians would come to this center to learn Arabic. *“In 1974, thanks to the Pastor [Jacques] Blanc, I took on a serious commitment in the CIMADE office in Algiers, which became ‘Encounter and Development’. It was there that I learned, on the job and as a result of concrete interventions, the universal and political dimensions of the problems in Algeria,”* he wrote, still in 1981.

Strengthened by these years of preparation, he would be ordained bishop on October 2nd, 1981, in the cathedral of Algiers, and would arrive at his cathedral in Oran on the 9th. His installation homily outlined his program: to work towards unity in the Catholic Church, between



different Christian confessions, to favor interpersonal encounters between Christians and Muslims, to fight against every fanaticism. The recording of a retreat dated from 1972 describes well his concept of this responsibility, taking Mgr. Scotto as his example: *“Now that is a bishop! He has the luck of being free from all the episcopal trappings: in Algeria we have no more works, no more properties, nothing that would justify the bishop being a Somebody (...) Therefore the bishop is reduced to his essential, fundamental function of being the bond between dispersed communities. He has nothing but this; he is restored to his true meaning. He is the servant of the servants of God. He has no more value, just like Christ. The glory of Christ was to have no value in the eyes of men.”*

He finished his installation homily at Oran with these words: *“Brothers and friends, this is our mission; it is as comprehensive as our life: it will take the form of prayer, dialogue, speech, and action, but always for the sake of receiving and communicating the Good News of God’s love. None of our activities can escape its demands: in it there is no distinction between religious and lay, because it consists primarily of living, simply living, but living fully, according to the Spirit of Jesus Christ.”*⁶

⁶ Pierre Claverie, *Quel bonheur d’être croyant*, Cerf 2012, appendices p. 269.

He pursued that mission with great consistency until the end through fidelity to God and to Algeria, communicating his joy in living and his enthusiasm. In all his retreats, he would insist with humor on the importance of everyday life. If God has come to live among us (the mystery of the incarnation), it is so that our human life is to be respected and made fruitful. When he would present the Church in Algeria in his conferences, he would speak of the religious with great admiration, of the respect and trust that the Algerians and local authorities showed them because they lived in the service of the poorest of the poor, helped the young to study, and prayed. I can still see the cook for the diocesan Center of Oran, an Algerian Muslim from Sidi Bel Abbès. She was struck by Pierre's consideration: in the morning he would ask her how things were going with her and would take the time to listen, at the risk of exasperating "the gentlemen who were waiting upstairs for him for their meeting."

He liked to say during his retreats, "*During his process of canonization, the driver of the car who would take John Bosco to work every day was called in. This good man said, 'For him, I existed.' For me, that's the most extraordinary miracle. John Bosco was truly a Saint because the people who crossed paths with him could say, 'For him, I existed.' That's holiness.*"⁷

He was impressed by the courage the women showed in defending life: "*With them, and **above all with them**, who display tremendous ingenuity to ensure the subsistence of families, activists continue, in a variety of associations, their fight for the rights of minorities, for respect for the condition of women, and for a more just and open society.*"⁸ His simple attitude toward women, full of delicacy, respect, and trust undoubtedly had its origins in his family. His father would point out his mother as "*(her children's) natural bond to God*"⁹ Pierre adored his sister and loved teasing her.

In the editorial "A Hampered Church...", he wrote: "*The Body of Christ is missing a part of its members: are they perhaps paralyzed or inert because of the abnormal development of the head? There is still much to do in our churches to give each his place and thus his voice: fear of cacophony? Certainly, and a legitimate fear if we are not fundamentally animated by the will to serve the truth in the love of our brothers.*"¹⁰ He would see the little things and would thank with his warm laughter, as at Prouilhe, at the end of Mass, for "the rags offered when the vases were knocked over ...".

"*We do not possess God. We do not possess the truth, and I need the truth of others,*" he liked to say. For Pierre Claverie, dialogue was a necessity for the Christian and found its source in the Trinitarian God. In an ordination homily given June 10th, 1995, in Paris, he said, "*The feast of the Trinity reminds us that the mystery of God is a union of differences, a dialogal communion, respect and love of the other in his otherness. Each one is necessary for the identity of the others from whom he draws his own existence, and the communication is such that each is totally given*

⁷ Cited also in Pierre CLAVERIE, *Je ne savais pas mon nom*, Cerf 2006, p.21-22.

⁸ Pierre Claverie, *Lettres et messages d'Algérie*, expanded edition, reprint of the article « l'Esprit Saint au-delà des frontières » originally printed in *Spiritus 141*, December 1995) – p. 280

⁹ Cited by Jean-Jacques Pérennès in *Pierre Claverie, un Algérien par alliance*, Cerf 2000, p. 62. Letter of Etienne Claverie from November 23rd, 1958.

¹⁰ Pierre Claverie, *Lettres et messages d'Algérie*, ed. Karthala 1996 (expanded edition 1997) p. 200, editorial from June-July 1995.

to the other and bears in himself an effigy of the others towards whom he is perfectly transparent.”¹¹

Distrustful of officially organized interreligious encounters, he believed in sharing experiences. For him, questions were at the heart of dialogue. He let himself be challenged by the questions the Muslims had about Christian practices and listened to what scandalized them, as, for instance, saying that Jesus is the Son of God. These questions oblige us to search for the right words and so to deepen our own faith. *“From that moment on, the stranger (the other) takes on a vital importance for each person. Without idealism and with perseverance, our faith in one God who has entered into humanity pushes us to create conditions of encounter and universal fraternity, not having left our differences behind, but with them. Jesus reveals to me the infinite value of each human being, precious in the eyes of God.”*¹²

In his retreat on religious life in Algeria¹³, he challenged our Christian life by describing the five pillars of Islam. The truth of others obliges us to be coherent, to seek to express our faith in our everyday life, to live our relationship with God.

During the civil war in the 1990’s in Algeria, Pierre Claverie wanted to help his flock persevere under trials. If we are all called to give our life, he wrote, it’s not a matter of *“playing Russian roulette”*, of taking thoughtless risks. Giving one’s life has meaning because life is precious. *“Jesus did not seek death. He did not wish to flee it either because He probably judged that fidelity to his commitments toward the Father and for the coming of His Reign were more important than His fear of death. He preferred to follow the logic of His life and mission to the bitter end rather than to betray that which He was by denying or by abandoning to avoid the ultimate confrontation. That hour sealed the whole of His existence with the seal of truth and fidelity.”* And again: *“The crises we are going through, the death we brush against, constrain us to bring to light our reasons for living.”*

The meaning of the death of Jesus illumines the meaning of His life and also that of Pierre. At the time he wrote that editorial, he knew he was threatened. Love is at the heart of his life. *“The Passion of Jesus is above all passion for Him whom He calls ‘Abba! Father.’ It is not a death wish but a passion of love. Love received from the Father, life given in return so that that love might be shared and poured out on all humanity... With Jesus we refuse the logic of violence and of the power that contradicts love and life. The Cross is exactly there and not in just any suffering.”*¹⁴

During his homily at Prouilhe on June 23rd, 1996, Pierre recalled the place of the Church at the foot of the Cross, where she finds her strength, vitality, hope, and fecundity. He affirmed that she is mistaken if she situates herself as a power among others. *“She can shine, but she does not burn with the fire of God’s love, ‘strong as death,’ as the Song of Songs says (8:6). Because it’s a matter of love here, love above all and love alone. A passion for which Jesus has given us the taste and marked out the way: ‘There is no greater love than to give one’s life for those one loves’ (Jn 15:13). To give one’s life. This is not reserved to martyrs, or at least we are all perhaps*

¹¹ Pierre Claverie, *Humanité plurielle*, article printed January 1996. Reprinted in *Humanité plurielle*, op cit. ch 7.p. 141

¹² Forum of Angers, Pentecost 1994 – found in multiple works, e.g. in *Humanité plurielle*, p. 284.

¹³ Pierre Claverie, *Quel bonheur d’être croyant*, Cerf 2012.

¹⁴ *Lettres et messages d’Algérie*, p. 234-236, *Le Lien* of March 1996.

called to become martyrs – witnesses of the gratuitous gift of love, of the gratuitous gift of one's life. This gift comes to us from the grace of God given in Jesus Christ."¹⁵

This call resounds for us today, where we are. Fidelity to God translates concretely into fidelity to persons, to a concrete people. "Saving one's life isn't putting it in the refrigerator, but giving it away"¹⁶ said Pierre in July of 1996.



Sr Anne-Catherine Meyer op
Monastery of St Jean Baptiste in Orbey (France)

(Original: French)

¹⁵ *Quel bonheur d'être croyant*, p 256, Homélie de Prouilhe, 23 juin 1996.

¹⁶ *Vie spirituelle* # 721, p 665, quelques dattes de Mgr Claverie par Andrée Ghillet, June 1996.

THE SISTER OF BLESSED PIERRE CLAVERIE VISIT WITH HIS DOMINICAN SISTERS

On December 8, 2018, the day our brother Pierre Claverie was beatified along with other martyrs in Orans, Algeria, I eagerly searched the internet for news and photos. Here in the United States such an event would be of little interest although there would be short news articles on Catholic news sites. Much to my surprise, when I Googled Pierre Claverie, a story came up from a neighboring diocese: **Hightstown parishioner to travel to Algeria, where bishop brother will be beatified by Church.**

Surprised I read it and found that not only was the sister of our new blessed, Anne-Marie Gustavson, living here in the United States but she and her husband, Eric, lived not too far from our monastery! A quick search online and I had their address. Our prioress, Sr. Mary Martin wrote her a note inviting her to come and share with us about her brother and the beatification.



The visit of Anne-Marie and Eric was a wonderful afternoon on a cold, dreary February winter day. We felt as though we had known each other for many years as is often the case among Dominicans. Both Anne-Marie and Eric joyfully shared their memories of Pierre, their growing up in Algiers, how Eric and Anne-Marie met (on a cruise ship!) and their work of continuing the legacy of Bl. Pierre. We were all moved after hearing about the Claverie family life and how their father kept the many letters Pierre wrote home in special boxes he had made for this purpose. Born and raised in Algeria, Anne-Marie helped us to better understand the political

and religious situation in which both Bl. Pierre and the other martyrs found themselves. Anne-Marie pointed out that the civil war killed 200,000 Algerians. What made the beatae “different” is that none of them had to stay in Algeria but rather in love for the people they served stayed until their own deaths, laying down their lives like Jesus. Anne-Marie’s testimony encouraged us in our own vocation in which we too are consecrated to be “white martyrs” in radical love.

Eric and Anne-Marie did not know we were in Summit until they received our note. They said that the visit reminded them of their visits to Pierre and his Dominican community. The visit was so special to us that we even ignored the bell for Rosary and Vespers letting the visit go on for almost another hour.



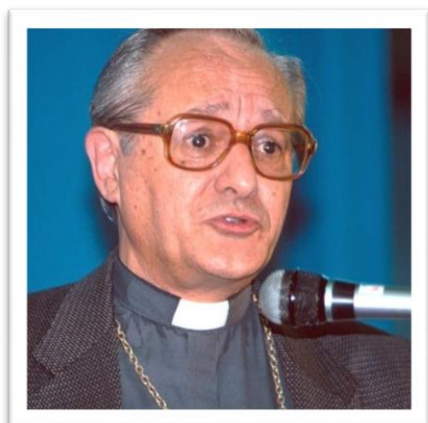
In a short account Anne-Marie wrote of the beatification she said, “My family and I felt a deep sense of joy throughout these two days in Oran, and if there were tears at times a smile was never far behind. We pray that the love Pierre and his companions offered their Algerian friends will conquer hate and division and will continue to bear fruit in Algeria, in France, the birthplace of most of these religious, and in the rest of the world as the 19 are now recognized as examples of unconditional love.”

Our visit, sharing in the love of OUR brother Pierre, was to me also the fruit of his martyrdom because God’s love was very evident during those few hours together.

Later that evening I searched for the homily that Bishop Pierre gave at our Monastery in Prouilhe just a few weeks before his death. I think it is not insignificant that it was given at the Cradle of the Order and is an “echo” of St. Dominic’s love for the mission of the Order and in a special way for his daughters.

Homily at Prouilhe, 23 June 1996

"Since the Algerian tragedy, I have often been asked," What are you doing there? Why are you staying? Shake the dust of your sandals! Go home! "At home ..." Where are we at home? ... We are there because of this crucified Messiah. Because of nothing else and nobody else! We have no interests to protect, no influence to maintain. We are not driven by some kind of masochistic or suicidal perversion. We have no power, but we are there as if by the bedside of a friend, a sick brother, in silence, holding his hand, wiping his forehead. Because of Jesus, because it is he who suffers there, in this violence that spares no one, crucified again in the flesh of thousands of



innocents. Like Mary, like St John, we are there, at the foot of the Cross where Jesus dies, abandoned by his family, mocked by the crowd. Is it not essential for a Christian to be there, in places of suffering, in places of dereliction, of abandonment?

Where would the Church of Jesus Christ, itself Body of Christ, be, if it were not there first? I believe that she dies of not being close enough to the Cross of Jesus. Paradoxical as it may seem to you, and St Paul shows it well, the strength, the vitality, the hope, the Christian fertility, the fruitfulness of the Church come from there. Not elsewhere or otherwise. Everything, all the rest is only dust to the eyes, worldly illusion. She is mistaken, the Church, and she deceives the world when she stands as a power among others, as an organization, even humanitarian or as an evangelical movement with great show. It can shine, it does not burn the fire of God's love, "strong as death" says the Song of Songs. For it is a question of love here, of love first, of love alone. A passion that Jesus has given us to taste and showed us the way: "There is no greater love than to give one's life for those one loves."

Give your life. This is not reserved for the martyrs, or at least we are called to become martyrs witnesses to the free gift of love, the free gift of life. "

This homily was delivered in Prouilhe, France, cradle of the Dominican Order, on June 23, 1996, a few days before his death, on the occasion of the national meeting of the Ancients of the Saint-Do of Algiers (Scout troop which Pierre Claverie had belonged to in his youth and through which he became attracted to the Order of Preachers.)

Sr. Mary Catharine of Jesus Perry, OP
Monastery of Our Lady of the Rosary
Summit, NJ USA

(Original: English)



Tomb of Bishop Pierre Claverie

THE HOLY PREACHING OF CIDALC



The retreat house of “Mary Auxiliatrix” located in the St. Michael section, province of Buenos Aires, Argentina, was witness to how the friars of South America and the Caribbean prepare the Dominican Holy Preaching, opening up to a preaching of listening, conversing, fraternizing, proclaiming, transforming and celebrating, an invitation with which Fr. Bruno Cadoré, Master of the Order, touched the hearts of his brothers.

Thanks to the invitation of Fr. Javier Rubio, OP, Socius of the Master of the Order for Latin America and the Caribbean, and President of CIDALC (Inter-provincial Conference of Dominicans of Latin America and the Caribbean), through our Promoter General of the Nuns, Fr. Cesar Valero, OP. It was the experience of the first nuns in Prouilhe, who surely listened attentively to the words of St. Dominic and the brothers, about his apostolic projects, difficulties, sorrows, joys, hopes, as well as the suggestions and motivations that animated Dominic and the friars to continue the mission of delivering the good news of the gospel.

Speaking of the apostolic life, Fr. Orlando Rueda emphasized: *“Our apostolic life not only consists in activities, but our way of life; people not only listen, but they see, look, observe, verify ... Let us remember that the project of life of each community, of each brother, is in close relationship with the Holy Preaching. Fraternal life becomes the ID of the preacher. How can we*



preach the love of God, if we do not build up a community of brothers? The mission of the Order demands a living witness of communion that brings us together in unity. Formation for the apostolic life, must guarantee a constant balance between life and mission. If our communities cannot guarantee to those in formation in daily praxis what it means to be brothers, then we cannot talk about preaching.”

It was stimulating to see the quality of open and respectful dialogue that developed in the plenary sessions, everyone seeking the common good, encouragement among the brothers, enlightening one another to see the way forward, and finally, the way they reached consensus after having been heard. They also prepared some proposals for the General Chapter.

The meeting with the Sisters of the Confederation of Dominican Sisters of Latin America and the Caribbean (CODALC) in the Loyola Center, was another moment of intense communion for us to meet as the complete Dominican family. We began Morning Prayer with a meaningful celebration by forming a circle around an image of St. Dominic. Each of us introduced ourselves and said a word or sentence we wanted to contribute to the Assembly.

Fr. Bruno Cadoré developed the theme: *“The Compassion of St. Dominic”*. I would highlight these words: *“The compassion of St. Dominic is the basis of the Order. Vocation and compassion are linked so that the preaching exists. This sentiment of Dominic enabled him to experience the pain and suffering of others, as his spiritual and material need. Our Father discovered compassion as a way of identifying with Christ, a path to humanization.*

“Dominic’s intuition of preaching is rooted in his compassion and seeing himself as a beggar. Sometimes we think that mendicancy is related with poverty, but it goes beyond that ... the choice of mendicancy asks us; in what situation do we find vulnerability. Brothers, this compassion is central for the Order’s communion of preaching. Human history is the place where God is united with His people.”

Being together as a family is priceless; the simple fact of being together is a living sign of communion. Seeing the brothers and sisters interacting, sharing dreams, supporting the mission, consoling themselves in the difficult task of justice and peace, deeply moved me. In the Assembly, they gave space to the other branches of the Dominican Family (the laity, youth and nuns) to share how we live compassion.

In the message to the Assembly, I reminded them, *that they nuns are the heart of the Order, that we remain in the rearguard as guardians of the Dominican Mission, supporting and forming part of this Holy Preaching for more than 800 years. We make our way together with them, opening up breaches in life, sowing peace and believing against all hope that the establishment of the Kingdom of God and His justice are possible.*

Finally, we listen to the testimony of our Friars from Venezuela, the suffering, the pain, the powerlessness ... of a country broken, that left us speechless, in silence ... with knots in our throats. Our brothers begged for our help for obtaining medicine for the Home for the Elderly that they run. Friar Manuel, a Cooperator Brother, has a project to accompany migrant in their journey. The friars who remain in Venezuela are accompanying and shine hope upon the people.

On February 2, Bishop Carlos Azpiroz Costa, former Master of the Order, presided at the Eucharist. All of us were filled with joy at his presence, his humor and his closeness as a brother. During a conversation he told me: *“The nuns are very dear to me. I am very happy that they are beginning the work of renewing the Constitutions. It’s about time...”*

Thus the meeting was concluded in an atmosphere of communion and fraternity. The Dominican charism was put into practice, full of happiness and hope for this part of the Holy Preaching in Latin American and the Caribbean.

Sr Irene Díaz, OP
Member CIM y CIDJP
South American Region

(Original: Spanish)



THE FORMATION COMMUNITY

AS A FORMATIVE ECOSYSTEM

Course for the Formators of Latin América and the Caribbean



From August 16-26, in Bogotá, Columbia was held a meeting of Formators organized by CIDALC and CODALC.

There were a total of 88 participants among the friars, sisters and nuns coming from Ecuador: Monastery of St. Catherine of Siena (Quito), Ven. Catherine of Jesús Herrera (Guayaquil); from Columbia: Monastery of the Most Holy Monastery (Duitama), Monastery of the Holy Spirit (Sogamoso); and from Mexico: Monastery of Our Lady of Grace (Guadalajara: in total 9 nuns. The preaching experience was vibrant; a precious Gift of the COMMUNION of the Dominican Family, especially because the elaboration of the topics was requested by the friars and sisters. I share the feedback of these intense days for formation, which helped us all to renew the criteria of vocational discernment.

Sister Viviana Sisak spoke about “The New Formation Paradigm”, the model in which we find ourselves is integrative-Christological to form the entire reality, to form all reality. This model seeks a genuine personal maturity, to integrate reality as an “ecosystem”. The challenge is to take charge of this ecological crisis and undertake transformations.

Sister Ana Francisca Vergara expounded upon Genesis 1 and 2, where one can identify elements for theological preaching. The biblical enlightenment helped the Formators at the meeting to have another look at the service of accompaniment, above all in times of crisis. There is a wisdom that can be summarized in the following way: *“to be in the right moment, in the right place and take the right position.”*

Sister Juliana Triana’s title was: “The New Dominican Generations ask the word”. She used the suggestive title during her contribution to the course for Formators. She took as her reference the biblical text of John 6:1-15. This story of the multiplication of loaves allows us to see formative styles: such as Jerusalem which was repressive, moralistic, politically correct, spiritualist; yet, it is difficult to find God in daily life. The Roman style is also identified, the one knows how much things cost, where the superior sends, works frenetically and the result is quantified in numbers; high numbers, a success; low numbers, a failure. This style is conservationist and is concern with following the customs. How wonderful to study the text, to identify Jesus’ style, who teaches us that, beginning from observation, new references emerge. Jesus asks rhetorical questions, to make them think, to see reality. Jesus does not object to taking something from the youth, the one who puts the bread of the poor into God’s hands by which a multiple is fed. This bread represents an authentic spirituality, personal knowledge and respect for authority, diversified and current formation, accompaniment and brotherhood, renewable and flexibility, passion for God alone and attention and obedience to the noise of the present times.

Friar Luis Javier Rubio, spoke on “The Prior/Prioress of the Formation Community: authority, power, community”. He quoted Fr. Timothy Radcliffe, to help us with the image of the ecosystem situated in an ecological niche, a concrete space of flowering and fecundity. For example, the migration of the Monarch butterflies from Canada to Mexico—a magical space where they can reproduce and later return to Canada. However, the ones who return are not the ones who left. Another generation returns to continue the next cycle.

Men and women Religious are not those who seek to make themselves known. By not having a partner, by not having a place of promotion, they need to create a space, an ecological niche where they can grow and reproduce themselves. That is where the prior/prioress, has a leading role in the construction of the environment.

Fr. Rafaél Colomé, addressed the theme: “The Person of the formator”, initially spoken of as “The Role of the Formator”.

- **Qualities asked of the Formator:** “Formators must be men of faith and prayer, upright in their way of life, with the ability to welcome, listen, empathize and understand the process of human and Christian maturity.” (Bogotá, 2007, #200) “They should be friars who love the Order, with sufficient experience of life and apostolate, who have well-integrated in their own lives the components of Dominican life.” (RFG, #74).
- **We are “participating subjects”:** We are Formators of a brother or sister with whom we live and we share the same vocational calling. We find ourselves in many areas of daily life beyond the time of the personal interview. For the role of the Formator, there is a direct impact upon the life of those formed (where their future, vocation, etc. are decided).
- **Have one’s own life “ordered”:** In order to be able to intervene in the life of another, without falling into manipulating or damaging the other, a certain emotional autonomy is

required. One must have previously entered within oneself and have a clear awareness of one's own limits and abilities. One must order/regulate one's affections, fears, angers, impulses... One must have integrated one's life history, physicality, needs and desires. The **Ratio Formationis Generalis** expresses it in these words: "A basic human maturity is essential for those who have a special responsibility in formation, as well as those assigned to formation communities. This is especially necessary to provide positive role-models for the friars in initial formation and to avoid every kind of exploitation of the friars in formation by the older friars" (RFG, #39).

- **Do not water-down the "role" of the Formator:** Being placed, or not, in the acceptable role of Formator, the viability, or not, of the formative processes are at stake.
 - *Do not manage the relationship with "authoritarianism".* The relationship would become "one-directional" or "external". We must avoid nullifying the other person with our authoritarian, censoring, judging and imposing attitudes; and expect, as a result, a passive compliance and submission on the part of the brother. They impose their own criteria and freely take advantage of the role of authority. This leads to dependent persons and children, or on the contrary, rebels and bitter misunderstood people. Handling this from the "legal" or "moral" perspective ends up dismissing charity in interpersonal relationships and placing the law before the consideration of persons.
 - Do not be managed by "paternalism", acceptance of persons or "permissiveness". They would be as negative as the previous ones, which also do not facilitate the process by the brother. It is better to invite a self-analysis of oneself, to work on aspects of the affective aspects that are not yet integrated, otherwise our emotional frailty will affect the *formandi*.
 - *Do not conduct yourself like a "friend":* The relationship must be asymmetrical. The Formator is no longer a friend. Do not confuse the roles or functions. It is fundamental not to produce false expectations and mutual commitments. Each one contributes in this relationship of Master/mistress- candidate what is proper according to one's functions. This allows maintaining an adequate affective distance without deviating the relationship.
 - Conduct oneself as a "brother/sister among brothers/sisters": Not in the sense of a symmetrical brother/sisterhood; nor putting an emotional distance out of fear of being involved with the candidate. Being a Formator means learning to conduct the relationship with the candidates from an "unequal" brother/sisterhood, but with an empathetic connection". Empathy is understood as the ability to put oneself in another's, without being confused with the other. It is to feel the same as the other, without carrying the emotional "baggage" of the other. Empathy enables one to "understand" the other, and at the same time create an atmosphere of trust and confidence in the relationship.
 - *Establish limits, a clear and distinct relationship* in which neither of the two parties— Master/Mistress and candidate—live with the expectation that the other will conceal his hidden needs. This implies, on the part of both parties, not generating expectations and asking, implicitly or explicitly, to assume roles that do not belong to them; or to look for, a way to satisfy unintegrated affective needs in the other person.

- *Always maintain a “respectful” attitude:* consider the “dignity” of each brother/ sister in our responsibility. With an inner attitude where the person is beyond all value judgments; never with condemnations nor ironies; yes, “true honesty”, which does not mean justifying the person, but on the contrary, the Formator must express what s/he feels and thinks. The Formator does not hide the truth, but is himself/herself. One’s conduct in dialogue and listening is clear and sincere in what they share, marked by limits and objectives. A respectful attitude towards our brothers/sisters implies care of the “ways” in which things are said, with respect and education. Never humiliating. Avoid taking out bad moods and tiredness upon others. Be careful of the “quality of the relationship”. Consider the humanity that can be hurt; that the person feel valued and accepted.

After the formative days, we had the joy of experiencing the famous “Salt Cathedral”, one of the marvels of Columbia, a truly impressive place. It has the Stations of the Cross and, at the end in the central nave, a majestic illustration of the Lord’s Resurrection completely sculpted from the salt mine. The gift that deeply moved all of us was to be in the Shrine of the Virgin of Chiquinquirá. At the feet of our Mother, the Queen of Columbia, we (friars, nuns and laity) were grateful to have participated in this project of Dominican formation. We also had a cultural night where all the colorful and beautiful songs and dances of our South American and Caribbean countries were displayed. These included *mariachis*, *cumbias* [folk dances from Panama, Columbia, etc], *san juanitos*, meringue treats. ... We shared the joy of being able to praise, bless and preach as brothers and sisters of the Order.

Finally, one can say that this training course was a time to practice empathy—to put ourselves in the other person’s place—to be silent and listen to each other. We live as humble seekers and seekers of the truth. This was a space to meet as a family and make into reality the witness that the world needs: COMMUNION.



*Sr Irene Díaz, OP
Membre of the
ICN
South American
Region*

(Original:
Spanish)



SAINT DOMINIC IN SEGOVIA

On January 13 our Monastery concluded the VIII Centenary of the arrival of Saint Dominic to Segovia. The inauguration, presided over by the Bishop of the diocese together with the Provincial Fr. Jesús Díaz, and other Dominican brothers and diocesan priests was on December 2, 2017. Our Master, Fr. Bruno Cadore, OP, was also present.

We quote from Vicaire, historian of the Order who tells us this fact. Saint Dominic came to our city at Christmas 1218. “In Segovia as elsewhere, Dominic was a preacher before all else. Certain anecdotes, for once fortunately preserved, allow us to glimpse his manner of acting. He did not only make Latin sermons for a few initiates. He preached in the vulgar tongue, on every occasion, to the entire population as a whole or category by category. His audience could not be contained in a church, nor even in the city, for at that time, in the towns of the thirteenth century, large public squares were not yet known. The sermon was delivered on some unappropriated ground outside the city wall, it is said on the banks of the Eresma.”¹⁷ Soon new candidates enter the Order and the convent of Santa Cruz was founded. Having converted the house of Madrid into a woman’s monastery, the convent of Segovia will in fact be the first convent of the Preachers of Spain, having Friar Corbalán as prior.

At night Dominic retired to pray in a hollow with a small hermitage (today the Holy Cave). Austere in the secret of his prayer, kind and compassionate in his relationships with men—such is the figure that Dominic leaves us in Segovia, A few years later it was the nuns who formed a convent in the city, a document addressed to them from 1284 is preserved.

The current community of sisters is deeply grateful for having been able to celebrate this Year, thanks to the dedication, work and generosity of the lay people of Segovia and the Fraternities of Atocha, and of Madrid, without whose collaboration it would not have been possible to carry it out.

Conferences, guided visits to the Cave of Our Father, prayer, music ...a good number of activities have marked a long year of spiritual and cultural activity in the city. Undoubtedly, the most welcome was the visit to the Cave, which ended with a prayer based on each of the

¹⁷ Vicaire, OP, M.-H., *Saint Dominic and His Times*, trans. Kathleen Pond, (New York: McGraw-Hill 1964) 254.

prayer modes of Saint Dominic. For many Segovians it has been the propitious occasion to discover the peace of the place where our Father prayed.

Coinciding with the liturgical feast of the Baptism of the Lord we celebrated the Closing Eucharist presided by the 86th successor of Saint Dominic, Fr. Bruno Cadoré. The Provincial of the Province of the Holy Rosary, Fr. José Parra, Fr. Jesús Díaz, Provincial of the Province of Hispania, Fr. Cesar Valero, and 13 Dominican friars; the Vicar of the Diocese of Segovia and our Vicar of Religious.

After the celebration, a fraternal meal was held and then a visit to the Cave of Saint Dominic, guided by a Dominican laywoman from the Fraternity of Segovia. The day ended with a prayer recalling the prayerful presence of Saint Dominic in that place.

We were accompanied in the celebration by several Dominican nuns and others from different convents of Segovia with whom we shared a wonderful fraternal meal.

Finally, we share to you the homily that Fr. Bruno preached in this celebration and to whom we are grateful for his support and presence.



HOMILY FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE VIII CENTENARY

Of the coming of Saint Dominic to Segovia and the foundation of the first convent of friars in Spain

Sisters and brothers, first of all I would like to say that it is a joy for me to be able to celebrate with you, with the sisters, with the nuns here, with the whole Dominican family, with the diocese, to celebrate the Jubilee of Dominic in this place.

And it is a joy to celebrate this jubilee on the feast of Baptism. Because it seems to me that this solemnity says something important about the charism of the Dominican Order, the need for preaching today and forever in this world.

A preaching that has to find a way to say something about Advent, about mercy, about the coming of mercy, the advent of mercy, such as this feast.

St. Thomas spoke of the mystery of the Incarnation, and it is this coming, this Advent that the texts of the liturgy speak to us today, on this Sunday of the Baptism of the Lord.

The coming of mercy, announced by these magnificent words of the prophet Isaiah. Upon hearing these words, the people hear the announcement of the fulfillment of the expected promise. He comes in the midst of his people, he is the Lord of the promise, he comes and establishes his dwelling with his people, he comes as a king and it is necessary to prepare the way for him as if it were for the kings, victorious.

But this king is also a shepherd, who takes care of his lambs paying special attention to the most fragile, the most vulnerable. He comes without forgetting anyone. He comes and through the desert, beyond obstacles opens a path that, since it takes God to man will be the way by which man will be led to God.

And that is the preaching of the Order. Announce, proclaim the coming of God with us, to open up in our lives that sometimes seem to be desert. Open up in our lives the way to go to God.

In fact, echoing this road prepared in the desert, the sky opens on Jesus and a voice proclaims "you are my Son, the beloved, in you I am well pleased". Certainly, the people who heard this, and John the Baptist the first, understand that it is the voice of God himself who, through the Dove of the Holy Spirit, designates Jesus as chosen, expected.

Finally, now, he is among men and does his work there, with us. And this voice is also addressed to all of us, to each one of us, to indicate what is the horizon of our history in humanity, to listen to the voice of the Father and to welcome the Son of Man, of course. But also discover the mystery that unites us with the Spirit in one God. May this communion of love, this communion of life, be the destiny of our own human life, in each one of us, to be taken when the moment comes for the Son, as a lamb to the Father. To be through the son introduced in the mystery of Trinitarian love. See our life take its full dimension in the presence of God, being made by grace present to God.

And Dominic in his preaching meant that this is for today. And it is this grace that the Apostle Paul spoke of, the grace of God was manifested for the salvation of all men, without forgetting anyone. God shows his kindness, surrendered to us to make us his people, a people burning to do good and for his mercy makes us reborn and renews us in the baptism in the Holy Spirit so that we live in the hope of living with him in fullness.

This is the good news of this mystery that Dominic, whom we remember today in particular here in Segovia, in this place which testified to the ardor of his prayer, to his desire to give as a preacher. The mystery of the life of Christ, so that the world has life, even living in communion with Jesus. And here in Segovia Dominic lived this communion with Jesus until he lived his passion. Once again, here in Segovia, we can think of the way in which Dominic wanted to take that path, as always imitating Jesus the preacher. This is how I understand on my part this ardor of the prayer of Dominic that came from penance, to live the passion of Jesus. Until discovering how in his life he, Dominic, a man of this earth, could live the life of Jesus, give his life as Jesus gave his life.

It seems to me that the echo of this phrase from the Gospel of the Baptism of the Lord according to Luke as "all the people were baptized", this is the baptism of conversion of John, after Jesus was also baptized, heaven was opened. Jesus wanted to be with his people and take the path of conversion with them, did he need it? Of course not. He could simply watch his people enter the river and commit to changing their lives, no more than that. Jesus wants to take with him all human life to assume all this life, his laziness and failures, his convictions and doubts, his commitments to do good and his ability also to do the opposite. He the Son of God in his humanity wants to take all that and present it to the Father. He stands in solidarity with his people in their human condition; He, who is without sin, because the mercy that he is wants to make the people in solidarity with their God.

This I believe is what Dominic wanted to experience in his prayer to be able to preach this news. Experiment in his prayer to the point of suffering in his body the faults, rejections, infidelities of the people, who asked God to send him to follow his Son. Here in Segovia Dominic had the experience of being able to live as Jesus lived it, of living solidarity with all humanity. To hope with all humanity that this desert has apparently been changed to become the way of God to the world. So that in this world a path can be opened by men to God.



This is what Dominic wanted to announce, the advent of God's mercy changes the time of humanity. And this time of humanity can once again be God's time with humanity, the time of mercy that transfigures humanity from today to forever. So be it.

It seems that everything is over, but no, the intercession of Saint Dominic is still alive and as we graciously listen at the end of the Mass:

This VIII Centenary is closed, until the ninth! Let's try it!

Santo Domingo el Real de Segovia Monastery-Spain

(Original: Spanish)

800 years later, “Dominic” again visits his sisters



On Sunday, February 10, 2019, the community of Nuns of Caleruega received the visit of Fr. Bruno Cadoré, MO, accompanied by Fr. Orlando Rueda and Fr. Luis Javier Rubio, his socii for apostolic life and Latin America and the Caribbean, respectively, within the context of his canonical visit to the province of Spain.

It was not the first time they came, far from it, but it was a special visit and not only because of "the taste of farewell" in these last months of fr. Bruno's term as the head of the Order or because of the fraternal love which throughout these years has been deepened with these fleeting but enriching visits to

Caleruega. His presence among us on this day of 2019 inevitably evoked the origins of our community.

It was Bishop Martin of Bazá who established the Monastery of Santa Maria and San Martin de San Esteban de Gormaz, which is about 11 km away in the Burgo de Osma. A community of regular canons of St. Augustine, a community that, in all likelihood, was known and appreciated by the Chapter of Osma for whose reform, in the same observance of the Rule of St. Augustine, wanted to have Fr. Dominic, subprior and sacristan of the Chapter, who, later, would accompany Diego de Acebes on the trip that would be crucial for the history of the Order, of the Church, of humanity and, consequently, for this community of sisters who, without a doubt, would feel their absence all those years.

In the first months of 1219 that long wait was amply rewarded. We do not know the day, not even the exact month, but it is clear that something happened and changed the course of its history forever. Or, rather, someone passed and those sisters, who professed the rule of St. Augustine in the town of St. Stephen of Gormaz, decided to join the Order of Preachers and their mission from the monastic cloister. And that someone could only be: Dominic de Guzman. His visit to the communities of his newly founded Order of Preachers had brought him back to his Castilian land. With his apostolic zeal and his appreciation for the sisters' lives; with his closeness and fraternity and his bold way of understanding the charisma he received, he convinced the sisters (no it must have cost him too much) to join the mission of the Order of Preachers and the passionate prayer for humanity from the silence of the cloister; from the silence of their lives, apparently hidden, that cry with their intercession that God is Mercy.



Of the double invocation of St. Mary and St. Martin, the Dominicans of St. Stephen of Gormaz adopted the first, St. Mary, as their patroness and continued to give their lives in quiet fidelity, with many inconveniences. The documents of the archives have preserved the memory of those years in which the sisters suffered abandonment by the canons of the Burgo de Osma and the neglect of the Dominican friars.

But things, when they are God's, go forward against all human prognosis.

And so, it happened that those sisters in 1270 moved, by express wish of King Alfonso X, to the paternal house of their Holy Founder, in the new Monastery that had built them in Caleruega under the patronage of Saint Dominic de Guzman, where for almost 750 years we continue to praise, bless and preach God.

You may now understand why we say that this visit of fr. Bruno was special. Simple and sober as must have been that other one that changed our destiny, knowing the discreet character of Saint Dominic and his eagerness to be one more among the brothers, just as fr. Bruno wanted to be among us. But no less loaded with meaning, in these moments of the contemplative life of the Church, than that other visit in the beginnings of the Order.

A few minutes before eight in the morning the bell rang and the community, with some sisters absent, due to the delicate moment in which we are, received at the 87th successor of Dominic

de Guzman at the door, eight hundred years after starting this trip, passionate about preaching and the salvation of souls.



The faces of our brothers reflected the inevitable weariness of an exhausting journey for anyone, but with the satisfied smile of those who know themselves again at home.

After the appropriate greetings, we went to the convent chapel that, with its own architecture of a kitchen, stands out for

being a cozy atmosphere in the heat of the altar in the same place where the fire burned.

The Eucharist, simple but very alive, was the central moment of the visit, around the Word and the altar. The preaching of Br. Bruno in the thread of the Sunday readings identified us with those disciples tired of so much struggle without obtaining any result (Lk 5,1-11): Do not be afraid! these net, which now seem sufficient and too big compared to the fruits obtained, and which are prepared to receive "the usual", will be small and inappropriate to receive the abundance that can only come with the newness of the Spirit. It is discovered when we row out to sea, leaving the comfortable banks of our securities. And it ended with an invitation: today is the day to say again to the Lord "Here I am, send me."

After the Eucharistic celebration we went to the refectory where we had prepared a simple breakfast with a short stop along the way for the traditional family photo. They were moments where fraternity became evident in the exchange of concerns, longings, laughter and shared memories. Our brothers signed the guestbook and fr. Bruno also autographed his book "Listen, with God, to the other side of the world" recently published in Spanish. Of course, we talked about our 800th anniversary and we give them the prints and triptychs designed for the occasion. The jokes and laughter were increasing as the footsteps approached the door: it was time to say goodbye.

With the simplicity with which they had arrived, they said goodbye at half past nine leaving among us the joy of a vocation received and shared. With uncertainties and fears about the future, without a doubt, but with the certainty of knowing that we are accompanied and part of a great family that always has the care and protection of Saint Dominic de Guzman, just as he promised.

Sr. Margarita and Community - Caleruega, Spain

(Original: Spanish)

SOLEMN PROFESSION

IN THE ROYAL MONASTERY OF ST. DOMINIC DE GUZMÁN, CALERUEGA (ESPAÑA)



My name is Sr. Teresa of Jesus. I belong to the Community of Dominicans in Caleruega, Burgos, Spain, and on June 23, 2018 I made my Solemn Profession.

It was a special day that dawned with music and gifts from everywhere, surprises, little acts of love that had arrived the previous day and congratulations from various parts of the world.

Between various things, the morning flew by and, without barely realizing it, the time for the Profession had arrived. When I was ready I decided to go down into the crypt until it was time. I return there, to the well, the place where “it all began”; there where Jane, on day without any idea of what it meant said yes to God’s plans. She welcomed life, and knew how to give it simply and generously, without pretensions or conditions. There, on June 24, according to tradition, Dominic began his journey, without applause or witnesses, but just like anyone else. There, in the same place that for centuries has given silent, but eloquent, testimony to the strength of the attraction of this saint and his work. There I was, about to give my whole life to the Lord. And although my yes would be more public and have more witnesses than these previous ones, I shared with them the uncertainty of the future and the precariousness of the present. But I also shared the confidence of one who, without seeing or understanding, believes that she does what she has to do and leaves the rest to God.

The celebration, presided by Fr. Emilio B. Garcia OP, current prior of the Convent of St. Thomas of Sevilla. The Liturgy was preceded by a statement of Friar Luis Miguel Garcia Palacios OP, who gave the historical context that surrounded us: in the year of the 8th centenary of our community as Dominicans; in the birthplace of St. Dominic de Guzmán, in the Vespers of “his birthday”.

The Readings of the day place the emphasis on trust in God: “My grace is enough for you. My strength is made perfect in weakness” and “Do not worry about tomorrow”. How timely! The homily highlighted, among other things, trust as an outstanding feature in the personality of our Father because knew that the One in whom he trusted could be “consoler of the friars”

The simple and well-known songs, were led by the community formed of the Federation of St. Dominic and the Federation of the Immaculate, as well as Friar Luis Miguel, OP, a native of Caleruega, who sang the litany, and Friar Sixto Castro, OP, of the Valladolid community, who accompanied on the organ. What a propitious occasion to experience the gift of fraternity and the Family that, not only comes to our aid but also shares in our joy!

The rite, the details, the words and gestures, well-known by all of you, had previously been prepared and internalize the meaning to live the moment with the greatest possible awareness. The formula of



profession, almost equal to the one I had pronounced four years before, but now in the new context seemed, to a certain extent, contradictory. How can one profess obedience “and to your successors” in a community than, as is well known, does not have great future prospects? How can one profess “according to the laws of the nuns of the Order of Preachers” when it is known that there will soon be changes, we do not know if substantially? These questions did not stop to concern me, and some kind of response became a requirement that proved providential to take this step with determination and realism. The uncertainty in the structure (legislative, communitarian, etc), that is good and necessary but insufficient. It obliged me to discern on a very different level and distinguish between the human-social-religious context in which a vocation develops, and the possibility that this vocation is rooted in my own identity. Without pretending to separate completely one from the other, I wondered if I professed for the structure that made this vocation possible, or, if, in the end, my reality as a person and a Christian

was identified with being a nun of the Order of Preachers. If this is so, then my vocation is something much more substantial than the environment in which it develops, favorable or not and, therefore, something more definitive than all those circumstances in which it is inevitably immersed. Didn't



Diana d'Andalò make her profession in Dominic's hand when she did not even have a convent or the favorable opinion of her relatives? Being clear about Whom and to Whom, having discerned without losing sight of the fundamentals will show how to be a Nuns of the Order of Preachers.

Finally, I want to share with you another moment that I experienced with special intensity. Since I belong to that generation of nuns that was born and grown up "federated", I would be if I did not recognize that has marked, pushed and sustained on various occasions my formative process and vocation. When I found myself prostrate on the floor in front of the altar, while my Sisters were singing, "You have seduced me, O Lord", and the odor of rose petals with which



my nieces and nephews were covering me, I began to think of all the people who, in one way or another, had been mediators between God and His plans for me. At this moment in which we find ourselves with the new Instruction, it seemed opportune to appreciate and thank God for how much the Federation has meant to me. It is not an impersonal institution, but a totality of faces, encounter, smiles, lessons, detail, and anecdotes and, above all, shared faith-experiences that have providentially accompanied me during these years. None of this would have happened if the Federation did not exist. Of course, not everything is ideal and we must continue walking, but with these words, I would like not only to show my gratitude for the effort and dedication of those who have made it possible, but also express my dream and hope for an unknown future in communion and in common.

We have no idea of the consequences that each one of our yeses will have, but, thinking about it, and although it is not given to us to see it ... isn't it worth it? Perhaps what touches me the most today is burying the grain that will bear fruit. Nothing will be gathered tomorrow if we do not do what belongs to us today, even if it is very little.

Fraternally, your sister,

Sr. Teresa de Jesus Cadarso Mateos, OP
(Original: Spanish)

SISTER CECYLIA ROSZAK

TESTIMONY OF HER LIFE

*«Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever»
(Ps 23, 6)*

“I have always trusted in Divine Mercy”



Sister Cecylia Maria Roszak OP, of the “Gródek” Monastery in Cracow, Poland, passed away on the 16th of November 2018 at the age of 110 years and seven months. She was 87 years professed at the time of her death. Her whole life was one of faithful service to God and His people, lived out under the care of our Blessed Mother. Sister Cecylia was born on the 25th of March 1908, the Feast of the Annunciation and she died on the 16th of November, the memorial of Our Lady of Mercy of the Gate of Dawn in Vilnius (Lithuania).

On the 4th of August 1929 she joined the Monastery of the cloistered nuns of the Order of Preachers at “Gródek” in Cracow. On the 6th of February 1930, during her clothing ceremony she received the names Cecylia Maria. She made her first vows on the 7th of February 1931 and her solemn vows on the 7th of February 1934.

In 1938 Sister Cecylia with a group of seven nuns was sent to Vilnius Colony (17 km from Vilnius) to establish a new Dominican foundation. That period of Cecylia’s life is remarkable for her readiness to sacrifice herself for God and for the example she gave to her Sisters in Community. It was at this time that she met blessed Michał Sopoćko, and heard about the revelations of

Merciful Jesus to Sister Faustyna Kowalska. She got the impression, as she said in her own words, that “this grace is for me too”.

In the Vilnius monastery, dedicated to Saint Joseph, the nuns helped the local people as best they could. During the Second World War they risked their lives hiding a group of over a dozen Jews (15-17 people). They were young scouts mostly. Among this group who worked in the monastery kitchen, orchard and garden was Abba Kowner and his family. Abba Kowner was a popular Jewish writer and Marxist who emigrated to Israel and then to the United States where he died in 1987. Behind the monastery walls the hidden Jews found a safe place and established sincere relationships with the Dominican nuns. They used to call the prioress by the Hebrew word “Ima” which means “mother”. In September 1943, shortly after sister Bertranda Siestrzewitowska, prioress, and Sister Diana Frąckiewicz had been arrested by Germans, the monastery was disbanded. The community of Dominican nuns dispersed. Many years later Sister Cecylia commented on that dramatic situation briefly: “Sister Bertranda paid a high price for her activity. She was imprisoned and tortured in Vilnius and sent to the Nazi labour camp in Kaunas. After being released from the camp she decided to leave the Order”.

Sister Cecylia was in exile during the occupation. She hid in local manors (nursing the sick) and vicarages. She served as a sacristan and taught children compulsory subjects and the catechism. Among those children there were Jewish siblings, Wanda (she is still alive) and her younger brother Julek. Their parents had been assassinated in their flat in front of children’s eyes. The children stayed all night by their dead bodies. In the morning the terrified children ran up to the vicarage and they were looked after by sister Cecylia who gave them safety and motherly care. Many years later Wanda spoke about this period of her life “We went into hiding with her in the homes of friendly people. For safety we moved from one hideout to another. It lasted for about a year. Sister Cecylia supported us with kindly words and she hugged us to comfort us in our pain after loss of our parents. She cared not only for our food and clothes but also for our upbringing and education. My brother (who is already dead) and I saw her as our second mother. Her interest in our lives and her friendship didn’t stop over the years but they survived to the end of her life. I visited her in the monastery in Cracow several times. I always wrote to her about my personal and family troubles and I found support and advice.”

During the Second World War, in 1944, the Dominican nuns from “Gródek” in Cracow were rehoused to the monastery of the Order of Saint Clare’s. They stayed there until 1947. After the War, on the 2nd of May 1945, Sister Cecilia and two other nuns came back to Cracow from Vilnius. In 1946, she was elected prioress. Immediately after the election she began to make efforts to regain possession of their former Monastery, - a task at which she succeeded, Thank God. Although, it was a difficult time for the Church in Poland – the time of post-war struggle against the Communist authority and a dark period of invigilation carried out by the security service, Mother Cecylia managed admirably. She was well-mannered, courageous and was gifted with a diplomatic disposition which served her well.

In her long, monastic life she served as prioress several times. After the Second Vatican Council, she worked tirelessly to understand and implement the required changes, according to the mind of the Church.

“I have always trusted in the Divine Mercy” – she made that confession on the hundredth anniversary of her birth on the 25th of March 2008. On the 23rd of December 2008 she was honoured with the **medal Righteous among the Nations**, granted by Yad Vashem Institute in Jerusalem.

When she was 101 Sister Cecylia had a successful operation on her hip and knees. She could still participate in common prayers.

In 2011 Fr Brian J Pierce OP, the General Promoter of the nuns of the Order of Preachers visited the Community. He called her “an icon of faithfulness and contemplative joy!” Fr Brian often recalled that visit “with those seemingly unimportant nuns – my sisters in Saint Dominic.” On many occasions while speaking about the preaching mission of the nuns of the Order, he spoke about the witness and courage of the nuns of the Monastery when they were living in Vilnius. The nuns in Vilnius he said “were called to preach the Gospel by opening their monastery to the poor and oppressed. They answered with all their hearts, and the echo of their holy preaching sounds nowadays in our world. Those nuns, although they had chosen the hidden life of prayer,



knew that sometimes the Gospel demands something unexpected from them”.

When she was 106 she used to say that “life is beautiful but short and that is why you need to live it wisely”.

At the age of 109 she got pneumonia, and began gradually getting worse. When she was visited by the archbishop Marek Jędraszewski on the 25th of March 2018 on her 110 birthday, she was bedridden. After that visit the Cracovian metropolitan confessed: “She is a great character”. Sister Cecylia was really moved and wanted to know why so many people visited her.

On this occasion many articles and photographs of the nun appeared in the national newspapers. Thanks to the media coverage Wanda heard that her saviour from Vilnius was still alive! To honour Sister Cecylia she sent her a bunch of beautiful flowers and again got in touch with the monastery.

Sister Cecylia spent most of her life as a Dominican contemplative nun in the monastery at "Gródek". She lived a deep life of prayer. She used to say that it was meaning of her existence.

She especially loved Jesus in the Eucharist. She was fond of the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. The Holy Rosary was her favourite Marian prayer. When she was 100, she still had a brilliant memory and a youthful, vital



spirit. She would ask her sisters to read for her some passages from the Scripture – especially from the Gospel of John. She participated in common Lectio Divina. She always trusted in the Divine Mercy and she liked listening to sister Faustina's Diary. The sisters of her community were surprised and enchanted by her sense of humour. It manifested itself in funny and witty sayings. She said, for example, that to keep a good memory "you should pray and study foreign languages" and "You should try to remember to not forget".

Right to the end she wanted to keep abreast of difficult matters and troubles of the Church, the Order, the homeland and the world. She wanted to be informed about them. She wove all those troubles into her prayer. She was also interested in her community's life and, using a walker, as long as she could, she visited the sick sisters. She said that she wanted to "do good deeds". Half-jokingly she confessed that she wouldn't yet die "because nothing hurt her". Another time she said: "You all will die and I'll still stay because our Lord has forgotten about me."

She died at noon, on the liturgical memorial of Our Lady of the Gate of Dawn, Mother of Mercy. She quietly passed away in the presence of her sisters praying and singing the Salve Regina. She left the beautiful testimony of a life lived in love, humility, sacrifice and prayer, totally submissive to God's will. She suffered greatly with many ailments before she went home to the Father's House.

After the death of this Venerable Jubilarian and aged Dominican nun whose "person and deeds made the name of the Order of Preachers famous", the Master of the Order, Fr Bruno Cadoré

OP sent a message to the Community - Advent words of gratitude and consolation. He invoked the document of the Holy Father Francis concerning the consecrated life in the life of the Church. He wrote: "All of us at Santa Sabina are very moved by the witness of her life of sacrifice and prayer. Her 90 years of profession were a genuine blessing to the Order of Preachers and a powerful testimony of God's love to the entire world. As we read in *Spe Salvi* regarding contemplative life: *The human race lives thanks to a few; were it not for them, the world would perish (15)*. I deeply believe that the life of Sister Cecilia remains such a powerful sign, and I am very grateful to you, Sisters, for continuing the mission of the Order through your dedication to silence and contemplation".

The Dominican nuns from the „Gródek” Monastery in Cracow, Poland
(Original: Polish) - First Translation: English



ECUMENISM AT THE MONASTERY

OSLO - NORWAY

In a special way, I entrust to the monasteries of contemplative life the spiritual ecumenism of prayer, conversion of heart, and charity. To this end I encourage their presence wherever Christian communities of different confessions live side by side, so that their total devotion to the "one thing needful" (cf. Lk 10:42) — to the worship of God and to intercession for the salvation of the world, together with their witness of evangelical life according to their special charisms — will inspire everyone to abide, after the image of the Trinity, in that unity which Jesus willed and asked of the Father for all his disciples.¹⁸

These words from the Post-Synodal Exhortation *Vita Consecrata* (1994), with which Pope Saint John-Paul II addressed contemplative communities, express eloquently the affinity between monastic life and ecumenism that we live from here in Oslo.

¹⁸ VC 101

As Dominican Nuns, we find a solid base for ecumenical engagement in the Augustinian ideal of religious life: to live in harmony, having one mind and heart in God. Further, our Constitutions tell us that the Nuns of our Order «first build up in their own monasteries the Church of God which they help to spread throughout the world by the offering of themselves»¹⁹. For us, to build up the Church of God and help spread it throughout the world, also implies seeking the unity of all those who confess the name of Christ, that we may be one, as He wanted. Our common life, which should furnish «a living example of the reconciliation of



all things in Christ»²⁰, and teach us to live together as sisters, does it not sow in us a seed of hope that one day all the baptised may gather around the same Eucharistic table? And the unity among Christians, is it not a criterion for the credibility of our preaching of justice and peace? Yes, we believe that

the statement our brother Timothy Radcliffe made about the Order is true for all Christians: «*We cannot preach the Kingdom*» – the Kingdom of justice and peace – «*and be divided.*»²¹

From its very beginnings, our community has had a special commitment to Christian unity. Founded in 1951, in a country with a Lutheran majority, it was marked by the spirit of l'Abbé Couturier, Taizé, p. Congar and Vatican II. Several sisters carried this intention in their heart already before they came to Norway. Others have discovered it here, living as we do among Christians of different confessions.

Sister Ida, the first Norwegian, was the daughter of a Lutheran pastor. Two of her brothers also became pastors, and one even bishop. It was he who celebrated and preached at the first ecumenical service in our chapel in 1972.

Sister Marie-Thérèse, another foundress recently deceased, tells her own story:

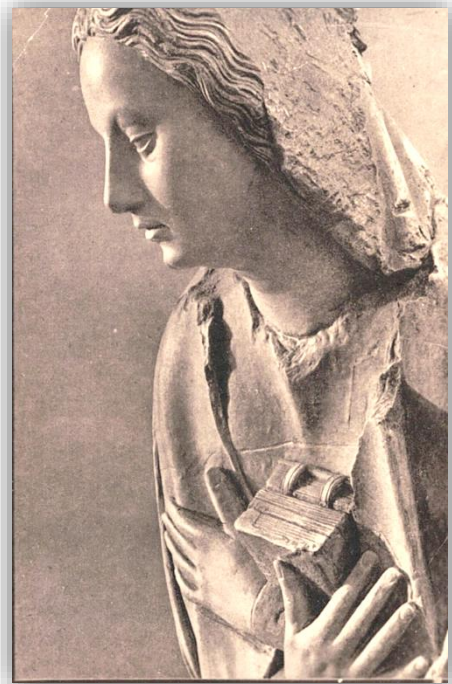
Once, the retreat [in Lourdes, the founding monastery] was preached by p. Le Guillou who founded Istina. At the end of the retreat, we met him in recreation, and he told us that Istina was founded for Christian unity. It hit me very strongly, as I had always asked myself why Christians were separated from each other. From that moment on, I prayed for the unity of all Christians.

¹⁹ LCM 3 § II.

²⁰ LCM 2 § II.

²¹ *To Praise, to Bless, to Preach – The Mission of the Dominican Family*, Manilla 2000.

In her *lectio divina* and her meditation, Sister Marie-Thérèse studied and contemplated in depth what she called «the mystery of unity», first in the Old and the New Testaments, then in the writings of the Rhineland mystics and Saint Augustin, in Ruysbroeck, Teilhard de Chardin and Hans Urs von Balthasar. Her favourite image of the Virgin, whom she invoked with the title *Notre Dame de l'Unité* – Our Lady of Unity – shows Mary at the Annunciation in the Collégiale d'Écouis, receiving the message of the Angel, with the Scriptures held close to her heart. Sister Marie-Thérèse loved showing this image to Protestant Christians, as she was aware of the central place the Scriptures hold in their tradition.



It happens that a Sister participates in more formal meetings or dialogues, but the main thrust of our ecumenism is found in prayer, hospitality, encounter and friendship. Once again, the example of Sister Marie-Thérèse is a good illustration. During her long life, she made friends with people from different Christian denominations. To her funeral came, not only Catholics close to the community, but also friends from the neighbouring Lutheran parish of Tonsen, who had faithfully visited Sister Marie-Thérèse until the very end, as well as representatives of the clergy both of that parish and the parish in charge of the nursing home where she spent her last years.

On a more official level, in 2008, Sister Anne-Lise, who was Prioress at the time, received a price for her work for unity and bridge building between Christians. When we celebrated her Golden Jubilee of Profession in 2014, Christians from all traditions were present, among them several Bishops Emeriti from the Church of Norway (Lutheran) – a testimony to the ecumenical journey made since Sister Anne-Lise's first Profession in 1964!

When it comes to concrete initiatives on community level, here are some examples: Every



Thursday, the day Jesus Himself prayed for the unity of all His disciples, we pray especially for this intention. A candle in the cloister burns the whole day as a sign of our prayer, a tradition we started in communion with an Anglican community of Augustinian Nuns in England.

Since 1972, as already mentioned, we celebrate an ecumenical prayer service in our chapel every January, during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, a joint celebration with the

Lutheran parish of Tonsen. To this service, we invite a guest preacher, usually a non-Catholic, and together we listen to the Word of God, praise Him with one voice, and pray together, for each other, for an ever deeper and truer unity between all Christians, for our local community and the needs of the whole world. The majority of the people we welcome at the monastery, groups or individuals, are non-Catholics. The Lutheran parishes around us regularly come with their Confirmations classes, groups for elderly people, volunteer workers etc.



We also have good relations with pastors and religious of Protestant and Orthodox churches around us, and deep friendships with people of every confession. Pope Francis, in the Apostolic Constitution *Vultum Dei quaerere*, speaks of monastic life as «an element of unity with the other Christian confessions»²², and this echoes our experience here, especially in the bonds that unite us to a little monastic community of Lutheran Deaconesses (*Diaconesses de Reuilly*)

here in Norway, Engen kloster.

The presence in our community of Sisters from non-Catholic families makes us more aware of the way we think and speak of other Christians. When it is no longer just an abstract “separated brother”, but real flesh and blood brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers, one is less inclined to accept facile generalisations and superficial judgments. This highlights the importance of mutual knowledge and encounter for ecumenism – and this is something anyone can do!

«May all be one»: This is the will of Christ for His disciples. We invite you to enter with us into this prayer, to live this desire for perfect unity after the image of the Trinity, as – in the expression of Brother Roger Schutz of Taizé, taken up by our Master General Bruno Cadore during a meeting with Dominican Nuns – small «parables of communion». For those who wish to study this topic in more depth, we recommend, in addition to the works already quoted, the Encyclical *Ut unum sint* by Pope John-Paul II, Cardinal Walter Kasper’s *Handbook of Spiritual Ecumenism* and the document *From Conflict to Communion*

Sr Ingeborg-Marie, op

Monastery of Our Lady of the Assumption - Oslo, Norway - (Original: English and French)

²² VDQ 4.



«Your Word, O Lord Is a Lamp for My Path! »

A young woman had purchased a Bible with the desire of knowing the Word of God, but... even if she knew the New Testament, the Old Testament was closed to her. I, who have the Bible in hand multiple times a day, was heart-broken. After discussing it as a community, it was proposed to the pastor of the local parish that we offer a first initiation to the Bible. And the adventure began!

Three or 4 young women – including some catechists – came to the monastery each week to discover that the New Testament was as it were embellished and made richer by its relation with the Old Testament. Thus we traveled through Exodus with the Hebrews; we followed Elijah the prophet...

A change of place for me when my old monastery closed, but the adventure continued...

For the last 11 years at Dax, a bible study group has met here every month. There has been a strong core of faithful participants since the beginning who are happy to come and come again! ... At Dax, after having examined the gospel according to St. Matthew, we looked at “Women in the Bible”, then other books. This year, we are examining the letter of St. Peter. An exciting adventure!



At the end of the year we exchange ideas to choose the topic for the next year: “The Word of God is Truly Joy for the Heart”.

In the group, 2 young women had difficulty following, but they did not give up: they really wanted to know the Word of God. So, with the consent of my prioress, I offered to give them “private lessons”: no more than 3 or 4 participants, all of whom know each other, so that they could ask all the questions that came to mind and request the explanations they need to understand the text. There are three in this group, which has been meeting for three years in simplicity and in the joy of better understanding the words of St. Mark, whom we are following in our reading, once a month.

Finally a third group was born for those persons who had a thirst to know the Word of God but who knew very little, sometimes even **nothing**! With this group we went through Salvation History, to situate the events recounted in the Bible in time and place.

This group did not continue because some of the members left. The others were able to carry on with the reading and the deepening of the Word! Joy!

Yes, the Word is very near to you, in your heart and on your lips... Open your mouth and I will fill it, and the Word will be sweeter than a honeycomb, will rekindle your heart, giving you the joy of loving!

Sr. Monique
Monastère St. Dominique, Dax (France)

(Original: French)

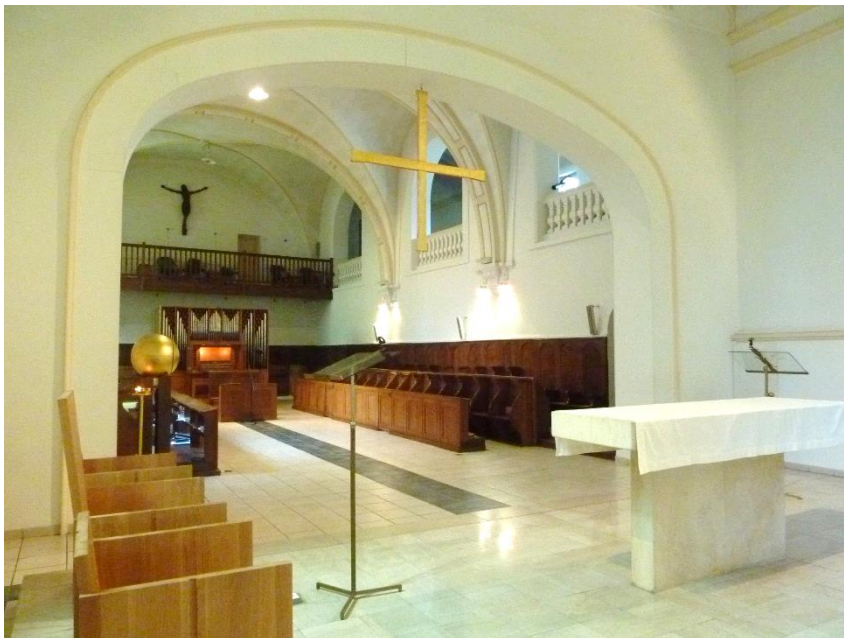


«Introduction to prayer...»

We, the Dominican Nuns at Dax, are located in a spa town in the department of Landes, in the southwest of France. Our monastery is situated in the heart of the city center, close to the parochial and diocesan life. This is why we have had the joy over the past few years of supporting two initiatives of the local church.

First of all, an introduction to prayer for young children in catechism classes.

In 2004, the project of this introduction to prayer was instituted between those responsible for catechesis and two of us nuns. From the beginning, we decided to welcome both the children and the adults accompanying them at same time, by dividing them into two distinct groups.



These encounters took on different expressions over the years: introduction to silent prayer, praying in the Holy Spirit, praying the Our Father, praying with a psalm, participation in Midday Prayer, praying with a chaplet.

At the present time, we primarily offer an introduction to silent prayer, which is included in the course of preparation

for First Communicants, who are around the ages of 8 to 9 years old. Based on the number of children, the groups are duplicated to facilitate exchanges.

The encounters remain simple, adapted to our “public.” They are prepared jointly by those responsible for catechesis and between the two of us; Sister Marie for the program for adults, and myself for the children’s program.

It takes place on Saturday morning. A catechist and very often a priest from the parish complete our trio.

The chosen day and the limited duration (1 hour 45 minutes to 2 hours) mean that the participants may include mothers and fathers, grandmothers and grandfathers; so there is a diverse group of adults, both from the perspectives of family circumstances as well as their relationships with the faith and the Church.

After a word of welcome, marked by the simplicity and joy of a Dominican hospitality, the children and adults break into two groups, and then meet later in the chapel some 45 minutes later.

Sister Marie shows the adults a brief video montage of our Dominican monastic life at Dax, focusing on our life of prayer, then she engages in dialogue and instruction in response to the numerous questions which surface, ranging from the very simple and practical to the more profound, existential, and spiritual. The surprise of discovery, marked by serious mutual respect and interest, results in an exchange which cannot leave anyone indifferent.

During this time, the children participate in three short consecutive sessions. First of all, I speak to them about our life of prayer, of the One who gathered us together from the four corners of France, and even beyond, who loves us and whom we love to the point of wanting to remain always closer to Him; I speak of silence and its richness before answering their questions or sparking inviting their questions. Freshness and flavor mark these dialogues. Then the children go to visit our chapel where the catechists lead them in



an exploration of the various spaces, the altar, the tabernacle, the choir stalls, explaining the stained glass windows and statues. The organ and the tribune of the sisters in the infirmary always spark interest and envy. Back in the conference room, the catechist leads a brief discussion among the children, the priest and myself, on the meaning and place of prayer in their own lives, and their friendship with Jesus. Then she briefly introduces them to the prayer time that will follow in the chapel.

This prayer time lasts 40 to 45 minutes. The adults are the first to arrive in the chapel through the public entrance. The children have the privilege of entering the enclosure: after receiving serious instruction and exhortation on the need to respect absolute silence, and not to disturb the prayers of the sisters of the monastery, they hurry in front of the large enclosure door, which I solemnly open; then they cross the few feet of cloister that lead to our entrance into the choir in an impressive silence, looking very 'pious', proud, curious and smiling. They enter in procession in the chapel where the music of Bach welcomes them and go to sit on carpets and cushions arranged in the choir, between the stalls, where their adult companions are already seated. The silence imposes itself on everyone, a respectful and open silence. Then the priest introduces the hour of prayer, beginning with the Sign of the Cross, recalling what was shared, before Sister Marie reads a passage from the Book of Isaiah, 'You are precious to me and I love you' (Is 43, 4). All, children, companions and catechists, are then called before God by their first name, spoken out loud. After a few words from a catechist to help enter into prayer, the time of silent prayer begins, supported by muted music. There is a period of recollection for 5 to 10 minutes, depending on the groups of children. Then, still observing a constant silence, each one is invited to make one or more gestures of prayer: to make the Sign of the Cross with holy water, to put a pebble (more or less big!) at the foot of the cross in front

of the altar symbolizing a worry, a sorrow that is entrusted to God, place a lit candle near the tabernacle or the cross as an expression of praise, a joy, a thank you, write an intention of prayer...a drawing for Jesus. Adults, children, and catechists perform these gestures calmly, with simplicity, seriousness, and confidence. Everyone seems swept up by the climate of prayer. Then the priest summarizes in a short exhortation the meaning and significance of what is being lived. The meeting ends with the recitation of the Lord's Prayer and then the blessing, before we sing a short response of praise, a signal for the children's murmurings. We then give each a bookmark, a remembrance of this memorable moment.



Before everyone leaves, the adults and children speak freely with us. Something deep and profound has happened, with surprise and wonder, calling forth joy and thanks. Parents and children are both proud and happy at this moment of interiority, of prayer lived together. Of course, we offer them assurances of our prayer and that of the community for the great day of their First Holy Communion.

Sr. Elisabeth
Monastery of Dax, France

(Original: French)

Reading the Bible with a Nun

Leading a bible study group at the Monastery

I am not a biblical scholar and so I offer only what I have received and continue to receive beyond the formation classes which characterize our Dominican monastic life, and from my readings of journals and specialized works.

The group has ranged between 12 and 15 attendees over the years. Retirees and people in various professions, with teachers or ex-teachers predominating, and clear female majority. Due to conflicting schedules, the average attendance is about ten people per meeting. Most of

the participants practice their faith, some have commitments in our parish (funeral, accompaniment, reception, etc.).



The meetings are held at the monastery in the early afternoon, every first Monday of the month between October and June, and last about an hour and a half. It is not a question of exchange of the type sharing of gospel or revision of life, nor of magistral teaching.

It is not an exchange of sharing the Gospel or conversion of life or Church teaching.

The clearly identified purpose is that of an initiation to the reading of the scriptural texts, not for scholarly purposes, but to deepen our faith and nourish our spiritual life, and to enlighten and sustain our Christian life. Therefore, I prepare an extensive file on the author or the text being studied, which I share at the meetings: a general introduction, its place in the history of the revelation, reading the text step by step, various exegetical interpretations, and recent scholarship.

The group progresses at its own pace. I do not determine the number of meetings that will be necessary to treat the subject. We move at the rate of understanding, and also, at the rate of the questions that arise on various levels, on the deposit of faith, theology, apostolic impact, the great questions of our time. It is a free and simple sharing, to clarify knowledge, to correct errors or inaccuracies, to debate opinions and attitudes, to enrich oneself with various experiences, to search together for truth.

So, we take our time! We did a tour on Paul, with a cross section of readings, over three years. It took three years also to encounter the Apocalypse and for the first eleven chapters of Genesis, and two years to address the psalms. This year, after studying the text of Babel, we are just beginning a study of the psalms in connection with the liturgy.

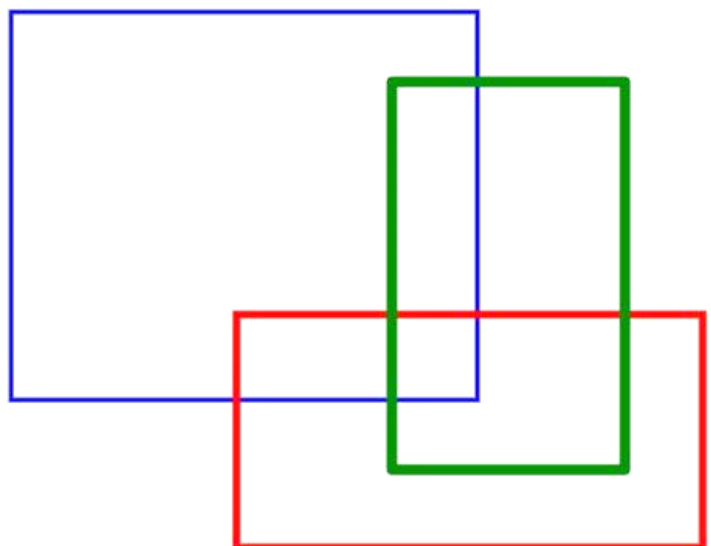
The levels of knowledge of the different participants vary, but I am struck by their common thirst for discovery and their depth, by the quality of listening, respect and mutual help they offer to advance to the fullness of understanding, by the availability to otherness, to possibilities, to the unexpected, by the willingness to surpass preconceived ideas and absolute certainties ... A thirst for God, thirst for truth in the following of Christ, thirst for openness to the world, to the Universal Church. A beautiful spiritual and ecclesial vitality in the humility of the situations and the simplicity of relationships. I marvel and give thanks, and also drink from this source, well beyond my own study "upstream."

Both with the children and with this biblical group, it seems to me that I am living an essential dimension of my Dominican being, without tension or contradiction to my contemplative vocation, on the contrary, this is what feeds my desire to share the taste of prayer and the passion of listening to the Word of God.



Sr. Elisabeth
Monastery of Dax, France

(Original: French)



Dominican Monastery

“To the Crucified Redeemer”

Dear Sisters throughout the world,

In this article I would like to introduce our monastery. Some of the following can also be found on our website.

Our monastery was founded in 1918 in the town of Klausen on the Mosel River in the Diocese of Trier by the Dominican Monastery of Limpertsberg,

Luxembourg. Luxembourg borders Germany and the Diocese of Trier, so the distance was not great. The parish church of Klausen has an image of the Mater Dolorosa which is venerated even today by pilgrims who come from far and wide. The first sisters found lodging in a simple pilgrim’s hostel that was added on to little by little and in which our community lived until recently.

Because the walls of the house were very damp and the interior was very dark and unwelcoming, we spent years searching for a way to improve the situation. For example, we considered erecting a new building on the property or behind the above-mentioned church. None of these ideas and deliberations led to any result. In 1999, we learned that the Diocese of Osnabrueck in the north of Germany was looking for a contemplative community for a vacant convent of the Knights Hospitaller (Order of Knights of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem) in Lage/Rieste near the city of Osnabrueck. After careful deliberation and many chapter meetings, we decided to leave Klausen and move north. It was February 13, 2000, the memorial of Blessed Jordan of Saxony.

The move was a great logistical undertaking. First we had to clean out our monastery and everything that we didn’t need anymore had to be disposed of. We filled three big dumpsters. Since 1918 things had been accumulating in the attic and cellar, things the sisters had stored up out of great poverty and had carefully packed.

We moved north in three groups. The first group of sisters had already made some preparations. Though the house was renovated, there was still a lot that was not finished.



By the beginning of December 2000 we were all together and on December 8 our “new” cloister was consecrated by Bishop Bode and placed under the patronage of the Crucified Redeemer. Since then we live in a very beautiful, bright building in the immediate vicinity the parish of St. John the Baptist. This church has special meaning for the people in this diocese - that is, from the surroundings all the way to the Muenster Diocese - because the so-called cross of Lage is in the side chapel.

The Knights Hospitaller made a foundation here in the 13th century, a *commendam*. Two of the members of this community had a vision in which they were told to erect a cross to be hung in the church for veneration so that the people could pray before it. At the beginning of the 14th century, the 130 kilogram cross was consecrated by the Bishop of Osnabrueck. It has been venerated through all the centuries since then. What is unusual about it is that people customarily carry it on their shoulders around the church. It takes 4 or 5 strong men to do this.



When a family member is seriously ill or someone is suddenly seriously injured or killed and accident, when problems of whatever sort arise, those affected say: “Come, we are going to carry the cross.” Friends, acquaintances, and colleagues are invited to participate and carry the cross. This can happen at any time of day - even late in the evening. The church is open almost all day.

The faithful come when need is at hand. It doesn't take a priest or organized pilgrimage, only trust in God's help and the solidarity of those who share in the need, sorrows and desperation of the other. These could be men of another religion or those who are far from the church. Only during Lent is it necessary to make a reservation because of the many parish cross-carrying pilgrimages from the diocese and surrounding regions.

During the Order's 2016 Jubilee year, our province of Teutonia held its pilgrimage here at Lage and the entire Dominican family carried the cross.

This carrying of the cross is simply a mark of the people who believe in Christ. It has lasted through all these centuries even in through times such as the Nazi regime in the last century while Hitler and his followers wanted to eliminate faith and persecuted all who professed Christ.

In September 2000, before our move, Bishop Bode invited us to Osnabrueck so that all the sisters could see our future home. Our visit coincided with the diocesan pilgrimage “For the Sick, With the Sick” to the cross of Lage. The mass was in a field next to the church and the cross was solemnly carried out of the church to a place on the altar, hung there and incensed. This was a very touching moment for me.

I experienced my first cross-carrying by an unorganized group in the weeks before the dedication of our monastery. It moved me deeply. The simple faith in the power and the love of the crucified Redeemer and the experience of putting our suffering in his cross goes to the heart.

Our community's intercessory prayer includes the intentions written in a notebook in the Cross Chapel. In our Easter Vigil liturgy we lay one of these notebooks on the altar.

In the 19 years since we have arrived at the Lage foundation, we have noticed that the number of people coming in spontaneous groups to carry the cross has dropped sharply. We attribute this to the countless scandals that have affected the Catholic Church, in progressing secularization and in the decreasing religious life of communities. Nonetheless, many individuals still come daily to pray at the cross and to find consolation.

Although we are a very small, fragile community, which begs your prayers we know that we at this place, at the cross of Lage, are called like Dominic to pray for the salvation of men. The patronage of the Crucified Redeemer leads us on and simultaneously gives consolation and the knowledge that he has already done everything for us and that we may thankfully accept and proclaim the redemption.



Sr. Anna Maria OP
Monastery of Lage, Deutschland

(Original: German)

ON THE THRESHOLD OF A NEW FEDERATION



"He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."
(Phil. 1:6)

This verse from the Holy Bible applies to us in the Asia Pacific Region as we embark on a new journey: the creation of a new Federation in our region.

After so much exchange of letters and communication among the six monasteries that expressed their intention to join the federation, finally we ended with the Preparatory Meeting which was held in Vietnam from Feb. 17 - 21, 2019.

We thank the support and prayers of our well-wishers coming from different branches of our Dominican Family, especially Fr. Bruno, Master of the Order, and Fr. Cesar Valero, Promoter of the Nuns.

We are happy with the outcome of the meeting which was participated by the majority of the Major Superiors and Delegates from the member monasteries of our region. Only two monasteries were unable to be represented. However, we were well-aware that during our meetings, they were in union with us through our communion in prayer.

We also included in the Mass the intentions of those member monasteries that were unable to come. We are looking forward to seeing them in next year's Federal Assembly which will be held in the Philippines, the Federal See of the Federation.

On the first day of the meeting, after greetings were made and procedures were approved by all, we read a letter from the Master of the Order. Following his advice, we proceeded with the election of the officers needed for the establishment and running of our new Federation which was presided by Fr, Mariano Gonzales Martin, OP from the Holy Rosary Province and presently assigned in Matsuyama, Japan.

It was a few days of intense personal coexistence. We not only got to know more about our own communities; through our personal sharing, we also got to know each other more deeply, enabling us to understand and help each other better.

One of the religious places that we visited in Vietnam was St Nicholas of Bari Cathedral also known as the Church of the Chicken because at the top of the bell tower is a large chicken. It is located in [Da Lat](#), capital of [Lam Dong province](#) in the Central Highlands of [Vietnam](#).

I think the most important thing we gained during the meeting was the personal encounter and better knowledge of one another, the realization of how much we can help each other. Even if the event happened over only the course of several days, we opened new horizons and developed and exchanged ideas and visions for our own communities. For example, Fr. Mariano insisted we work more closely with the priests, especially Dominicans, and the Dominican family, especially the tertiaries. He encouraged us to develop more programs together, especially for the youth, so our communities can become more relevant and helpful to the local Church.

With these programs, may we continue to grow in number, as well as in faith, so we can help strengthen the presence of the Church. Most of us live in countries with a great number of young and active Catholics—these youths are searching for their vocation and are in the process of formation.

Through these programs, may we show that we are working towards growth, responding to the needs of our times, and not allowing ourselves to become stagnant and paralyzed. Following the steps of St. Dominic, we must be always working towards justice and peace, creating new ways to be stronger and more active every day, and incorporating new members to our communities, even though they challenge us and make us uncomfortable many times.

Our region is a region of pure mission: we are missionaries in an ocean of non-Christians—and even sometimes anti-Christians. Let us remain committed and united in the same prayer, giving witness to our Faith.

The boat is now ready to sail. The net is ready to catch new vocations. The Nuns in Asia are now set for a new beginning, afresh!

Sr. Mary Augustine Godoy Cruz, OP
Queen of Peace Federation - Asia Pacific Region

(Original: English)



Our relationship with the natural environment of our region

Peace with Creation

We, at Queen of Peace Monastery, are very excited to announce that the film, [This Mountain Life](#), had its world premiere in Toronto on April 30th at the Hot Docs Film Festival. We were featured in this documentary that will eventually be aired on the Knowledge Network.

There is a 'trailer' that can be viewed online at <http://www.mountainlifefilm.com/trailer>. It promises to have breathtaking photography while exploring the lives of several people who have chosen to live in the Coast Mountain Range here in B.C.

The producers, Jen and Grant Rustemeyer-Baldwin, asked us thoughtful questions in the hopes of eliciting from us *an expression of our relationship with the natural environment; how it is affecting or forming us and why we have chosen to live here. I continue to carry these questions in prayer and in this article I propose to share with you some of my thoughts.*

It is good

Sunday mornings as we sing the Cantic of Daniel (Dan 3:57-88) in unison with God's creation we give praise and glory to the Father, creator of all things. This cantic has a way of coming alive for me as I gaze at the Tantalus Mountains and out over the Upper Squamish Valley.



My eyes and heart perceive the beauty of the Lord and I am swept up in a wave of gratitude for the wondrous works wrought by God. The ancient exclamation; *'It is good'* (Gen.1) resounds in the depths of my being as I behold what He has created with such love.

It has occurred to me that the age old gnostic heresy is refuted once again. The material and the spiritual realms refuse to be held in opposition to one another. The dualistic divide is bridged by the beauty of the Sacred Liturgy celebrated by a loving community in the midst of the pristine natural

environment. We find ourselves silently giving expression to the preaching of our father St. Dominic at the foundation of our Order; what God created by His Word is good, so good that He gave His only begotten Son. As St. Peter Chysologus said; *"The hand which had taken up earth with which to fashion us, became flesh with us."*

A holy preaching

This region has been called the 'outdoor recreation capital of Canada'. It is where people come, who are seeking 'something' in the outdoors. Thirsting, they are drawn into a mystery which they perceive and yet not fully hold the key to its meaning. My sense is that our prayerful presence points to the finality, the dignity, and the significance of this awesome creation. We are pointing to Someone ... the Source behind all beauty!

How many people have shared, with tears of emotion, that they have had a foretaste of heaven in our chapel. A guest, with Celtic roots, has described it as a 'thin place'. I understood this to mean that in this sacred space of beauty, silence, and liturgy, the veil between the visible and invisible world is almost transparent; the transcendent and immanent seem to intersect, the temporal and the eternal meet here and now.

We have seen how God silently preaches and touches the hearts of people while we quietly live out our lives, dwelling in the Word, as Dominican contemplatives. So, here we are, a humble but very real part of the new evangelization. The special alchemy of the beauty paired with the proclamation of the Word through our liturgical celebrations becomes a powerful preaching through which we affirm that:

- God created all things
- All things are held together in Christ.
- That God loves this good creation.

- That God longs to reconcile all things to himself and to bring about peace; peace through the blood Christ shed on the cross.

God's purpose is peace.

By the intercession of Mary Queen of Peace we pray for peace. Peace in our hearts, peace in our communities, peace for humanity, and peace with, and for all of creation.

Each year, as climate changes, we watch the shining glacier recede and we are threatened with floods and fire. We can hear *creation groaning in the hope that it will be set free from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. (Rm 8:20-21)*

Naturally, I ask myself what I can do to live in peace with creation. I search to understand the mind of God and the relationship He intended us to have with the rest of creation. I believe it has something to do with love, for being created in His likeness, it is fitting that I should love what He so loves, and love it with His love by His indwelling Spirit.



As I sit, I pray
 day by day
 I look out upon this vista;
 this ever changing dance of light and darkness,
 mist and cloud, greenness, whiteness,
 dazzling blinding brightness, or moonlit softness.
 I find myself,
 star dust and water,
 being mysteriously molded, changed, expanded;
 the Spirit most Holy fills, forms,
 quickens my clay.
 With this land and her creatures I am one.
 Now wounded with love

I know her groaning,
her longing for Life,
her hope for peace and redemption.
The border of my tent, my heart, my prayer
extends to cover
this wondrous
this vulnerable creation.

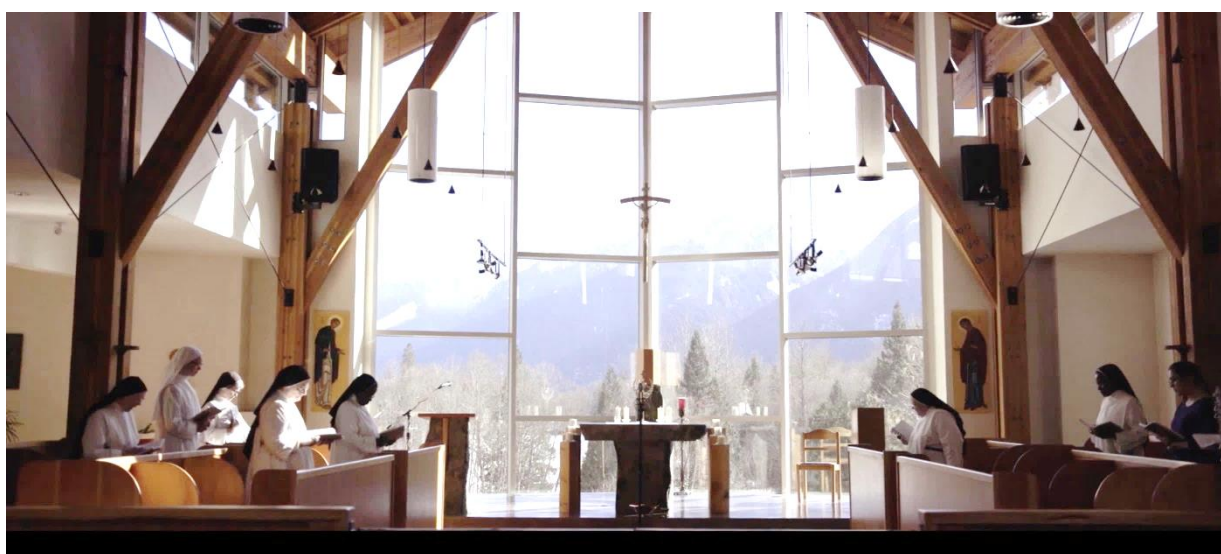
According to our likeness let them have dominion

St Peter Chrysologus has said; *“He imprints His image on us so that this visible image may show forth for the earth the presence of the invisible creator, and he has given us his place so that the earth may not be without his representatives.”*

Genesis 1:26 reveals that we were created in His image so as to have dominion over creation according to that image. It is the first task confided to humanity. I am invited into a relationship with creation that mirrors God’s relationship with creation. So, how does God exercise dominion? How does Jesus exercise dominion? What comes to my mind are words like: to delight, to love, to sustain, to care for, to nurture, to cultivate, to teach, to lead, to serve, to give, to heal, to reconcile, to restore, to seek the good of, to have mercy, to seek for peace, to live in communion, and even to give one’s life. True Godlike dominion means to be stewards of creation and to reflect God’s caring relationship with the world.

A sign of the Kingdom

Sacred Scripture leads us from the creation to the *new* creation. The old creation is renewed, restored and transformed so that all of creation may be filled with the presence of God. He calls us, as his redeemed people, to live today as if the future is already present, to live as signs of the future kingdom, which is the restoration of all things. This challenges me because I’m a nun and nuns are all about being eschatological signs!



How then should I live?

For centuries monastic and religious communities have been signs of the kingdom and have modelled a way of life that is sustainable for the earth. We live in simplicity and poverty, hold all things in common and seek the common good. Nevertheless, I have definitely been impacted by the consumeristic society which surrounds me. I know I need to become more intentional and consciously examine the way I am living so that I can contribute to bringing about the peace that God has established through Christ.

Here are a few of the questions that we could ask ourselves as we try to adjust our way of living:

When we shop, do we bring our own bags and avoid plastic ones?

Can we purchase with less plastic wrapping?

What kind and quantity of garbage do we produce? Can we reduce it?

Where does our garbage end up? Compost, recycle, landfill or ocean?

Can we re-use rather than throw away?

What kind of chemical products are we using for cleaning and laundry ?

What about pesticides and herbicides ? Are they kind on the environment?

What are we wasting; water, food, gas, electricity?

What are we eating? (How much processing went into it? Is it nourishing?)

Where does our food come from? Is it local or from far away ? (how much carbon was emitted in shipping and transport)

How is our food grown or raised ? (organically, ethically)

Do we need to purchase new things or can we reuse or buy used?

Do we practice the discipline of sabbath; stopping and resting from working, eating, consuming?

Can we reduce the number of trips to town and use of cars by grouping our errands and appointments?

In these small concrete ways we are attempting to respond to the environmental crisis and to the insistent call of our Holy Father Pope Francis. I would conclude this sharing with the beautiful prayer found in his encyclical letter 'Laudato Si'.

Prayer of Pope Francis

Father, we praise you with all your creatures.

They came forth from your all-powerful hand;

they are yours, filled with your presence and your tender love.

Praise be to you!

Son of God, Jesus,

through you all things were made.

You were formed in the womb of Mary our Mother,

you became part of this earth,

and you gazed upon this world with human eyes.

Today you are alive in every creature

in your risen glory.

Praise be to you!

Holy Spirit, by your light

you guide this world towards the Father's love

and accompany creation as it groans in travail.

You also dwell in our hearts

and you inspire us to do what is good.
Praise be to you!
Triune Lord, wondrous community of infinite love,
teach us to contemplate you
in the beauty of the universe,
for all things speak of you.
Awaken our praise and thankfulness
for every being that you have made.
Give us the grace to feel profoundly joined
to everything that is.
God of love, show us our place in this world
as channels of your love
for all the creatures of this earth,
for not one of them is forgotten in your sight.
Enlighten those who possess power and money
that they may avoid the sin of indifference,
that they may love the common good, advance the weak,
and care for this world in which we live.
The poor and the earth are crying out.
O Lord, seize us with your power and light,
help us to protect all life,
to prepare for a better future,
for the coming of your Kingdom
of justice, peace, love and beauty.
Praise be to you!
Amen.

S. Claire op
Queen of Peace Monastery - Squamish, BC - (Original: English)



SHORT NEWS

We Remember:

29 of April 2019

PRAYER FOR L'EUROPE



“If you are what you ought to be,

you will set the world alight with the fire of love”

Saint Catherine of Siena

Nuns’ Presence on the Order’s

Website: <http://www.op.org>

At the 2018 ICN Meeting, the Commission talked about the presence of the nuns on the Order’s website, [op.org](http://www.op.org). It would be good for the nuns to have a greater presence on the Order’s website: links to different regions and monasteries, maybe a map of all the Dominican monasteries in the world, more about the nuns, and a picture and list of the current ICN members under the section on Commissions. (The photograph up now is from seven years ago.)

I proposed asking Sister Mary Magdalene Prewitt, O.P. from the Monastery of Our Lady of the Rosary in Summit, New Jersey, U.S.A. to work on this project. She is in charge of our North American Association of Dominican Monasteries’ website and has helped a number of our regional monasteries set up their community websites. After obtaining the permission of her prioress, Sister is willing to try. She is attempting to work together with Fr. Javier Abanto, O.P., the Order’s General Promoter for Social Communication. The Order is in the process of renewing its website and changing servers. Sister speaks English and Father Javier Spanish so there is a language barrier. She asked if St. Blase Monastery in Lerma, Bugos, Spain might assist her, especially in translation to Spanish. They have agreed to help. Please keep this project in your prayers.

Submitted by Sister Mary Rose Carlin, O.P. - ICN Representative for North America
Monastery of the Infant Jesus, Lufkin, Texas, U.S.A.

“MY LIFE IS IN YOUR HANDS”

Sister Maria Lourdes Sala Bigas, OP

A Short biography written by Teresa Gomá, rscj.

Sr. Theresa Gomá has been able to identify fully with the subject of her biography: Sr. Maria Lourdes Sala Bigas, born in Tona (Osona), whose journey towards God, ascending and straight forward, at the same time had depth and agility.

Sr. M^a Lourdes Sala Bigas—Carmen was her baptismal name—was born in Tona (Barcelona), Spain, on October 29, 1920. She was the fifth of seven brothers and sisters. Carmen grew up in an atmosphere of affection, solicitude and strong family bonds. Following a divine impulse - she described it like this: "I feel a voice that calls me" -, she entered the Monastery of the Dominican nuns of Santa Clara in Vic (Barcelona).

Her life was a linear path, ascending, rough, without hesitation, at any price, evoking a clear and profound awareness of that call of God. And it was lived in the greatest simplicity and normality. Her ascent to Calvary day after day remained hidden behind a radiant face of joy and charity.

"A disease that lasted ten years, was consuming progressively, in the midst of incomprehension and judgment that undoubtedly sharpened the physical symptoms and the human and spiritual resistance of that unfortunate process."

"Admirable woman ... Admirable faith, dedication, joy, generosity, abandonment, maturity ... throughout her life, from the beginning in Tona to the outcome in Vic and especially in its end, in the Monastery of Santa Clara. Her example comes to our times as an invitation to live everything as a gift from God and, in any circumstance, to feel one's life as a gift. "

Says Sr. Teresa: "... her mature attitude will give us an example to our own life. And none of its features will leave us indifferent. "



Author: Teresa Gomá, rscj. Original spanish.


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Contact: sfeinma@gmail.com

(Original: Spanish)



MONASTERY OF OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY

SUMMIT, NJ, USA

May 18, 2019

Mass and Dedication of the Centennial Wing of the Monastery followed by Open House. Joseph Cardinal Tobin, C.Ss.R., Archbishop of Newark, presiding. Complete information at <https://www.summitdominicans.org/blessing> All are invited to join us in thanking God for his many blessings and for the many friends who made this day possible!

(Original: English)



“AVEC LUI, ECOUTER L’ENVERS DU MONDE”

Frech edition at Editions of CERF, 2018

“ESCUCHAR, CON DIOS, LOS LATIDOS DEL MUNDO”

Spanish edition at Editions San Esteban, 2018

Fr. Bruno Cadoré, op

Since 2010 Bruno Cadoré, OP, has been Master of the Order of Preachers and 87th successor of St. Dominic. Nine years later, he is close to finishing his service to the Order. In this book he offers us an authentic vision of being human, of the Church and of the world. He tells us about his beginnings in the Order, his years of formation, his desires, wishes and expectations as a Dominican friar, as well as the experience that changed his life: Haiti. He also relates with sincerity his service as student master and provincial of France, and then being elected Master of the Order where from this experience he shares that we are in the hands of God. Bruno Cadoré tells us how to walk in life, from Mercy to God. At the conclusion of his story the author says that "The WORD will have the last word". It is an encouraging message of hope.

But the book not only speaks of his life, vocation and ministries within the Order, Bruno Cadore shows us an analysis of reality where every opportunity must be seized. Because every moment of our history is a privileged moment to carry out what we were told at the moment we made profession: Go and preach!

(Publication in French, translated in Spanish)



Mon Dieu, ma miséricorde

Musique: fr. Clément Binachon, op
Paroles: fr David Perrin, op

$\text{♩} = 45$

mf Mon Dieu, ma mi sé - ri - cor - de!

4 *espress.*

f Mon Dieu - ma mi - sé - ri - cor - de! *f* Que -

8

- vont de - ve - nir les pé - cheurs?

11 Psalmodie I flexe Psalmodie II flexe

11 Psalmodie I flexe Psalmodie II flexe

St Dominique: 1. De grâce, ô Père, écoute ma pri - ère :
 2. Ô Christ, toute ma vie, j'ai dési - ré te voir.
 3. Em - brasse, Seigneur, dans ta mi - sé - ri - corde
 4. Du ciel, ô mes enfants, je vous im - plore :
 Assemblée: 5. Rendons gloire au Père Tout - Puis - sant,

2
 1. N'a - ban - donne pas ce peuple qui crie vers toi.
 2. Ne fair(e) qu'un seul coeur, une seule âme a - vec toi.
 3. Les sœurs et les frères de mon Ordre.
 4. « Ra - me - nez à Dieu les hommes qui ne l'a - dorent.
 5. A son Fils bien aimé Jé - sus Christ,

3
 1. Viens sor - tir tes enfants de l'ombre où ils errent
 2. Je te contemple aujourd'hui dans ta gloire,
 3. Tu les appelles pour te prêcher, te bénir et te lou - er.
 4. Pé - né - trez la beauté des âmes, louez le Cré - a - teur,
 5. A l'Es - prit qui habite en nos coeurs,

4
 1. Que jubilent en ton a - mour tous les coeurs droits !
 2. Toi, la lu - mière et la source de ma joie !
 3. Consa - cre - les dans la vé - ri - té.
 4. Contemplez en vos frères l'image de vo - tre Sei - gneur. »
 5. Pour les siècles des siè - cles. A - men.

The Dominicans Fr. Clément Binachon and Fr. David Perrin (Province of Toulouse) composed this song which opened the jubilee celebration on January 21, 2016 in Rome.

Music : Fr. Clément Binachon, op

Words : Fr. David Perrin, op

Here is the link to a good youTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uc2iHOfE8IA>

English

My God, my merciful God !
My God, my merciful God !
What will happen with the sinners ?

1. In your mercy, O Father, hear my prayer :
Do not give up this people who cry to you.
Save your children from the shadows where they roam
For all upright hearts rejoice in your love !

2. O Christ, all my life I longed to see you
To be one heart and one soul with you.
Now I contemplate you in your glory.
You are the true light and the source of my joy !

3. O Lord, embrace in your mercy
All the brothers and sisters of my Order.
You have called them to praise, bless, and preach you.
Consecrate them in your truth !

4. From heaven, o my children I beg you :
« Bring back to God all those who spurn him
See the beauty of souls and praise the Creator,
Behold the image of your Lord in your brothers. »

5. Glory be to the Father Almighty,
To his beloved Son, Our Lord, Jesus Christ,
To the Spirit, who lives in our hearts,
For ever and ever. Amen.

Spanish

¡Dios mío, mi misericordia!
¡Dios mío, mi misericordia!
¿Qué será de los pecadores?

1- Por favor, Padre, escucha mi oración.
No abandones a este pueblo que te llama.
Que salgan sus hijos de las sombras por donde vagan,
Que se regocijen en tu amor, todos los corazones
rectos!

2- Oh Cristo, toda mi vida he deseado verte.
Hazme un solo corazón, un alma contigo.
Hoy te contemplo en tu gloria,
Tú, la luz y la fuente de mi alegría!

3- Abraza, Señor, en tu misericordia
Las hermanas y hermanos de mi Orden.
Les llamas para que te prediquen, te bendigan y te
alaben.
Conságralos en la verdad.

4- Desde el cielo, hijos míos, os lo suplico:
"Devolved a Dios a los hombres que no le adoran.
Penetrad en la belleza de las almas, alabad al Creador,
Contemplad en los hermanos la imagen de vuestro
Señor".

5- Demos gloria al Padre Todopoderoso,
A su amado Hijo Jesucristo,
Al Espíritu que habita en nuestros corazones,
Por los siglos de los siglos. Amén.