

**ACTS**  
**OF THE**  
**SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS**  
**OF THE**  
**LAY DOMINICAN FRATERNITIES**



**Buenos Aires, Argentina**  
**2007**

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# Foreword

Christmas 2007

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

We certainly hold fond memories of our International Congress 2007 held in Pilar, Buenos Aires, Argentina, twenty-two years after the Congress in Montreal, Canada. Our historic gathering, still burning in our hearts, was rewarded by the abundant fruits of our Commission sessions and the Plenary Assembly.

Your active and generous participation in the Congress made it a fruitful event that will guide us in our apostolic activities and evangelical growth.

Enclosed herewith are the Acts, approved by the Congress and dutifully reviewed by the International Council of Lay Dominican Fraternities, including the Presidents of the Commissions. The review focused particularly on language translation. The Promoter General of Dominican Laity, Fr. David Michael Kammler, OP presented the reviewed Acts to the Master of the Order, Fr. Carlos Alfonso Azpiroz Costa, OP and the Curia Council, for approval. The Council approved all the Acts of the International Congress 2007 during the November 2007 Council meeting in Rome. We hereby convey our heartfelt thanks to the Master and his Council.

We are confident of your willingness to distribute these documents among your respective Provincial Councils, and through the councils, to the fraternities/chapters.

May we keep the vision of Father Dominic aflame as we continue together as Companions in Preaching on our Dominican journey.

May the joy, love, and peace of the first Christmas dwell always in our hearts and our lives.

Yours in Saint Dominic,

PROF. DR. BELEN LOREZCA-TANGCO, O.P.  
Chair-Coordinator, ICLDF  
Congress Chair

MRS. TERESITA TENTI DE VOLTA, O.P.  
Congress Secretary General

FR. GERALD STOOKEY, O.P.  
Former Promoter General of Dominican Laity

FR. DAVID MICHAEL KAMMLER, O.P.  
Promoter General of Dominican Laity

## Presidents of Commissions:

Prayer and Preaching	-	MRS. PATRICIA KELLY, O.P.
Study and Formation	-	MRS. DORIS STUKES, O.P.
Government: Rules and Statutes	-	MRS. PATRICIA ROBINSON, O.P.
Organisation and Structure	-	MRS. LAURIE BISZKO, O.P.
Economic and Finance	-	MR. PEDRO TORRES CASTELLANOS, O.P.
Our Place in the Order and in the Church	-	MR. MARCUS KEJUNGKI, O.P.

# Opening Address

**LET US NOT SIMPLY CALL OURSELVES “DOMINICANS” BUT RATHER LET’S ACTUALLY BE “PREACHERS”**

**BY FR. JERRY STOOKEY, OP**

**PROMOTER GENERAL OF THE DOMINICAN LAITY**

Good morning, preachers! Thank you for coming to Argentina to attend this International Congress of Lay Dominican Fraternities! I know that everyone has made a great sacrifice just to get ready for the Congress and just to be here today.

How is your preaching going? That is the question that all of us Dominicans should ask ourselves regularly, and at the beginning of each new day. So, at the beginning of our Congress, whose theme is “Lay Dominicans: Companions in Preaching”, let us ask ourselves right now: “How is our preaching doing?”

I imagine we could spend the entire week here just listening to each other’s answers to this challenging inquiry about our preaching. We would have each one take a turn and tell us what it means FOR YOU to be a preacher personally. Surely each one’s report would include a lot about TO WHOM you preach or WHAT message it is that you most often preach to them. As modern disciples, we would have to answer Jesus question of us today: Who do YOU say that I am - and especially do you say it to others? How do you personally communicate the Word of God to others? I imagine that from some of you we would hear stories of how difficult it is to preach to certain individuals or how hard it is to give testimony to God in adversary circumstances. Many in this room would share remarkable stories of what they have already suffered in this life because of their faith in the Crucified and Risen Lord. And yes, so many of us would get the opportunity to tell our greatest success stories as preachers, and how we really celebrated the Living Word of God with some others who needed to hear it and who actually responded when they heard it.

Personally, I think every Dominican individual and group should frequently ask how their preaching is going? All our lives and mission should be seen in relation to the Holy Preaching, and we should develop a deep self-identity by calling ourselves PREACHERS. Do you wake up in the morning asking yourself, how can I help spread the Word of God today? A Dominican might ask herself “Who needs to hear the message of God’s love where I will be working today? A Lay Dominican might say to himself “I need to be a better Christian example here in my neighborhood.” A Lay Dominican Chapter or Fraternity could discuss having a community preaching project together. You see, I believe every Dominican priory, monastery, convent, fraternity or group should evaluate their entire life and mission in relationship to the Preaching. All of us ought to include a report on our preaching in every one of our meetings!

The Master’s recent letter on the Preparation of the 800<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Foundation of the Nuns reminded me of the Second Vatican Council’s calling us back to our roots and original preaching charism. As fr. Carlos wrote “Let us walk faithful to the love we had at first.” Are we faithful to that first love we felt when we began to know Christ and when we first began to walk in the way of the preachers? Let’s go back to what we always have been and are still suppose to be: PREACHERS!

As the Letter to the Romans (10:14) asks: how will they hear without a preacher? How will there be any preaching, unless people are sent and actually go out and preach? And how would anyone go out and preach until they know what they believe, and they clearly identify themselves as a preacher. And then, wise as serpents (Mt. 10:16) we must go out and find a myriad of ways to preach.

It is true that one cannot give what one does not have. And likewise it is true that if we who “have” preaching or who ARE preachers and call ourselves an Order of Preachers, then we ought to give what we do have! Go preach! Timothy Radcliffe has often emphasized that we Dominicans are essentially MISSIONARIES, perhaps the very first truly missionary religious order of the Church. So being a Dominican preacher is not something for OURSELVES or a vocation for saving my own soul, although that will hopefully be the result at the end. Rather being a Dominican preacher is for OTHERS, directed outward in mission. Not self-centered, in other words, but other-directed.

In order to truly celebrate our 800th anniversary, I suggest we emphasize our being a religious “Order of Preachers” just as much as we have emphasized being “Dominicans” in recent history. That is, the love we had at first was not about being followers of Dominic de Guzman, but above all followers of Jesus Christ. When the Order of Preachers first began to walk faithfully, we might equally have been called “Diegans” instead of “Dominicans” because it was Bishop Diego of Osma who initially led the preaching project, as our Dominican historian Sr. Barbara Beaumont has stated.

Too often being “Dominicans” is folkloric in a way (although I do not mean to put down our wonderful traditions of black and white, and cute dogs with torches!). But what is rather essential is being an Order of PREACHERS, not just “Dominicans”. We Dominicans run the same risk that a lot of Catholics face, namely, we could almost completely forget the initial project, the love we believers had at first, or the original message of God’s love for all which Jesus preached. And instead, we could simply focus on the cultural beauty of being a Christian or a Dominican. We end up DEVOTIONAL Christians and Dominicans, but not very deeply VOCATIONAL preachers, like Jesus and Dominic were! In fact, the word “Dominican”, as lovely as it is, helps keep us inactive, keeps us neutral, allows us to focus on ME being one. But the word “Preacher” is very active, cannot be used as a simple identity but rather signifies that I must be preaching to OTHERS, and not just to myself. So like Jesus and his follower Dominic de Guzman, we no longer live for ourselves but for HIM and for OTHERS.

So thank God, the Order of Preachers has formed a new International Commission on Preaching, which includes men and women preachers from different branches of our Family. May they assist us during the Jubilee Anniversary in repeatedly asking the daily perennial question “how is our preaching doing?”

For, there is an urgency of the Gospel being preached that we cannot afford to ignore. As Ruben reminded us in his reflection at Morning Prayer, the world is full of suffering and many needs. You might say, the world is waiting for us preachers. But will the preachers be sent? How will the world ever hear, if there is no one prepared and sent to preach?

Many in the world do not know or believe in Jesus the Christ. And still many more who have heard of him or even profess to follow him, do not believe in what he preached. Jesus went out of his way to tell the synagogue and the whole world that God is love and that all people are created in love by God and that all God’s creatures are loved by God. Every human on planet Earth is your brother or sister! And this is the preaching that does justice. Not justice as if it was a political campaign or a workers’ union or an ideology. But Biblical justice which defends the equal rights of every person: they are your brothers and sisters, whether you like them or not, and they are loved by God, even if others do not love them, and ALL people are children of God as Jesus preached, especially those whom we love to exclude and hate: widows, orphans, lepers, the sick, women and children, foreigners, and even tax collectors and soldiers

But this is the preaching that also makes peace. Not peace as if it was a political solution or a pacifist movement or a philosophy. But Biblical peace which means love and compassion even for our enemies. In Christ you cannot kill your enemy. When we are in Christ, murder is really fratricide, for every time one is killed it is your brother or sister that is being killed. Of course, we have enemies and evil people do exist. But they are our brothers and sisters who are mistaken and only our love, compassion, forgiveness, and hard prayer and preaching might bring them to conversion. Peace and justice are the preachers basic message of Christ: God loves all people equally and they are all your brothers and sisters as children of God, and therefore you may not kill any of them, not even your enemies.

I don’t think the world hears this message or that we preach it clear enough. It is a difficult task to be a faithful preacher. It requires companions. Do not attempt to preach alone! There is no such thing as a lone Dominican - we are the company of preachers, the companions in preaching, a community and Family of Preachers. It takes prayer companions to do this. It requires classmates or colleagues with whom to study and learn. It will need support and fraternal correction and organization, for the world is NOT naïve about organizing against the message of God’s love. Even Jesus commented on this: how can the enemies and evildoers be so good at their wickedness and be so skilled at doing harm, while we faithful preachers remain do not get our act together, remain disorganized and unprepared! Jesus pushed his disciples to ORGANIZE, not AGONIZE!

And all of this is the work of this Congress, so that we might be more effective, faithful PREACHERS to the world, in the manner of St. Dominic.

*Fr. JERRY STOOKEY O.P.*

# Reflection of the Master of the Order

## COMPANIONS IN PREACHING

To begin, I ought to tell you that in Argentina, the expression "companion" has as an added value, some very special political or partisan connotations. Leaving aside these connotations, I say to you from my heart "Welcome companions"

My brothers and sisters, I have not come today to speak about what you should or should not do this week. Without doubt you know what are the challenges you have before you and you know how to take them up accordingly.

Rather I would like to ask St. Joseph today, whose image accompanies us in this place, to help us to understand more deeply what it means to be "companions in preaching".

### Joseph's Dreams:

The Gospel tells us that Joseph dreams and that God speaks to him through his dreams... (now I wouldn't want this to become an invitation to sleep!) What does it mean to "dream"? Well some people say "dreams are dreams" and a famous author titled his book "Life is a Dream".. Finally, I am not an expert nor have the knowledge to interpret dreams... Nevertheless, in almost all languages when we talk of "to dream" or "our dreams" we refer rather to expectations, desires and plans, hopes and projects

From the beginning, the "sacra praedicatio" spoke of married laity who dedicated themselves to it in some way or other. Since then, many lay people have wanted to live the spirit of Saint Dominic. The first Rule was promulgated by Fray Munio de Zamora in 1285. Since that time the said rule was modified adapting it to the circumstances of the time.

I want to point out some events which have been especially significant in latter years: the Symposium of the Dominican family celebrated in Bologna (1983); The Congress of the Laity of Montreal (1985); The Assembly of the Dominican Family of Manila (2000) and finally the meeting of Fanjeaux (2006) in which teams of coordinators, animators, persons responsible in whatever manner for the different branches of the Order, participated together with the members of the International Council of the laity

In these assemblies varied or similar, the richness of our Order has certainly been expressed. On the other hand, in the last 30 years also, many General Chapters of the friars dedicated reflections to the life and mission of the laity of the Order and the members of the Fraternities (I am thinking particularly of the General Chapter of 1986)

Let's return to St. Joseph. Joseph had a "companion", his spouse; Mary (espoused according to the law). Mary is an important part of his dreams for the future, a "privileged" part, more than special!

But Mary is expecting a son; a son who is not his (Joseph's). Joseph's dreams are then turned into a real nightmare. It is very difficult to check that one is not part of the dreams of loved ones. Joseph, it seems, had no place in Mary's dreams, his "companion" in life. Indeed, it would seem she had other dreams.

### The Dreams of Others:

Saint Dominic is not a "strategist" or a "businessman" of preaching, he is simply a "preacher"; he realizes that disciplinary reforms in the Church are not enough (the Gregorian reform or, later, that impelled by the Fourth Lateran Council) People are hungry and thirsty for the Word. For it, he attempts each day, in the presence of the new challenges that present themselves, to offer a word of grace and truth. Saint Dominic, he is a prophet. Every prophet reads reality in the light of the Word of God. It allows him to read beyond and more profoundly from events what is seen, what is happening. In this way, reading reality is not wasted in a centrifugal relativity.

On the other hand, the prophet seeks to read the Word of God "taking the pulse of reality", history, things that pass... And thus he discovers what are the "signs of the times". Saint Dominic, being a prophet, avoids every kind of fundamentalism as if the text of the Word of God might be applied to-day and in every place exactly

the same as yesterday or in other places simply "because thus it is written" ( without taking into account the circumstances of space or time, the signs of the times!)

In his dream there is a place for other people. In this way he associates the "Sacra Praedicatio" with women. We celebrate this year the Jubilee for the VIII centuries of the foundation of the first monastery of Prouille. The historians, I repeat, offer us documents which tell of married laity who in 1207 surrendered "themselves and their goods to God, Mary and all the saints and to the Holy Preaching; and to Dominic of Osma and all the friars and brothers who exist to-day and in the future".

But let us return to Joseph. Mary and the infant that she is expecting have smashed his projects to smithereens. But the gospel tells us that Joseph is a just man.

In the Old Testament justice is the virtue par excellence (which refers to what we today can call sanctity)

The "just man" is he who does justice. This doesn't treat of doing justice in an isolated or futuristic way. Saint Thomas Aquinas says that justice is the perpetual and constant will to give to each his own, that which belongs to him, that is to say: his right.

We know the history of the Order and the many men and women who have been real examples of "workers for justice"(and preachers of justice) I mention here Catherine of Sienna, Bartolome de las Casas, Antonio de Montesinos, Pedro de Cordoba, Rose of Lima, Martin de Porres, Pier Giorgio Frassati, Giorgio La Pira and many others.

Justice is the only cardinal virtue which of necessity needs "the other". To practice justice the presence of "the other" is essential. It is not like that with the other virtues.

Joseph is a just man. According to the Law, the Torah, Maria would deserve a severe punishment. Joseph doesn't want to denounce her publicly, and decides to repudiate her in secret. He doesn't try to make out a document or call witnesses even though he has the law in his favour.

Joseph decides simply to withdraw although he mourns, he recognizes the existence of the other (Maria) and other dreams, where he himself has no place. Although he mourns, he recognizes the dreams of the other... although this tears his heart to shreds.

We ask ourselves. Why are we here at this congress, meeting in Pilar from the 18 to the 24 of March 2007. Above all, to listen to each other mutually. Listening is the key to obedience especially in the Dominican tradition.

In the Old Testament the Lord does not tire in saying to his people "listen Israel"...

The believer, also, especially in the psalms, addresses God "Listen Lord" (my lament, my supplication, my sorrow, my words, my weeping, my anguish)

Secondly, we are meeting one and all, to pronounce words of grace and truth.

We are not here simply to know "who we are" or "Who do not belong to us in order to declare it publicly so that the world will find out (it is the temptation of the youthful apostle, John, when he wanted to stop anyone who preached or performed miracles in the name of Jesus)

We are here to discover and to renew ourselves in our vocation as companions in preaching and to try to support companions in preaching.

We do it with much patience (peace and knowledge) and this demands many times "blood, sweat and tears". We do it always seeking evangelical unanimity, the fundamental law of the Order! (not by any means easy for fragile adults )

Joseph recognizes and accepts in his grief, first the existence of two people (Mary and the infant she is expecting, even though the infant is not his) and secondly, Mary's dreams, (although he has no more place in them).

Joseph recognizes the existence of Mary and her son and the dreams of his spouse which exclude him. It is difficult to interpret the dreams of others, above all if they do not adjust to ours.

### **God's Dreams:**

The dreams of Joseph and Mary are God's Dreams. I ought to say that in the Order I have learned that a little is enough, I would say even a "very little " for God to reveal his own dreams to us.

Let me explain. The length of time offered to others to listen to them and offer them a word, permits us now to make ourselves defenders "advocates" of the dreams of the rest (although many times that pains us because it breaks our limits)

The author of the Apocalypse calls the Devil (Satan) "The accuser of our brothers and sisters, he who accuses them day and night before God" John, in his first letter calls Jesus the Defender.

Joseph has preferred to make himself the defender of the life, of the existence of the others (Mary and her son) rather than accuser. In some way we can find companions on the way where until now there was sadness and desolation.

Joseph does not remain worrying about himself in a perpetual attitude of self-pity or commiseration, hurting in his own wounds, .he recognizes the existence and dreams of Mary and decides to go away.

Then, only then, God reveals to Joseph what his own dreams are (God's dreams); what are the dreams that he, God has for him (Joseph), for his spouse (Mary), for his son whom she carries in her womb (The Son of the Most High), for the three...

Mary's son will be called Joseph's son. "the son of the carpenter" and through Joseph, Jesus will be of the stock of David. He will give him the name, Jesus

Both, Mary and Joseph, will be in some way, " the first companions on the way and disciples of Jesus" even though that will bring them to situations which are not easy (the flight into Egypt, or when Jesus answers them after an anxious search "I must be about my Father's business")

I will conclude with three questions which my three predecessors have made to the Order:

- Friar Vincent De Couesnongle was in the habit of referring to Dominic who dreamed of going to the cumans to evangelize them, to announce to them the Word. It was a question of a people who were far beyond the limits of Christianity although the historians argue about precisely who they were or where they were. The certainty is, that Dominic wanted to evangelize them, although this might cost him his life. In this context, Friar Vicente challenged the Order "Who are our Cumans?" And this continues to be our challenge
- Friar Damian Byrne confronting the usual complaints about the lack of vocations, insisted in saying that before asking "Why have we no vocations" that we should ask ourselves "Why do we want them?"
- Friar Timothy Radcliffe also referring to vocations asked the Order: "Are we ready to accept in our communities a new Saint Thomas, Saint Catherine, Giorgio La Pira, a blessed Longo, Pier Giorgio Frassati with their new questions and enquiries to shake our convents, monasteries and fraternities, our ideas and concepts, proposing new challenges?"

Fr. Carlos Azpiroz Costa OP

*Master of the Order*

# INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF LAY DOMINICAN FRATERNITIES / BUENOS AIRES 2007

## RESOLUTIONS

### Commission 1 – PRAYER AND PREACHING

#### PRAYER

**Issue 1: Contemplative prayer - how to recover the tradition of contemplative prayer in order to benefit the relationship between active and contemplative life?**

***What** do we propose?*

**Proposal:**

Create a team in order to study and teach meditation and contemplative prayer according to the Dominican tradition, and also promote communal prayer to strengthen our Dominican spirituality through the Liturgy of the Hours, Reflection of the Word and the Praying of the holy Rosary.

***Why** we propose this?*

1. We need to deepen and broaden our understanding of Christian prayer in order to develop a spiritual experience of the Truths of the Scriptures and the teaching of the Church.
2. The experience of our union with God is a precondition for preaching 'life' – and not merely repeating knowledge.
3. It is a need of our time.  
Prayer helps us choose the right priorities and enables us to read the signs of our time in a better way. Many people are searching for the meaning of life and ways of self-realization through different meditation-techniques not connected to the christian understanding of God, We need to be able to show how meditation is part of our own Christian tradition - and to make known the purpose of prayer.

***To whom** does this proposal go?*

We propose this to the Provincial councils of the Laity.

***When** to elaborate this proposal?*

To be effected when the councils decide.

#### PREACHING

**Issue 2: How do we preach in our time for new generations?**

***What** do we propose?*

**Proposal:**

Do a systematic process of listening to groups of people around us; young people, families, etc. to inform us of their needs. Then come up with an operative plan of preaching and ministry.

**Why** we propose this?

1. Our methods of preaching are poorly adapted to our contemporary times.
2. We need to meet the young people on their own terms in order to understand how to preach to them.
3. In order to understand our time we need to listen to people and consider the vast differences of life conditions.

**To whom** does this proposal go?

We address this proposal to the Lay Dominican chapters.

**When** to elaborate this proposal?

As soon as possible

### **Issue 3: Lay Dominican Preachers**

**What** do we propose?

**Proposal:**

**Live our charism of preaching creatively. In order to do this it is necessary to develop and strengthen the awareness and the confidence of being Lay Dominican preachers through Word, charity and example, seeking better formation in methods of preaching, making use of the new technologies of information and communication.**

**Why** we propose this?

1. Our Dominican identity as Lay Dominican preachers has not been recognized in the past due to historical and cultural reasons.
2. The Order is now recognizing us as companions in preaching in a new way.
3. We have many opportunities as Lay Dominicans to reach people who do not normally come to Church or believe in the existence of God.

**To whom** does this proposal go?

We address this proposal to all the Lay Dominican Fraternities of our Order.

**When** to elaborate this proposal?

As soon as possible

## **Commission 2 – STUDY AND FORMATION**

### **Issue 1: Formation programme**

**What** do we propose

**Proposal:**

**A written formation programme should be developed for the Lay Dominicans in accordance with the Rule of the Lay Fraternities of Saint Dominic (Nº 11).**

**Why** we propose this?

Such a programme provides material for the spiritual development of lay Dominicans to enhance their preparation for preaching.

**To whom** does this proposal go?

Such a programme is to be written by each Provincial council of Lay Dominicans according to the Rule of the Lay Fraternities of Saint Dominic (N<sup>o</sup> 11).

**When** to elaborate this proposal?

The programme is to be completed within 3 years.

## **Issue 2: Recommended fundamental contents of the Formation Programme**

**What** do we propose?

**Proposal:**

### **A. Initial Formation**

- **Dominican Spirituality**
- **Four pillars of Dominican life: prayer, study, preaching (*specially methods and skills*), community**
- **Life of St. Dominic and other saints of the Order**
- **Lay Rule and directory**
- **Dominicans symbols**
- **Human formation**

### **B. Ongoing formation**

- **Sources of Dominican Formation (Sacred Scripture, theological reflection)**
- **Christology**
- **History and tradition of the Order**
- **Documents of the Church and the Order**
- **Study of the signs of the times and present day culture**
- **Justice, Peace and Care of Creation**

**Why** we propose this?

1. This programme would be an instrument for the formation of formators, as well as being of use to those in formation.
2. It would strengthen collaboration between fraternities in different countries who share the same basis for the programme.

**To whom** does this proposal go?

Each province would elaborate this programme (in compliance with present Rule N<sup>o</sup>11)

**When** to elaborate this proposal?

Within three years.

## **Commission 3 – GOVERNMENT: RULE AND STATUTES**

### **RULE**

#### **Issue 1: Identity**

The name should be "**Lay Dominican Fraternities/Chapters**".

The lay Dominican who has made a promise will be entitled to the free use of the initial **O.P.** after his/her name.

However, if they use this initial they must put **Mr., Mrs. Ms.** before their name.

## **Issue 2: The term "Profession or Promise" or commitment (*Rule Nº 14*)**

*14. In order to be incorporated into the Order, members are bound to make profession, that is a promise in which they formally promise to live a life according to the spirit of Saint Dominic and the way of life prescribed by the Rule.*

*This profession or promise is either temporary or perpetual. The following or a substantially similar formula is to be used for making profession.*

**"To the honour of Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of Saint Dominic, I ... (name) before you ... (name) President of this Fraternity/Chapter, and ... (name), the Religious Assistant, in place of the Master of the Order of Friars Preachers, promise that I will live according to the Rule of the Lay Dominicans for three years / for life."**

It was decided to use the expression **"promise"** in all cases so as to be in accordance with the lay state.

## **Issue 3: President**

*20. a) The Prior Provincial presides over the fraternities/chapters within the territorial limits of his province, and, with the consent of the local Bishop, establishes new fraternities/chapters.*

It is recommended that the expression **"preside"** be correctly interpreted, specially in Spanish. It is requested that there be **faithfulness to the translations** of the Latin text approved by the Holy See.

## **Issue 4: Should the word "lay" be included? Their own rights**

*20. b) The Provincial Promoter (brother or sister) represents the Prior Provincial, and is a member of the Provincial Lay Council with full rights. He/she is appointed by the Provincial Chapter, or by the Prior Provincial with his Council, after the Provincial Lay Council of the Dominican Laity has been heard.*

In order to interpret this article, it is asked that the words in the brackets include **lay, friar, brother, sister, nun**. **It is asked that they be included without the right to vote.**

## **Issue 5: Religious assistant**

*21. c) The Religious Assistant (brother or sister) assists members in doctrinal matters and the spiritual life. He/she nominated by the Prior Provincial, after he has first heard the Provincial Promoter and the local Laity Council.*

**As in the case of the previous article it is asked to include in the brackets a lay person as an assistant.**

## **Issue 6: Dispensation from the commitment and the involvement**

*(cf. also Friar's General Chapter 2001 at PROVIDENCE Nº 446)*

**Add: When a lay Dominican wishes to obtain dispensation from his/her promise, this person needs to bring this concern to the local Council of the Fraternity/Chapter. The Council in turn will present the request to the Prior Provincial.**

**The Prior Provincial upon the request of the Fraternity/Chapter, has the authority to dispense a member from their promises.**

## **Issue 7: Dismissal**

**The Prior Provincial, upon the request of the Council of a Fraternity/Chapter has the authority to dismiss any member in the case of lack of communion with the Church or public scandal, recognizing that this person has the right to defend himself/herself and call upon the Master of the Order.**

# STATUTES

## OF THE INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF LAY DOMINICAN FRATERNITIES (ICLDF)

### Preamble

The International Council of Lay Dominican Fraternities hereafter referred to as the ICLDF or the "Council", is motivated by the love of Christ and His Church as expressed by the apostolic spirit of Saint Dominic. It was established, in accordance with Rule 22b) of the Rule of Lay Fraternities of Saint Dominic, in May, 2002 in Santa Sabina, Rome, in the presence of fr. Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa O.P. Master of the Order and fr. Gerald Stookey, O.P. General Promoter for the Dominican Laity.

While recognizing that each Province, Vice-Province and Vicariate is entitled to its own autonomy according to the rights and responsibilities as defined in the Rule, the Council draws on and supports each one's specific charism.

Here after 'Province' shall be used to refer to all Provinces, Vice-provinces and Vicariates

### Mission Statement:

ICLDF is an international network for promoting greater communication between Lay Dominican Fraternities in order to achieve a more effective preaching of the Gospel.

## STATUTES

### I. THE COUNCIL

#### A) Government

- 1) The Council is governed by:
  - a) Statutes
  - b) Regulations
- 2) The Statutes can be changed only with a two-thirds majority of all voting members at an International Congress. The Council can alter the Regulations and Recommendations.
- 3) The Council understands its obligation to uphold the interests of the Lay Dominican Fraternities and is under the canonical authority of the Master of the Order.
- 4) All Statutes and Regulations are subject to and must be compliant with and not inconsistent with the Rule.

#### B) Membership

- 1) The Council is composed of the Promoter General of the Lay Dominicans and five elected Lay Dominicans who have made Perpetual (Life, Final) Promise, one from each of the Regions.
- 2) The Regions are:
  - AFRICA - African Council for Lay Dominican Fraternities (Conseil Africain pour les Fraternités Laïques Dominicaines) (ACLDF)
  - ASIA PACIFIC- Asia Pacific Council of Lay Dominicans (APCLD)

EUROPE - European Council for Lay Dominican Fraternities (ECLDF)  
NORTH AMERICA - Dominican Laity Inter-Provincial Council (DLIPC)  
LATIN AMERICA - Consejo de las Fraternidades Laicales  
Dominicanas de America Latina y el Caribe (COFALC)

Each Region shall elect one representative and one substitute according to the procedure prevalent in that Region. Under special circumstances, the Master of the Order shall appoint the representative for a particular Region until a regular election can be held.

- 3) The members of the Council shall be elected for a non-renewable term of three years beginning on July 1. The substitute member shall be eligible for a regular term.
- 4) Terms shall be staggered so that no more than 2 Council members will currently end in any given year.
- 5) Each Council member shall serve for one year as Co-ordinator of the Council on a rotating basis, as agreed upon by the Council. The Council shall elect a Co-ordinator each year from their members by lottery. If the Co-ordinator cannot be present, the Co-ordinator shall appoint his/her temporary replacement from among the remaining Council members. who shall have the Co-ordinator's proxy voting authority.
- 6) The Council shall elect a treasurer from the Council members, or co-opt, hire or seek assistance from a competent Dominican for that office. The co-opted treasurer is not a member of the Council.
- 7) A quorum of 3 members is required for a valid meeting.
- 8) All decisions of the Council require a majority vote. In cases where there are four members present and there is a tie vote, the Council shall, if possible and practicable, contact the absent member. If this is impossible then the Coordinator shall have the casting vote even if he/she is a temporary replacement.

**C) Duties of the Council**

- 1)
  - a) The Council members shall establish continual communication with the Lay Dominicans in their respective region.
  - b) The Council shall establish and maintain an effective relationship with the other groups in the Dominican Family
  - c) The Council shall endeavour to collaborate with all groups in the international activities of the Dominican Family.
- 2) The Council shall present subjects pertaining to the International Regions to the official institutions of the Dominican Order.
- 3)
  - a) The Council shall prepare an annual budget and financial report.
  - b) The Council shall request an annual financial contribution from each Region.
- 4) The Council shall collect and distribute information and relevant documents.

- 5) When requested the Council shall nominate its representative for International meetings
- 6) The Council shall prepare for and be responsible for the effective running of any International Congress of Lay Dominican Fraternities every ten years and perform the following activities:
  - a) establish appropriate committees
  - b) produce a programme for the Congress
  - c) notify all Provincial Promoters, Provincial Presidents (or delegated Contact persons) of the Congress
  - d) establish the membership of the Electoral Body at the Congress. (The Electoral Body consists of those members who are eligible to vote)
  - e)
    - (i) present the operating budget.
    - (ii) raise funds for the effective running of the Congress
    - (iii) provide a financial report on the Congress
    - (iv) prepare and publish the Acts of the Congress.
- 7) Lay Dominicans, Friars, Nuns or Sisters with special skills or qualifications may be co-opted at the discretion of the Council for a specific period. They do not have voting rights

#### **D) Finance**

- 1) Following the spirit of our Father Saint Dominic within the Church, the brothers and the sisters of the Lay Dominican Fraternities/Chapters worldwide, shall support by an annual contribution their office in Rome and any budget presented by the ICLDF. The International Congress shall determine the amount of this contribution and update it annually in accordance with the Italian inflation rate.
- 2) The annual contribution shall be payable in advance each year, not later than December 31.
- 3) The Fraternities/Chapters shall send their yearly contributions to their Provincial or National Councils who shall forward them to the International Treasurer.
- 4) Each year the International Treasurer shall send copies of an audited statement to each Provincial or National Council and distributed to the individual Fraternities/Chapters.
- 5) The duties of the various governing bodies of the Lay Dominican Fraternities/Chapters regarding questions of economy or finance are the following:

Duties:

a) ICLDF

- 1) Approve the annual fee
- 2) Approve the audited statement and forward this to the local councils
- 3) Propose the annual contribution to the General Assembly
- 4) Approve the fee for the Congress and other events

b) General Assembly

Approve the annual contribution based on the audited financial statement of the previous periods

c) International Treasurer

- 1) Manage the financial resources necessary for the efficient functioning of the ICLDF
- 2) Establish strategies in order to obtain financial resources
- 3) Establish the annual fee
- 4) Prepare the financial statements for the Congress and other events
- 5) Prepare the Budget for the Congress and other events

## II. THE CONGRESS

**A) Composition of the Congress**

- 1)
  - a) Each Province, vice Province and Vicariate shall send one delegate to the Congress. When possible this delegate shall be the president.
  - b) Each Province, vice-Province or Vicariate shall elect an alternative delegate should the president be unable to attend.
  - c) All delegates must be Finally Professed Lay Dominicans.
  - d) All ICLDF members shall be eligible to attend.
  - e) Members of the Congress Executive Committee shall be eligible to attend.
  - f) Regional Presidents are eligible to attend.
- 2) The Promoter General for the Dominican Laity shall also attend.
- 3) Each Province,(see Preamble) shall send one delegate. However, where there is a multinational province, fraternities may send one delegate from each country
- 4) The names of all delegates shall be submitted at least six months before the Congress.
- 5) All delegates shall have a letter of authorization from their Lay Provincial Council or Prior Provincial testifying that they have been chosen to represent their Province.
- 6) The Master of the Order shall be invited to the Congress.
- 7) A canon lawyer shall be invited to the Congress.

**B) Duties and Functions**

- 1) To study and discuss issues of the Lay Dominican Fraternities and make proposals to the ICLDF.
- 2) To discuss, propose and vote on changes to the Rule.

- 3) To make representations to the Master of the Order on matters concerning the Lay Dominican Fraternities.
- 4) To propose and promote means of financing the work of ICLDF.
- 5) To vote on the acceptance of any suggestions of changes to the Statutes of the Council.
- 6)
  - a) To discuss ways and means of assisting members to fulfill their preaching mission.
  - b) To discuss ways of promoting vocations to all branches of the Order.
  - c) To discuss ways of helping those missions where there is a lack of material for formation and study.
  - d) To promote collaboration with all members of the Dominican Family.

**C) Electoral Body**

- 1) The Electoral Body is composed of:
  - a) The delegates representing their province, vice-province, vicariate or country.
  - b) Members of the International Council or their substitutes.

If the member of the International Council is also a delegate for their province, vice-province or vicariate or country they may have one vote only.

- 2) The Council shall draw up a list of those entitled to vote in the Electoral Body.
- 3) The Council shall appoint a Facilitator of the Electoral Body.

**REGULATIONS**

**A) Responsibilities of Office Holders**

**1) The Co-ordinator**

The duties of the Co-ordinator are:

- To ensure all relevant correspondence is distributed to all members of the Council.
- To ensure that documents concerning the Lay Dominicans internationally are obtainable by all concerned.
- To ensure that the acts of each meeting are produced and distributed to the members of the Council.
- To act as liaison between the council members when deemed necessary.

- To keep a record of the dates of the terms of office of each member of the Council
- Preside at the Congress

**2) The Treasurer**

The duties of the treasurer are:

- to manage the financial resources of the Council.
- to devise strategies to obtain resources.
- to set up a budget for the expenses concerning the Council.
- to submit yearly independently audited accounts to the Council.
- to set up a budget for any Lay Dominican Congress organized by the ICLDF.
- Liabilities incurred by the Council in the name of the Council will be the equal responsibility of all and each Council member.
- Should the Council be disbanded, any outstanding funds remaining after the Council's settling expenses, will go to the body agreed by the International Assembly.

**3) The Secretary**

- to prepare the Acts of the Council meetings and distribute these to the Council members prior to the meeting
- to carry out routine secretarial duties.
- to produce Minutes for the new members of the Council.
- to oversee voting procedure
- to establish and up-date relevant contact names and addresses, e-mail and fax numbers.

**B) Rules and Procedures**

**1) Financial**

- All monies received will be deposited in a named account
- Only Council members have the right to draw on the account for the expenses incurred in their council business.
- Approval of expenses is the responsibility of the Co-ordinator, the Treasurer and Promoter General of the Laity.
- Liabilities incurred by the Council in the name of the Council will be the equal responsibility of all and each Council member.

**2) Administrative**

- The Council shall assemble at least once a year.
- The Council shall
  - a. inform all provinces, vicariates on matters relating to the Congress.
  - b. draw up and distribute the Acts of the meeting

- c. produce and discuss matters pertaining to the International Congress.
- d. maintain proper records of the meetings and the correspondence and safeguard records of the preceding Council that comprise its history.

### **Recommendations**

- 1) In order to put into practice its nature, the Council being a fraternal community as well as a working and structure for organization, shall carry out the following at each meeting:
  - a) Some time in prayer appropriate to the Council.
  - b) Some time in fellowship.
- 2) The Council aims to publish news, information and themes for formation in IDI.
- 3) The Council will encourage the exchange of Formation Programmes
- 4) The Council will suggest dialogue concerning life in our fraternities and the creation of space for reflection on the problems of today.
- 5) When invited the Council shall nominate its representative to the General Chapters of the Order and elaborate a text with proposals and petitions to be presented.
- 6) Each member of the Council shall be able to speak English and one other language.

***N.B.*** The above stated six (6) Recommendations are subject to review by a select Committee, as agreed upon by the Congress body.

## **Commission 4 – ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE**

### **Issue 1: Language befitting membership in the Dominican Order**

#### **Proposal:**

**That we establish a common glossary reflecting what we are, what our various roles are, therefore: what terminology is the norm for usage as adapted to the various languages of the world. We recommend:**

- **'LAY DOMINICANS'** as the designation of the lay members of the Order; the noun *Dominicans* denotes what we are; *Lay* describes what kind of Dominicans
- **'O.P.'** as the designation for all professed Lay Dominicans
- **'Fraternity/Chapter'** as the title of our groups, which expresses our way of life as brothers and sisters and reflects one of our pillars.
- **'GROUP'** as a designation for a group whose aim is to form a fraternity/chapter
- **'COUNCILS'** as organisations of Lay Dominican government, as a minimum, at the fraternity/chapter and at the provincial levels

- **'PROVINCIAL PROMOTER'** as the friar, sister or lay, who is the link between the Lay Dominicans and the other branches of the Order
- **'RELIGIOUS ASSISTANT'** as the Dominican friar, sister, layperson, or other person approved by the Prior Provincial, who serves as a resource for the Lay Dominican Fraternity/Chapter
- **'PRESIDENT'** as the elected leader of a fraternity/chapter; *president* is the term used in the Latin version of the Rule and best describes the role

## Issue 2: Structure for irregular applications

### Proposal:

To be open to people who would like to follow the Dominican spirituality but, for personal reasons, cannot be professed. They should be able to join the lay Dominican fraternity/chapter on a local level, with the agreement of the members of the fraternity/chapter.

## Issue 3: Other lay groups

### Proposal:

The Lay Dominican fraternities/chapters should appreciate and welcome already existing and new Dominican lay groups, with their own structures, in order to share together as Dominican brothers and sisters and be more fruitful in our vocation to preach to others.

## Issue 4: Internet

### Proposal:

The use of internet is a wonderful mutual source of information and material for every branch in the Dominican Family. It is also a new means of preaching. Therefore, it is important to form an international internet team to draw up an inventory of all Dominican sources to make them visible, useful and to link them for everybody in the Dominican Family.

# Commission 5 – ECONOMIC AND FINANCE

## Introduction

Simplicity, humility and solidarity express *the* beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount. Unanimity identifies us as Dominicans throughout the world, Freedom gives us the possibility of presenting our ideas by always seeking the common good.

This is what concerns us when we speak of economy and finances.

All organisations have a structure. All structures have a *cost*, but structures are necessary to allow these organisations to function properly.

This is why if we wish to be adequately organized we need to have a strong structure that would allow us to be efficient in the fulfilment of our mission, which is to preach the Gospel. We are laypersons who are involved in the world and our space for preaching is this same world. We therefore must use the tools that the world has created so that we may speak its language and be listened to.

### Issue: Financial support

**What** do we propose?

**Proposal:**

**In respect to the International Council statutes we need to establish the following:**

**A specific section on finances should be included in the Statutes of the International Council. This section will include the following elements:**

- 1. The brothers and the sisters of the Lay Dominican Fraternities/Chapters of the whole world following the spirit of unity of our Father Saint Dominic within the Church, support through an annual contribution to be approved by the International Congress for the expenditures of the office of Lay Dominican Fraternities established in Rome, and of the presented budget.**
- 2. The annual contribution shall be updated each year in accordance with the Italian inflation rate.**
- 3. The annual contribution is payable in advance each year, not later than December 31.**
- 4. The first payment corresponding to the year 2008 will be due no later than March 31, 2008.**
- 5. The Fraternities/Chapters will send their yearly contributions to their Provincial or National Councils to be forwarded to the International Treasurer.**
- 6. Each year the International Treasurer will send copies of an audited statement to each Provincial or National Council, which will be sent to the individual Fraternities/Chapters.**
- 7. The functions of the various governmental bodies of the Lay Dominican Fraternities/Chapters in respect to questions of economy or finances will be the following:**

**Functions:**

**a) ICLDF**

- 1) Approve the annual fee**
- 2) Approve the audited statement and send this on to the local councils**
- 3) Propose the annual contribution to the General Assembly**
- 4) Approve the fee for the Congress and other events**

**b) General Assembly**

**Approve the annual contribution on the basis of the approved audited financial statement of the previous periods**

**c) International Treasurer**

- 1) Manage the financial resources necessary for the proper functioning of the ICLDF**
- 2) Establish strategies in order to obtain financial resources**
- 3) Establish the annual fee**
- 4) Prepare the financial statements for the Congress and other events**
- 5) Prepare the Budget for the Congress and other events**

***Why we propose this?***

Allow all to support the upkeep of our "house" which in this case means support for the Lay Dominican Office for the Fraternities/Chapters of the whole world located in Santa Sabina in Rome in order to have it function properly.

REGION	ANNUAL CONTRIBUTION PER CAPITA
AFRICA	€1.00
ASIA PACIFIC	€1.50
LATIN AMERICA & CARIBBEAN	€1.50
EUROPE	€1.50
UNITED STATES & CANADA	€1.50

## Commission 6 - Our Place in the Order and in the Church

### Issue 1: Website

**What** do we propose?

**Proposal:**

**Develop an international website for lay entities to serve as international clearing house for information among all lay entities.**

**Why** we propose this?

1. Currently information exchanged between entities is limited, often outdated, and does not encourage collaboration and cooperation.
2. Such a site would consolidate in one place the many scattered sites in use now and allow greater utilization of web resources.
3. In identifying our entity and its mission to others, we clarify it for ourselves.

**To whom** does this proposal go?

We address this to the Webmaster under direction of the International Council.

**When** to elaborate this proposal?

As soon as possible

### Issue 2: Basic formation

**What** do we propose?

**Proposal:**

**To give attention to the task of developing in each province a formation programme, adapted to the needs of young people and those who have not had**

**the benefit of an initial formation. In this way it will be easier to welcome into our Fraternities/Chapters those who wish to have a first encounter.**

***Why we propose this?***

1. To introduce them into the commitment aspects of the Dominican charism such as prayer and study, which are not the driving principles of youth entities
2. To retain talented youth as life long members of Dominican laity

***To whom does this proposal go?***

We address this to the Formation Committees of provincial councils

***When to elaborate this proposal?***

Now

# Appendix I

## *Convocation Letter*

September 1, 2005

**To all Members of the Lay Fraternities of St. Dominic  
(Order of Preachers)  
from the International Council for Lay Dominican Fraternities.**

***Dear sisters and brothers in St. Dominic:***

Your International Council of Lay Dominican Fraternities (ICLDF) sends you warmest greetings!

By means of this letter, the ICLDF is convoking an International Congress of official representatives of all Lay Dominican Fraternities (Rule of Montreal) throughout the world. This Congress will be the first such International Congress held since Montreal in 1985. The basic information is the following:

### **International Congress 2007**

***Theme:*** Lay Dominicans: Companions in Preaching

***Date:*** 17th – 24th March, 2007

***Venue:*** El Cenáculo Retreat House, at Pilar (Buenos Aires), **Argentina**

***Delegates:*** One representative from each Province, vice-province and vicariate.

The delegates must be the properly elected lay president of the province, vice-province or vicariate. An alternative delegate must be elected well in advance of 2007 in case it is necessary to replace the president for a legitimate reason such as illness. All delegates and their alternatives must be Finally Professed (Lifetime) members.

***Cost:*** The exact cost of the Congress has yet to be determined. However, each province, vice-province, and vicariate urgently needs to begin fundraising now in order to send its delegate to this International Congress.

This International Congress requires the collaboration of everyone. First of all, let us all pray in every Lay Dominican Fraternity/Chapter for the success of our Congress. As companions in preaching, let us remember that this Congress is convoked primarily so that we can continue to be effective Lay Dominican preachers of the Word of God. Please pray that this venture may be very blessed, happy and fruitful.

We need your suggestions on matters that you would like to see the Congress address. Therefore, enclosed with this Letter of Convocation you will find an Issues Form that should be used to send any suggested topics to the ICLDF, which is planning the programme for the Congress. The suggested Issues should be the result of serious discussion among Lay Dominicans and submitted collectively, rather than by an individual. Later, these suggestions from around the world will be compiled and approved by the ICLDF and distributed to you for further discussion at the local level before the Congress. Our hope is that each delegate will come to the International Congress well prepared on the Issues which have surfaced from around the world.

And finally, we need your help in raising funds to pay for this International Congress. We would like to assist those delegates from less affluent regions who may not otherwise be able to attend. We would like to raise enough money at the international level to keep our collective expenses very low. Hopefully, no province, vice-province, or vicariate will have excessive expenses. An International Laity Congress Fund

has been opened at Santa Sabina in Rome. All donations to it must be clearly designated for that purpose and sent to: Dominican Laity Office, Convento Santa Sabina (Aventino), Piazza Pietro d'Iliria 1, 00153 Roma, ITALIA

There will be forthcoming information on the International Congress 2007 as plans continue to be made. We count on your enthusiastic involvement and support to make this exciting venture a success.

May God bless you all.

In St. Dominic and St. Catherine of Siena,

*For Africa:* Marcus Kejungki

*For Asia Pacific:* Belen Tangco

*For Europe:* Patricia Robinson

*For Latin America:* Pedro Torres

*For North America:* Laurie Biszko

*Promoter General:* fr. Gerald Stookey, OP

## Appendix II

### *Programme / Schedule / Calendar*

#### **March 17, 2007 (Saturday)**

- 07,30 Morning Prayer and Eucharist Celebration (*for delegates arriving earlier*)  
Arrival and Registration of Participants
- 14,00 Registration

#### **March 18, 2007 (Sunday)**

- 07,30 Morning Prayer (Buenos Aires)
- 08,00 Breakfast
- 09,00 Inaugural Session  
Invocation  
Acknowledgment of Participants and Guests  
Welcome Addresses
- ICLDF.....**Belen Lorezca-Tangco**
- National Council of Argentina.....**Maria Llopert**
- Dominican Province of St. Augustine.....**Rev. Fr. Javier Maria Pose, O.P.**  
*Prior Provincial (Argentina)*
- Opening Address.....**Rev. Fr. Gerald Stookey, O.P.**  
*Promoter General, Dominican Laity*
- 10,00 Departure for Buenos Aires
- 12,00 Eucharistic Celebration (Basilica de Nuestra Senora del Santisimo Rosario, Defensa and Belgrano, Convento de Santo Domingo, Buenos Aires)  
Main Celebrant: **Rev. Fr. Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, O.P.** - *Master of the Order of Preachers*
- 13,00 Reception (Convento de Santo Domingo)
- 14,30 Cultural Tour of the City
- 18,45 Departure for El Cenaculo, Pilar
- 20,30 Dinner

*DAY'S MODERATOR: MARIA TERESA TENTI DE VOLTA*

#### **March 19, 2007 (Monday)**

- 07,30 Morning Prayer (Latin America)
- 08,00 Breakfast
- 09,00 Invocation  
Summary of Previous Day and Orientation on Day's Activities
- KEYNOTE ADDRESS : **“Companions in Preaching”**  
**Rev. Fr. Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, O.P.**

10,00 Orientation on Workshop  
10,30 B r e a k  
11,00 C O M M I S S I O N S  
12,30 Lunch  
15,00 - 18,00 C O M M I S S I O N S  
19,00 Vespers and Eucharistic Celebration  
20,00 Dinner

*DAY'S MODERATOR : PEDRO TORRES CASTELLANOS*

**March 20, 2007 (Tuesday)**

07,30 Morning Prayer (Africa)  
08,00 Breakfast  
09,00 - 12,00 C O M M I S S I O N S  
12,30 Lunch  
15,00 - 18,00 C O M M I S S I O N S  
19,00 Vespers and Eucharistic Celebration  
20,00 Dinner

*DAY'S MODERATOR: MARCUS KEJUNGKI*

**March 21, 2007 (Wednesday)**

07,30 Morning Prayer (North America)  
08,00 Breakfast  
09,00 Invocation  
Summary of Previous Day and Orientation on Day's Activities  
Output Presentation of COMMISSION 1  
10,30 B r e a k  
11,00 Output Presentation of COMMISSION 2  
12,30 Lunch  
15,00 Output Presentation of COMMISSION 3  
16,30 B r e a k  
18,30 Vespers and Eucharistic Celebration: **Main Celebrant: Rev. Fr. Javier Maria Pose, O.P.**  
20,00 Dinner  
International Cultural Night

*DAY'S MODERATOR: LAURIE BISZKO*

**March 22, 2007 (Thursday)**

- 07,30 Morning Prayer (Europe)  
08,00 Breakfast  
09,00 Invocation  
Summary of Previous Day and Orientation on Day's Activities  
Output Presentation of COMMISSION 4  
10,00 B r e a k  
11,00 Output Presentation of COMMISSION 5  
12,30 Lunch  
15,00 Output Presentation of Commission 6  
16,30 B r e a k  
17,00 Free Time for Work Completion  
18,30 Vespers and Eucharistic Celebration: **Main Celebrant: Rev. Fr. Gerald Stookey, O.P.**  
20,00 Dinner  
S o c i a l s c/o MARCUS KEJUNGKI

*DAY'S MODERATOR: PATRICIA ROBINSON*

**March 23, 2007 (Friday)**

- 07,30 Morning Prayer (Asia Pacific)  
08,00 Breakfast  
09,00 Invocation  
Summary of Previous Day and Orientation on Day's Activities  
COMMISSION RESULTS (for completion)  
10,30 B r e a k  
11,00 Plenary (completion of output presentations)  
12,00 Lunch  
15,00 Regional Meetings  
16,30 B r e a k  
17,00 Closing Ceremony : **Rev. Fr. Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, O.P.**  
18,30 Closing Eucharistic Celebration: **Main Celebrant: Rev. Fr. David Michael Kammler, O.P.**  
20,00 Farewell Dinner

*DAY'S MODERATOR: BELEN LOREZCA – TANGCO*

**March 24, 2007 (Saturday)**

- 07,30 Morning Prayer and Eucharist Celebration (*for delegates leaving later*)

## Appendix III

### *Congress Committees*

- 1) **Transportation:** Jerry Stookey (ICLDF) - Jorge Arturo Olmos, Salvador Librace (Argentina)
- 2) **Reception, Registration, Hospitality:** Laurie Biszko, Doris Stukes, Marcus Kejungki (ICLDF) - Julieta Maria Puig, Maria Elvira Falcucci, Florencia Costa (Argentina)
- 3) **Secretariat/Documentation/Publication:** Belen Tangco, Maria Teresa Tenti De Volta (ICLDF) - Marta Ferreira, Ana Sofia Romero (Argentina), María Laura González (Uruguay)
- 4) **Treasurer/Finance Committee:** Pedro Torres, Laurie Biszko, Jerry Stookey (ICLDF) - José Héctor Pacheco, Kevin Ennis, Sebastian Maza, Rodolfo Cardillo, Dolores Etchevers (Argentina)
- 5) **Translation:** Jerry Stookey (ICLDF) - Veronica Rafferty, Fernando Reta (Argentina)
- 6) **Social entertainment:** Marcus Kejungki, Teresita Tenti De Volta (ICLDF) - Miguel Guevara, Alejandro Speroni (Argentina)
- 7) **Public Relations Committee (website):** Belen Tangco (ICLDF) - Jorge Llopart, Miguel Guevara (Argentina)
- 8) **Issues/Content/Study/Statutes/General Declarations:** Laurie Biszko, Patricia Robinson, Jerry Stookey (ICLDF) - Ana Sofia Romero (Argentina)
- 9) **Program Committee/Calendar Agenda:** Belen Tangco (ICLDF) - Mary Llopart, Rodolfo Cardillo (Argentina)
- 10) **First Aid/Emergency:** Doris Stukes (ICLDF) - Dr. Kamal Zariffa (Canada), Marta Ferreira (Argentina)
- 11) **Liturgy:** Patricia Robinson, David Kammler (ICLDF) - Juan José Baldini (Argentina)
- 12) **Physical arrangements/Facilities :** Patricia Kelly, Doris Stukes (ICLDF) - Julieta Puig (Argentina)

# Appendix IV

## *Commissions*

### **Commission 1 – PRAYER AND PREACHING**

**President:       PATRICIA KELLY**

**Members:**

- Yamir Antonio Ahumada Cachay
- José Carlos Murillo Boniche
- Iñaki Benito Diez
- Louise Fitinghoff
- Bruce Trigo
- Jeanne Wreden
- Alberto Dorta
- José Manuel Noguero
- Hegberto Copa
- Eugenia Barraza
- Enedina Fuentes

### **Commission 2 – STUDY AND FORMATION**

**President:       DORIS STUKES**

**Members:**

- Bárbara Cockburn
- Adenike Emeke
- Isabel Robalino
- Grace Edey
- Bogdan Penev
- Adriana Peña
- Rubén Muñoz
- Elva Susana Brittos
- Sofía Guerrero Ponce

### **Commission 3 – GOVERNMENT: RULES AND STATUTES**

**President:       PATRICIA ROBINSON**

**Members:**

- Leda Brasileiro Texeira
- Gabriel Silva
- Dalia Stanciene
- Eugenia Barraza
- German Turcios
- María Angélica de Llopart
- Prosperina Vitale
- Alvaro Martínez
- Leonor Aguilar

### **Commission 4 – ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURE**

**President:       LAURIE BISZKO**

**Members:**

- Chantal Soligny
- Inara Uzolina
- Leny Beemer
- Karen Woods
- LuyenTruong
- Margaret Grant
- Shane Goodman

### **Commission 5 – ECONOMIC AND FINANCE**

**President:       PEDRO TORRES CASTELLANOS**

**Members:**

- Ruth Kummer
- Paula Maina
- Félix Foko
- Eva Zudorova
- Miguel Soria Céspedes
- María Pascuala Alfonso
- Víctor Colón
- John O'Brien

**Commission 6 – OUR PLACE IN THE ORDER AND IN THE CHURCH**

**President:       MARCUS KEJUNGKI**

**Members:**

- Michelini Ruggli
- Remigiusz Olejnik
- Noreen Marian
- Irene Larcán
- Kamal Zariffa
- Odile Gaume
- Dorothy Murphy
- Kaarina Kohr
- Inam Dabish

# Appendix V

## *Reflections*

### **March 17 - Morning Prayer**

*(Patricia Kelly - Ireland)*

In this morning's Gospel we have heard Jesus say, "go out to the whole world and proclaim the Good News". We as Dominicans belong to a worldwide Family of Preachers and so we continue to fulfill this command that Jesus gave. He also spoke of certain Signs we would recognize in each other, Today The Irish celebrate the feast of St Patrick our Patron Saint and Patrick used many signs including mountain's (first reading) to bring the faith to the Irish people but he could not have done so if he had not prayed constantly I would like to read a section of his prayer known as

#### **St. Patrick's Breastplate. (For Communion Reflection)**

I arise today  
Through the strength of heaven:  
Light of sun,  
Radiance of moon,  
Splendour of fire,  
Speed of lightening,  
Swiftness of wind,  
Depth of the sea,  
Stability of earth,  
Firmness of rock.

I arise today through God's strength to pilot me:  
God's might to uphold,  
God's wisdom to guide me,  
God's eyes to look before me,  
God's ear to hear me,  
God's word to speak for me,  
God's hand to guard me,  
God's way to lie before me,  
God's shield to protect me  
From all who would wish me ill,  
Afar and near,  
Alone and in a multitude,  
Against every cruel and merciless power, that may oppose my body and soul.

Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me,  
Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ behind me,  
Christ on my right, Christ on my left,  
Christ when I lie down,  
Christ when I sit down,  
Christ when I arise,  
Christ in the heart of everyone who thinks of me,  
Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me,  
Christ in every eye that sees me,  
Christ in every Ear that hears me,  
I arise today.

Before I left Ireland our Parish of St. Aengus were having a Lenten Parish mission and I saw the reality of our theme Companions in Preaching working at first hand. A young group known as St. Patrick's Mission Society were preaching to all ages. Visiting Schools, the sick, drug centers, and all aspects of Parish life, Praying for all and with all.

**Let us arise from our Congress with the help of Jesus to go out to the whole world to Praise, to Bless and Preach the Good News.**

**As Companions in Preaching.**

### **March 17 - Evening Prayer**

*(Susana Brittos - Paraguay)*

*"As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. For he says, "At an acceptable time I have listened to you, and on a day of salvation I have helped you." See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way."*

On the way to Passover we find ourselves in the presence of the Father who comes looking for us to offer us his merciful and liberating embrace.

Paul speaks to us in the name of the church, presenting himself as a "helper", a collaborator of God (like the other apostles) and he reminds us of the scripture: "At an acceptable time I have listened to you, and on a day of salvation I have helped you." And in a subsequent sentence Paul affirms: "Now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation!"

As we begin this Congress of Lay Dominican Fraternities, we too can say the very same thing: "Now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation!"

We are here to look at ourselves in the present moment: TODAY, HERE, AND NOW, who we are and the mission we have.

We are here to open our eyes and our hearts so that nothing be done in vain. The One who promised us, "where two or three are gathered in my name I am with you," is the one who gathers us and calls us to this Lay Dominican Congress. He is with us and in his gratuitousness he gifts us with the "present moment". It's up to us to respond to the grace.

As citizens of the world, we lay Dominicans bring with us the cries of reality, the pain and anguish, as well as the hope for redemption.

We add to the promise of "the acceptable time of God" the present moment of our world. The present moment challenges us, it urges our Lay communities to be prepared for the preaching of the truth.

Let us open wide our hearts and the ear of our soul to receive the word of God as clearly expressed by the Apostle Paul: "Now is the acceptable time. Do not receive the grace of God in vain."

May the Holy Spirit flow freely, uniting us in communion as brothers and sisters, bringing us up to date among ourselves and with the different means available for our Lay Dominican communities at this time, for our world, for the reality of our global culture, and in the regions and nations where we live. May the brothers and sisters of the other branches of the great tree of Dominic find in the Dominican laity "Companions in the Preaching", the result of our preparations and our updating on this journey together. May love unite us in our differences of culture, gender and branches of the Order.

Let us say with the Apostle: "We are the co-workers of God" announcing with enthusiasm the Good News, which is the ministry entrusted to all Dominicans.

**March 18 - Morning Prayer**  
(Rubén Muñoz Muñoz - Mexico)

*“This day is sacred to the Lord your God. Do not mourn or weep, for this is a sacred day to our God. Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.” (Ne 8:9a:10)*

“Our Lord is our strength”, in a world full of selfishness, where offers of money and power proliferate, and where lies are fostered, it seems difficult to be able to find our strength in the Lord.

Nevertheless, in the life of a Christian and particularly for one who has as model a man like Dominic, one must search for this path; Dominique found it in the Lord. In Him, he found enough strength to do his work in a world full of difficulties, just like the world we live in today. It is a challenge for us to be able to find the path that will enable us to obtain our strength in the Lord.

Our life as committed lay persons is developed in various fields: work, family, education, social life, religion. In each one of these fields it is feasible to walk in that direction, since God’s mercy comes across us in either field.

In our relation to work, we encounter great opportunities to meet many brothers and sisters and share our feelings and thoughts with them. We also encounter the possibility of sharing our hope with them.

In our journey, we move around in a world of interest, power, wealth and evil. Therefore it is essential that we show our trust in the Lord to the whole world.

Amidst the opportunities that the world offers us nowadays, the lay people who follow Dominic’s steps have the chance to make visible the manner in which we find our strength in the Lord but, just as our father St. Dominic did, we have to do it with passion, but, above all, with joy.

In our daily life and in all our daily activities, we must find that joy, since every day of our life offers an opportunity to consecrate our being to Our God, for in God we shall find our joy.

We have to act and live as the Psalmist indicates

*“Happy are those who delight in the law of the Lord... they are like streams planted by streams of water, which yield their fruits in due season, and their leaves do not wither, in all that they do they prosper.” (Psalm 1:1-3)*

**March 19 - Morning Prayer**  
(Isabel Robalino - Ecuador)

We have just heard part of David’s prayer, one of “praise and thanksgiving” in response to God’s promise given through the Prophet Nathan, a messianic promise written in the Book of Chronicles (1 Chron. 17:13) an expression of faith in the one God whose words are truth. We are reminded of them on this liturgical feast of Saint Joseph, who was a “just man” according to the Scriptures (Mt 1:18), and a man of faith, who accepted the legal fatherhood of Jesus, the Messiah, a man who was warned in a dream by an angel of the Lord about the mystery of the Incarnation. We have all “read what the Book of Genesis says: “Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness,” (Gen 15:6)

This coming together of truth and justice, this just life, brings us to this world community gathered here in order to reflect on community in preaching and to reflect on our own vocation. The Order of Preachers has on its crest: *Veritas* – Truth. We seek truth through study, the deepening of the knowledge of Scriptures in the light of our Christian tradition, of the content of our faith: those foundations which allow us to claim for Christianity the title being the “true religion”. But what would this quest for truth mean in a world where relativism prevails? This world where we still hear an echo to Pilate’s question: “What is the truth. Jesus says that he has come into the world to give witness to this truth. (Jn 18:17-18). “Sanctify them in the truth” (Jn 17:17) is Jesus’ prayer for his own, for those that the Father gave him. Jesus asks that his disciples live in God’s truth, made holy by the faith in God that Jesus revealed to them.

Let it be said that if there is “orthodoxy” – right thinking – there is also “orthopraxy” – the witness of the right life, a life in justice. To be understood in today’s world, as Pope Benedict XVI said, we have to join both: rightness, intellectual rectitude, with a life of righteousness, a life that answers the requirements of the sole commandment of love. Thus we’ll be able to extensions of the apostles, witnesses to the crucified and risen Christ who promised us eternal life. “we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles.” This is our Dominican vocation in service to the Church.

### **March 19 - Evening Prayer** *(Kamal Zariffa- Canada)*

My dear sisters and brothers in Dominic, our father, Joseph obeyed purely in faith when he took his fiancée into his home (see Rm. 1:5, 16, 26; 2 Cor. 10: 5-6). He fully gave himself over to God.

Born in the East myself, having visited Nazareth -- a small hamlet -- when I was 8 years old, I had already made up in my mind what Joseph the carpenter would be doing. He would be designing or planning houses. When I returned during my last visit in 2006, it was clear that the hamlet had become a city.

I experienced it both with my childhood eyes of then and of today [no matter how old we are or what phase of our lives we are going through, we always can see with the eyes of a child! This Wednesday, on the feast of Saint Joseph, I have therefore put some words down on paper concerning today’s feast.

I was fascinated by the way in which today’s liturgy set up an interplay between the reading of the Hebrew Scripture, Paul’s letter to the Romans and Matthew’s Gospel.

In the Book of Samuel we discover the renewal of the covenantal promise through the words of the prophet Nathan, a promise made to Abraham and his descendants to build his House, to send the Saviour Messiah,

The beauty of the Letter to the Romans in Chapter 4 is that it talks to us about faith, truth in faith, as highlighted by our Holy Father Benedict XVI. God deemed Abraham to be just, because he was worthy to be the father of a people of believers. Abraham trusted in God’s Word, but what is this Word, if not THE Word that we Dominicans live by and breathe, after having meditated on it, internalized it, contemplated it and digested it so that we in turn can pass it on to others?

To the extent that we are witnesses and during our whole lifetime, we will be sowers of this Word of Love and of Truth, as well as of Justice.

All of us here know that our Father Dominic traveled with the Gospel of Matthew and the letters of Paul in his knapsack. He meets us here, in the love of Jesus and of Mary, when acting as a just man, Joseph internalized and made his own [contrary to Adam] the words of the angel, and after having deeply meditated upon them. By taking Mary in his home with him, Joseph identifies with Abraham the just one.

I am quite struck by the words the angel presents to Joseph in the Gospel, which are similar to those used by the angel to Mary: “Rejoice, full of grace”. And Mary, contrary to our mother Eve, pondered these words and said: “How can this be, for I am still a virgin, and do not know man.” We all know the angel’s message.

Here, Joseph, acts in a contrary manner to our father Adam who, ashamed, hid behind our mother Eve as it is written in Genesis [3:11-12]: “The woman that you placed at my side is the one who gave me the fruit of the forbidden Tree and I ate of it.”

Instead of being thoughtless or cowardly, Joseph acted as a just person, as a man of reflection once the angel had appeared to him; through meditation and prayer Joseph becomes aware of his responsibility and takes the woman under his care.

Joseph takes Mary under his roof to exonerate her, and gives the name to the child, which makes of him a father.

All this happened to fulfill the words of the prophet: ““The virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,” which means, “God is with us.”- “And he gave him the name Jesus.” [Mt 1:23, 25]

So, my sisters and brothers, these are my reflections. I do hope that on this day when we celebrate Joseph, all of us will not fall prey to the tendency to seek super-humans, to overestimate the archetype of the modern man as a superman, and admire instead this simple man in Nazareth, who presents to us the path to follow, the path that all Dominicans should follow, for as we say: “Dominican once, Dominican always.”

May the Spirit keep us. May Mary the Theotokos, Mother of God, may Joseph the faithful guardian, may our Father Dominic, our sister Catherine and all the saints allow us to progress in the way of Love, Truth and Justice. Amen. Thank you my brothers and sisters.

### **March 20 - Morning Prayer**

*(Adenike Emeke - Nigeria)*

My dear fellow children of God (“Children of God”, and that indeed is what we are (Jn.13:33). I can see the Lord speaking to each one of us in this passage; calling us to the repentance that is for our own good, which is the salvation of our souls. In the call that we turn to Him with all our hearts, He has shown us the way by which we should do it, it is “with fasting, with weeping and with mourning” (Joel 2:13). In other words, our turning to Him must be deep and thorough.

We are called to rend our hearts and not our garments. When we do this, as demanded of us in the passage, we are declaring our sincerity at letting go of our sins; for a thing that is torn is no longer in place as a whole. In that way, we humble ourselves before Him and bid our sins bye-bye.

It is in this humble position that we attract the grace and mercy of God. It is important that we rend our hearts, because though our God is “slow to anger and rich in mercy” (Joel 2:13b), He is also a God of justice; ready to punish those that yield not his call and thereby reject his mercy. We must remember that as sinners, we really deserve great punishment, but the constant mercy of God makes us to be polished when actually we should be punished. Should we reject a mercy so great?

While I conclude by challenging us to please heed the word of Scripture that declares “if today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts (Ps.95:7b-8). I also leave us with the hope and joy-filled words of Scripture that say “----- my grace is sufficient for you” (2 Cor.12:9). And friends, I say that indeed, His grace is sufficient for anyone who is ready and willing to rend his/her heart in **sincere repentance**.

May His sufficient grace help our hearts not to be afraid to yield in totality to Him as we hear His voice today. Amen.

### **March 20 - Evening Prayer**

*(Brian Pierce - Peru/USA)*

One day – probably when we were small children – we were dressed up in starchy white clothes, taken to church, where some songs were sung and prayers said, and then a priest, dressed in rather strange clothes, poured water over our heads. It didn’t really seem very interesting at the moment. People clapped, more songs were sung, there was a little party afterwards, and we were inscribed into a book as *Christians*. All without anyone ever checking it out first with us!

That was the beginning of a long journey, one that we are still on today. We later learned that Jesus began *his* journey this way, and in fact that *all* Christians begin their journey either by being dunked or by having water poured over their heads.

But we also learn little by little along this journey that being a Christian is about more than having water poured over our heads as infants. If *that* were the important thing, then we would meet every Sunday in Church and pour water on each other’s heads. Being a Christian is more than just repeating past acts, doing the same rituals over and over again.

At some point in our lives, the outward sign of water has to become an inward reality. We have to *become* the water, *become* the fountain from which the water flows. This is the beauty of the prophet Ezekiel’s

image of the Temple that we heard in today's first reading. The life-giving water does not flow *into* the Temple from outside, but flows *out* from the Temple as a healing presence in the world. St. Paul later says that *we are* that temple. Catherine of Siena expressed this beautiful reality using an image that she received from God: 'As the Sea is in the fish and the fish is in the Sea, so I am in you are you are in Me, the Sea of Peace.' Catherine discovered that the great ocean of God's love was actually *in her*.

Being a Christian is about discovering that God's spring of living water flows from deep within us, out into the world. That is what Jesus said to the Samaritan woman at the well in chapter 4 of John's gospel – the chapter previous to our gospel of today. Jesus said to the woman: 'Let the water flow from within. *Be a spring of living water*. Let me become a river, a Sea of Peace, within you.' She actually *did* become a spring of water – flowing out into the people of her village. In fact she became a preacher of the Word, and some even say that she was the founder of the first lay Dominican chapter in the Samaritan village of Sicar. (Not even Dan Brown, of Da Vinci Code fame, has uncovered that piece of hidden Dominican history!!)

The man in today's gospel of John is stuck. He can see the pool of water. He can almost get his big toe into the pool. But then someone else always beats him to it. 38 years of trying to get to the water. 38 years of living in the desert – trying to get to the Promised Land. And he never quite gets there.

One day, one *Sabbath* day, Jesus saw this man, he saw the hardened lines in his face, saw his thirst, saw his dry, desert heart. The lame man cried out, 'Excuse me, Sir, can you push me over to the water? I need to get over there so I can be healed.' Jesus looked at him, with love. And the man, when he looked into Jesus' eyes, he saw an Ocean of Love – much grander than the Sheep Pool that he wanted to bathe in. And then he heard Jesus' words, he heard *God's Word*: 'Stand up. Walk. The living water is *within* you. Let go of the pool and *become* the Sea of Peace, *become* the Temple of God, *become* the living water.'

And his life was never the same. He picked up his mat and he began to walk. *Not* exactly the right thing to do on the Sabbath with the Jewish canon lawyers standing around (Giacomo, of course, was *not* there that day – he was home watching Italy win the World Cup!). Jesus and the lame man got into a little trouble that day with the legalistic Jews. You are *NOT* supposed to do those kind of charitable things on Sunday...I mean, on the Sabbath! Rules are supposed to be followed. People who break the rules, therefore, must be punished. Today's gospel ends with these words: 'It was because he did things like *this* on the Sabbath that the (Jewish authorities) began to persecute Jesus.'

The lame man who was healed, though, realized that *those kind* of laws – the old laws that were good for a time – needed to be renewed. The old laws are like the pool of water. They are good for a time. But once we drink from the springs of *living* water that well up from the depths of the human heart, we are set free to discover the greater law, the law of love, the law which is the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We do not pour water over our heads on Sundays so that we can keep repeating our baptism over and over. That would be legalistic silliness. That would be spiritual stagnation. True Christians do not live in the past. We live in the present moment, filled with an ancient Word and an ancient story, filled with *living* water and with the Spirit of the *living* Christ.

I close this reflection with some lines from a poem written by one of Argentina's prophets – a martyr – Bishop **Enrique Angelelli**, who poured his life out in loving service of the poor. As we remember this week the 27<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the martyrdom of Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador, let us also remember one of Argentina's modern-day saints. Let us hear his words as if they were spoken to the lame man in today's gospel...and as if they were spoken to us, Dominicans, during this, the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first community of preachers:

Advierte! No eres pasado sino historia,  
eres proyecto y siempre mensaje,  
pueblo que camina y no desierto,  
agua que canta y no estanque.  
No te quedes solo, porque envejeces;  
escucha la Fuerza de lo que no muere...  
es Él...de ayer, de hoy y de siempre.  
Advierte! No eres pasado sino historia,  
agua que canta y no estanque.

Beware! You are not the past, but history,  
you are project, you are always message,  
a pilgrim people and not a desert,  
water which sings, but is never stagnant.  
Do not remain alone, for you will grow old;  
listen to the Strength of that which never dies...  
it is He...yesterday, today, and always.  
Beware! You are not the past, but history,  
water which sings, but is never stagnant.

**March 21 - Morning Prayer**  
*(Iñaki Benito Diez - Spain)*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We have read from Deuteronomy, and here are some reflections on it.

“The Lord fell in love with you, out of his love” according to Deut, 7, 6. Those people were not the most powerful nor the most numerous of the known world. He needed no argument to justify His preference and choice. God loves because he loves. God creates love. For He knows he can break the jar, reconstruct it, beautify it. God is like the master who has abundance of wisdom to teach his people and counteract their ignorance and raise their level of wisdom, by osmosis almost, by the action of the Holy Spirit. God through Jesus Christ loved his people. Did he not cry before his death, on contemplating the temple of Jerusalem., symbol of His identity? He wept mainly for the city but also for all the nations of the earth to which Redemption would reach eventually.

But at the same time as He expressed this declaration of love, he lifted up the people by means of it. Yes, I know that that primitive and crude people would not appreciate His choice and would prostitute itself with idols, but at least someone would understand and be grateful.

God acts like any man in love, so He can gain the interest of His children. We have seen hundreds of times in gardens, written on the larger tree trunks, two initials inside a heart pierced by an arrow. Who could measure the passionate tension with which these letters, arrows and hearts were carved? Within them were placed a whole life, a dream, a being in love, who after saying it in burning words, was not satisfied and went on to carve it, to sculpt it to leave it exposed to everyone’s gaze. A boy or a girl wrote that love of theirs in blood.

These days we are experiencing a real “kairos”, a time of grace. It is a gift to fall in love with Jesus Christ and Saint Dominic, for this changes our lives. To see so many saints, men and women who lived their lives completely devoted to Jesus Christ and His Church.

This is our vocation my friends: to fall crazily in love with Jesus Christ so we can transmit this love and the joy of being followers of Jesus.

But how can we fall in love crazily with the Lord? We ask ourselves...There is a Spanish expression which says: Contact creates love. This is what we must do with the Lord. A Dominican man or woman should be a person of prayer. Our preaching must emerge out of that contemplation. Our Christian life, in imitation of Dominic our father and master, grows in a heart to heart contact with the Lord, as Teresa of Jesus tells us.

We must get the strength of prayer to back up our preaching, so as to convince people with our way of life. Paul VI said we need more witnesses nowadays than teachers. The witness is one who has seen and experienced and then speaks of that.

The best way to get to know Jesus is through his mother. Our Mother, our Lady of the Rosary. Our pope, John Paul II said in the meeting with youth held in 2003 in Cuatro Vientos, Madrid: to know Christ you have to enter the school of Mary.

This school is the school of humility and simplicity. Our Lady draws us closed to the Lord and teaches us to say like her: Yes. And we are here today because once our parents said yes when they baptized us.

And through various stages of our lives we went on saying yes. We are here today because once we said Yes when we were presented with the idea of being Christians according to the Dominican way.

Society thinks we are crazy to be Catholics and more so if we have a commitment such as ours. But I give you an invitation, brothers and sisters. MAKE THIS WORLD A MADHOUSE.

MAY GOD WHO IS LOVE, WHO IS FATHER, AND MARY THE STAR OF EVANGELIZATION AND SAINT DOMINIC OUR MASTER OF PREACHING, BLESS US

### **March 21 - Evening Prayer**

*(Javier Maria Pose - Argentina)*

During the celebration of Baptism there is a rite that I think is especially significant. When the priest, recalling the miracle of Jesus when he cured the deaf mute, touches the ears and lips of the newly baptized and asks the Lord to grant him or her to be able soon to hear the Word and profess the faith. I think there is no real Christian life without listening to the Word as there is no true Christian who does not witness and announce the Good News that he or she has received.

Every year, during Lent, we are invited to renew this condition of being hearers and messengers of the Word which is also at the heart of our Dominican vocation. The liturgy of the church repeats emphatically during these days with the words of the invitatory psalm: Let you listen to the voice of the Lord today, do not harden your hearts. To listen to the Lord's voice is to leave our indifference and rebellion and to open to his loving designs, to accept the invitation to enter into communion with Him. So that this call really reaches humanity God sent his only Son to the World so his voice could resound in our own language in a manner of speaking. For this reason the Word of God became flesh and dwelt among us – so we would listen to his voice.

Jesus himself is the Word of God, the secret that the Father has revealed to us. He is light and life for all. So we listen to the gospel today: the time has come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live. His is the voice of the pastor who knows his sheep and calls each one by its name, the voice of the Master who invites us to follow him, the voice of the Spouse who seeks his beloved. It is the Son who calls his brothers and sisters, who when they welcome the Word and receive his own Spirit become truly the children of God.

For the Word of the Lord gives us life and life in abundance. New life, life of grace, joyful life in the experience of the mercy of God, of fraternity, of shared mission. Is this not the experience that we live in our communities? What we experience here at this meeting, recognizing that we are brothers and sisters?

We know too that the new Life is not ours completely. We are fragile and we carry our treasure in clay pots. We are still weak and sinful, within our Dominican communities. It is part of the admirable and mysterious pedagogy of God with his people, where his infinite patience is evident, respecting our rhythm at times slow and lazy in which our freedom is not always victorious. However, we are on the journey towards the fullness of life and love to which God calls us.

Only in the Light of that full life in the Resurrection can we understand our vocation, which is already being realized by means of that mystery of grace which is the seed of glory.

So every time we take a step in our conversion, every time we are pardoned for our sins by the ministry of the church, every day that we are freer to live our mission where the Lord sends us, this is the voice of the Son who invites us and the power of His resurrection is revealed in us. How can we see the Church, the Order, our own communities, our very selves always in the light of that call to life, to Resurrection? We need to be led every day more deeply by the voice of the Lord and listen to it in our heart. For this we need an attitude of vigilant listening, of silence and of discernment. This is the only way to say like Jesus that we are doing what the Father tells us. Do we not often run the risk of being agitated, tired and even to fight among ourselves when we do not hear that voice? On the contrary what fecundity, fullness of life when we listen and listen to each other, when we welcome together the will of the Lord for us!

Jesus says: the dead will hear. This seems to be contradictory, the dead do not hear, but the deepest reality of conversion is the passage from death to life. It is necessary to be dead to hear the voice of the Son of God.

We have to know how to die. This signifies a radical poverty, this is a condition for an authentic listening and for effective availability for the message. So we listen to the voice of the Son of God when we accept the way of poverty and abandonment, when we know how to die to ourselves and to the idols that give us security but which close our ears and shrink our hearts. But the word of God has the power to give us life. We know that we listen to his voice when we opt for mercy and pardon, for truth and coherence of life, for peace and unity.

The first rule of lay Dominicans called them the Order of Penance of Saint Dominic. The old name indicated a profound reality which is condition for life and renewal for each Christian and especially for every preacher.

What does it mean to do penance except to convert the Heart and to be open to the love of God? This is the objective of the preaching of Jesus: be converted and relieve in the Gospel. Is this not a task for the whole of our lives? Once more, we are invited to listen to the voice of the Lord.

I am convinced that the primary purpose of each community of each fraternity is precisely to be a school of the Word, a privileged space in which each sister and brother finds help and stimulus to let the Word sown in the heart to grow and to bear abundant fruit in sanctity, in living testimony and evangelization, according to the vocation of each one. I would even say that also each Provincial council, and the International Council, every one of our meetings and assemblies should be places where we exercise openness of ears and lips so that the Word of God, overcoming all obstacles, can be completely effective and powerful and return to the Father in a hymn of praise and thanksgiving, as we are doing now in this Eucharist, a memorial of the Passover of Christ, sign and anticipation of the full life that He offers us.

I do not doubt that in these days of grace the voice of the Lord will resound vigorously in this International Congress. Let us once again allow Him to open the ears of our hearts to welcome the Word of Life. That in the diversity of our realities and cultures, that Word would become the message of salvation for the world, following the steps of Dominic, preacher of grace. Because when we listen to his voice, He opens our lips and gives us the joy of being able to announce the Good News that we have heard.

### **March 22 - Morning Prayer** *(Louise Fittinghoff - Australia)*

The context of this passage is the consecration of Solomon's Temple and the installation of the ark of the covenant of the Lord in the inner sanctum.

The verses we have heard today are part of Solomon's supplication to the Lord to listen to his people, and be prepared to forgive them their sins, if they sincerely repent. The Lord choose Israel to be his possession in a unique way separated from all other peoples and Solomon asks him to always protect them and stay with them.

As Christians we are the new offshoot of God's people. The great difference for us is that through Christ we have inherited an even closer relationship with God. Christ showed us that God is our Father, who loves us unconditionally. He will always hear our prayer. He is always prepared to forgive us. However, this also brings responsibilities. We should also be prepared to forgive each other and love each other.

Christ also added a new command: To spread the good news that he preached. We are all called to preach and bring others to God. The Israelites saw themselves as the one and only people chosen by God. Jesus taught us that every human is God's child, that we all are God's people and that God want to gather us all in, like the mother hen her chickens.

As we know from the Acts of the Apostles, this new idea of spreading the Word to others than the Jews was at first hotly contested. It was a very radical change from the existing way of thinking, that the Jewish people were the one and only people chosen to be God's people.

As Dominicans we have taken on the call to spread the Good News in a special way. How we do our preaching will vary depending of the circumstances. What should never vary however is the message that God loves us all, regardless of who we are and what we have done.

We can always rely on God to hear our prayers. The answer he gives may not be the one we expected, in fact sometimes we may not even be aware that God has answered our prayer, but it is always the answer that is best for us.

## **March 22 - Evening Prayer**

(Jerry Stookey - Rome)

*Theme: Witness of Christ*

*Central Message: You and I have all the credentials necessary to testify on Jesus' behalf!*

Baptism: I wonder how many of us here know the date of our Baptism? I bet a good number of you know the date of your first profession as a Dominican. And probably all of the priests here present remember perfectly the date of our ordination, right? But our Baptismal date? Hmm?

Well, in the first place, most of us don't even remember being there—since infant baptism is the most common practice. Although we remember so many big events in our lives, especially our birthdays, it would be a good thing for Christians, especially for us Dominicans, to celebrate our birth in Christ—that is, our Baptismal date! Why?

Our Baptism is the start of being a Preacher. By our Baptism we began to be Preachers, not at our Dominican profession! We are *obliged* by our baptism to live as witnesses of Christ and to tell the whole world and tell the Good News. All of the symbols of the Sacrament of Baptism speak to this: anointing, water, new clothing in white, lighted candle—all for setting us on the road of witnessing to Christ for all our lives. Coming from a largely Protestant country, I am often intrigued by the clear understanding of the *meaning of baptism* among our “separated Christians”. Their style of preaching and their continuous knocking at our door may be obnoxious to us.

However, one has to admire their commitment to fulfill their baptism and their correct interpretation of what it means. By our baptism we followers of Christ are given not only *the authority* but also *the duty* to tell all the world the Good News of the Resurrection. If all Catholics understood this, we would have millions of preachers giving testimony to Christ. And if all Lay Dominicans realized this, they would not be so hesitant to call themselves lay preachers or to actually be one.

Testimony not accepted: Even so, our testimony as preachers is not always accepted. In this passage of John's Gospel for today, Jesus laments that when He gave testimony to his fellow Jews, they would not accept it as valid. He points out that John the Baptist came as his witness too, but John's testimony was not enough. Jesus' own works are a testimony that He was sent by the Father—but no one believed in the one that was sent. They did not even believe in the writings of Moses, as Jesus commented saying “if you refuse to believe what he wrote, how can you believe in what I say?” I found it interesting that in this short Gospel reading today the word “*testifies*” or “*testimony*” is repeated 10 times! In fact, the language of this text is full of expressions like: witness, testimony, on my behalf, believes me, sent me, accuse me, accept me, **truth!** Jesus is a testimony to the Father and he had a hard time getting people to believe he was who he said he was!

Prove who you are: Recently you and I have had several personal experiences of what this is like, right here in relation to the Congress. I remember when Bernard Perez, who is the webmaster of our Congress website back at Santa Sabina, began putting up the names of those who registered. For a long time, I never got around to it, and so my name was not in bold, blue letters on the list of Participants. I had to fill out the Registration Form just like you! One had to prove that you were really registered to attend this Congress! And worse than that for many others. So many needed to get a passport for the first time or renew the one that they had. How about those of you who needed a visa to get in, eh? Oh, what a litany of official letters and legal documents, from the president of the Laity in Argentina, from the Master of the Order, from the Provincial in Argentina, from the Promoter General, from the Ministry of Religious Affairs in Argentina, with the help of Alejandro Speroni and DHL mailing service and anyone else who could please **help now**—you may or may not have been accepted! For those whose testimony was not accepted over and over again, they felt just like Jesus in this Gospel today! If you don't think it matters whether a giving testimony is

important or not, just recall how much you scrambled to get your Credential Letter to Laurie so that you could vote in this Congress! And there will be Roll Call each day to prove that your presence and testimony at this Congress is valid. The world runs on having and giving testimonial proof all the time! But with all those testimonies and documents in hand, above all show the world your *credentials* as a Christian preacher!

Give me a Dominican to Witness for Christ. For like Jesus, we know that mere human testimony is nothing in comparison to the great witnessing to the love of God by a Christian! In fact, if someone offered me \$25,000 or a Dominican preacher — I would take the Dominican preacher any day! For even if money is needed for our mission, and even if an office in Rome would be nice for the Dominican Laity, none of it is worth half of the testimony of one dear Dominican preacher, who is worth his or her weight in gold, for sure! We can all go home and find our Baptismal Certificate to see when our preaching life actually began. It might be fun actually! And we can celebrate our birthdays and profession days and ordination anniversaries year after year. But it will never be an adequate credential unless we truly testify to Christ as living witnesses. I say, give me a Dominican Companion in Preaching, and together we will testify that Jesus was sent by God and that through Him God is alive in us and in our world today.

### **March 23 - Morning Prayer** (*Felix Foko - Africa-Cameroon*)

The text from Isaiah that we are invited to reflect upon this morning leads us to understand that he is talking about Jesus, the one sent by God to save us. Being alone without sin, he was counted as a sinner. He, the only just one, carried our damnation. Brothers and sisters as I perused this text, two words drew my attention: the suffering of the just one.

The just one in respect to sinners and suffering in respect to happiness. I would like to establish a strong link between these two words and speak about ignorance. Ignorance in my opinion is the greatest human sin, for it remains a mortal danger, the greatest enemy of humankind.

The master of the Order, Fr. Carlos, in his sermon on Sunday drew our attention to the happiness that the prodigal son wanted to experience (Lk. 15) when he asked his father for his inheritance. [In Africa it is scandalous to ask the father for an inheritance as long as he lives. You run the risk of being damned] The prodigal's bliss turned into suffering. It is from the depth of the pigsty that his eyes will open up to his ignorance, and that he'll finally understand that there is no joy outside of the father: far from the father there is but misery and suffering.

Suffering also of the elder son who upon his return to the house falls upon a party whose reason he ignored. Soon he becomes aware that the Father, in spite of what the youngest son has done to him, continues to love him, to give him his time and his goods: is that not true love? (1 Cor. 13)

So far the elder son is ignorant about his father's personality. He has always lived with him but really does not know him. For the Father allows the sun to rise on the sinners and on the just. The Father is the one who allows the rain to fall in the fields of the just as well as the sinners. (Mt. 5:45) The Father is the one who forgives. In fact the elder son, who in my opinion is the real prodigal son, was frustrated. [brothers and sisters I am not presenting a sermon on the prodigal son, but I would like to draw your attention to the infernal circle of suffering for when it attacks somewhere it affects everyone.

The elder son felt excluded from the sharing, excluded from the Father's love, in fact he even felt rejected. This is where we recognize true suffering. Are we saved from this?

- How many children suffer from the lack of love of their parents? [for example the young woman who drank and went home late?]
- How many men suffer from the loss of their wives?
- How many men and women in the suffering of their stress can no more trust God?
- How many senior citizens suffer rejection from society and even from their descendants?
- How many persons suffer physically, mentally and morally in their body?

- How often do we suffer injustices?
- How often do we suffer from guilt?
- How often do we suffer in our thoughts and even from our silence?
- How often do we suffer from our opinions, our fears, and our doubts?

I would think that we do not suffer to often from all of the above. For all our sufferings touch the heart of God, who also suffers from the ignorance we have of Him. Yes God suffers because of our ignorance of Him.

And yet for each suffering God gives us an answer. The two brothers receive answers to their anguish, their suffering. For the first one God acted very concretely out of love and healed him. In the second case, God heals his ignorance through a word: “Everything I have is yours.” (Lk. 15:31), did you not know this? It is because of your ignorance that you have suffered.

You who today suffer from different ills and from rejection, exclusion, and betrayal... this morning the Father full of love says also to you: “Everything I have is yours, everything I do is for your good, did you not know this?”

Brothers and sisters let doubt our doubts, but let us never doubt God. Remember Jesus who said: Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”

### **March 23 - Evening Prayer**

*(David Kammler - Rome/Germany)*

Dear companions in the service of preaching the Gospel,

Which ideas are given us to in the parting texts of Holy Scripture in this celebration?

*(Book of wisdom 2, 1.12-22 / John 7,1-2.10.25-30)*

#### **Jesus leaves Judea and goes back to Galilee, his home.**

Tomorrow we will also leave for our home countries again. Very different from Jesus however, because we, unlike Jesus, are not in danger of our lives here in Argentina! On the contrary: Many of us would prefer to get to know even more of this beautiful country and experience the hospitality of its inhabitants. Our mission, to let the ‘seed’ rise and grow the in these days entrusted to us, that mission begins at home where we are rooted. From there, our task during the coming years will be to remain in contact with each other and to realize the good inputs and ideas little by little. That is what Galilee is for Jesus, the familiar surroundings that allow growth and development of the inner concerns of Jesus: the preaching of the Lord’s abundant love and kindness for all creation! We are not alone in this – as Jesus was. In today’s gospel it is said:

**Jesus joins his sisters and brothers in their pilgrimage for Jerusalem for the feast of Passover; he keeps in the background, but - so it is said: 'he is speaking freely'.**

In community with God’s loving proximity and aware of the sisters and brothers at our side, we too are strong and do not fear places and opportunities as much as we did before - just like Jesus on his journey to Jerusalem - where for us also, conflicts are inevitable. There are of course, single-pilgrims and famous individualists. However, rooted in our Dominican Family it will better help us to manage the pilgrimage together. We must not draw attention to ourselves standing at the centre of public interest. Without having a bad conscience we can in our society keep in the background - just like Jesus in the gospel of today –and from there preach independently and freely through our life itself, our lifestyle, the liberty of God’s children. We need not indeed, preach ourselves.

**Jesus proclaims: "I have not come from myself, there is One, who sent me."**

That is the big goal of our common Dominican Preaching: to let Christ become transparent in our time, our families, under our social and religious conditions. What gives us the strength to succeed in it? What gave Jesus the strength for that? He brought himself by prayer and contemplation into ever and ever closer connection with God’s incomprehensible love. By prayer and contemplation, we also receive the ability to

receive God's light and revitalizing energy into the most hopeless situations in life. Soon we approach - like Jesus on the way to Jerusalem - the Holy week of His Passion and Resurrection. United with God by prayer, spread over the continents and with a reinforced unity among each other in the Order of St. Dominic, let us also become more 'passionate' sisters and brothers in the service of preaching the gospel!

A famous fellow countryman of mine, Karl Marx (- born in Trier at the shore of Mosel river, as well as the father of the church St. Ambrose many more than 1000 years before him -) put his Communist Declaration under the motto: " Workers of all nations: Unite!" My appeal at the beginning of my service as your Promoter General will be: "**Dominican Laity of all nations: Unite!**" –with each other on continental, national and local levels, - together with the brothers and sisters in the other branches of our Order and the Church worldwide; - and above all with our Lord and brother Jesus Christ, who sends us to the common service of preaching. In that combination of unity, we become strong and credible!

### **March 24 - Morning Prayer**

*(Patricia Robinson - ICLDF, England)*

In an Intensive Care Unit a 3 year old child is dying.

There is little hope for her.

Little Rose suffers from a very serious blood disorder, caused by a virus.

There is one possible way of saving her life.

The only hope is to give her a blood transfusion.

Her 6 year- old brother is put on the operating table next to little Rose.

His blood type can save her.

"When will I die"? he asks the doctor.

The brother and sister are linked by tubes.

The blood flows from the young boy who is becoming paler and paler, until he is ashen.

Hours later, the operation is pronounced a success.

Little Rose is restored to full health.

Jesus preached his most important sermon from the cross.

This was his operating table.

The transfusion of his blood maintains our life.

When we sin we introduce a fatal virus into our blood system.

"It was only through His suffering that we were healed" (Isaiah)

Our heavenly Father sent His Son to give us a blood transfusion so that we could live again.

The most important call for a Dominican is not to preach but to become holy.

To do this we need the power of the purifying blood of Christ.

An infilling of His blood to make our souls as white as snow or as wool.

Wool being the whitest tiling that the people in Isaiah's time knew.

Where the blood of Christ flows there is the Holy Spirit.

Everyone purified by the blood of Christ is full of the Holy Spirit.

We give witness to Christ's blood when we lead a life of sacrifice.

When Christ was baptized John the Baptist said:

"I saw the Spirit come down from heaven as a dove and remain on Him." (Marc 1:10)

Christ was filled by the Holy Spirit and then He began his ministry.

When we are baptized we too, are filled with the Holy Spirit.

From Exodus (19:6): "You will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation."

Why priests? What do priests do? What is their function?

They offer sacrifice.

Psalm 51:17: "My sacrifice, a contrite spirit, a holy contrite heart you will not spurn."

Romans 12:1: "Present your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God".

We sacrifice our gifts, our talents, our lives for others in peace, compassion and goodwill.

Then we shall be "as white as snow" and a pleasing sacrifice to God.

Holy Preachers.