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THE FUNDAMENTAL CONSTITUTION OF THE DOMINICAN LAITY

GENERAL DECLARATIONS GOVERNING THE DOMINICAN LAITY THE DIRECTORY OF THE DOMINICAN LAITY IN THE PROVINCE OF THE ASSUMPTION

AUTHORISATION DETAILS

The preparation of this Handbook, previously under consideration by the National Council of the Dominican Laity in Australia, was endorsed by the Provincial Chapter of the Friars in Canberra in January 1993.

The publication of this Handbook was approved by the National Council of the Dominican Laity at its meeting in Adelaide in February 1994.

Note:

In accordance with the requirements of n20c of the Rule of the Lay Fraternities of St. Dominic, the National Council of the Dominican Laity is henceforth referred to as the "Provincial Council" of the Dominican Laity.

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PART I

INFORMATION FROM THE LAITY OFFICE AT ROME

Dear Sisters and Brothers in St. Dominic - and all those who are interested in being informed about the Statutes governing Lay Dominican Fraternities and Chapters!

Several years ago, my predecessor, Fr. Jerry L. Stookey, O.P., asked Fr. Columba Ryan, O.P. to convoke a team of Latinists of the English Province of Dominican friars to prepare an English translation of the Rule of Lay Fraternities of Saint Dominic. Important differences in the translation of the text have been experienced around the world, hence it was necessary to have as literal a translation from the Latin as possible.

The original text in Latin was published in the *Analecta* of the Order, 1987, pp.82-87. Owing to an error, Article 2 of Paragraph 12 of the approved final text of the Rule was omitted. Lay Dominican Provincial Chapters of English-speaking countries, with the approbation of their prior provincials, have the right to produce a modified translation when the language pattern used in their particular country differs from this 'British' English version. It is imperative to adhere strictly to the concept of the original Latin of the Rule, approved by the Holy See on January 15, 1987.

The Rule was drawn up two years before by the International Congress of Lay Dominican Fraternities, Montreal, June, 1985. As Lay Dominican Fraternities/Chapters are integrated to the Order of Preachers via the friars, they pertain not to the Pontifical Council of the Laity as do "associations of the faithful" but to the Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes.

This Rule declares (§ 24) that it has to be observed together with the General Declarations, approved by the Master of the Order and his Council and of the General Chapters, as well as national or provincial Directories adapted to local requirements, approved by the provincial authorities.

Lay Dominican Fraternities/Chapters should not regard the Statutes from a solely juridical aspect but as an aid to inspire the Lay Dominicans' vocation as preachers of God's love and mercy for his creation, in union with the other branches of our Order. To "Release the Fulness of our Preaching - catching Fire from Dominic's Vision" - the motto of the time of jubilee commemorating the 800th anniversary of the foundation of the Order of Preachers - the following texts may be a continuous helpful guideline!

Rome, Feast of the Holy Rosary, October 2007

Fr. David Michael Kammler, OP
Promoter General of Dominican Laity

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THE RULE OF THE DOMINICAN LAITY (BACKGROUND)

The Dominican Laity originated in its present form with the promulgation of the first Rule under Munio de Zamora, Master of the Order, in 1285. The spiritual origin of the Laity was in the penitential movements centred around St Dominic, who gathered around himself groups of the laity for the spiritual and material defence of the Church and for apostolic work. The Laity has existed, under various names, as long as the Dominican Order itself and has always performed specific functions and collaborated closely with the other branches of the Dominican Family.

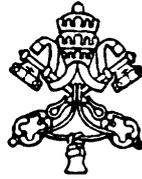
There have been five Rules of the Dominican Laity since the foundation of the Order. The First was that promulgated by Munio de Zamora in 1285, for the "Brothers and Sisters of Penance of St Dominic". The Rule of Munio, slightly amended, received Papal approval in 1405. This Rule survived for centuries, serving the laity and being adopted for other branches of the Dominican Family.

The Second Rule, adapted to the new Code of Canon Law in 1917, was approved in 1932 under Master Louis Theissing, with the title: "Rule of the Secular Third Order of St. Dominic".

After Vatican II, the need was felt for a new Rule or an updating of the 1932 Rule; accordingly, the Third Rule was approved in 1964. However, the General Chapter of River Forest in 1968 proposed a Fourth Rule, which was promulgated by Master Aniceto Fernandez in 1969 and approved on an experimental basis by the Sacred Congregation for Religious in 1972 under the title: "Rule of the Lay Fraternities of St Dominic". With this title, reference to "Third Order" had disappeared, to be confirmed by legislation of the 1974 General Chapter abolishing such terms as First, Second or Third Order.

Finally, after the promulgation of the new Code of Canon Law in 1983 and the "Bologna Document" on the Dominican Family in 1983, the General Chapter of Rome in 1983 commissioned the Master of the Order to hold an International Congress of the Dominican Laity in order to renew and adapt its Rule. The Congress was held in Montreal, Canada, in 1985 and a new Rule was prepared. This, the Fifth Rule, the "Statutes of Fraternities of Lay Dominicans", was approved by the Sacred Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes in January 1987 and promulgated by Master Damian Byrne on 28 January 1987.

The Dominican Laity is governed by these "Statutes of Fraternities of Lay Dominicans", by the General Declarations of the Master of the Order and General Chapters and by Provincial or national Directories, covering questions of local organisation and practice, as provided for in the Rule and the General Declarations. These Directories are prepared by the Laity in the local area and are submitted for approval to the pertinent authority (LCO 149).



CONGREGATION FOR RELIGIOUS AND SECULAR INSTITUTES
DECREE

Prot. #D. 27-1-87

The Master General of the Order of Preachers on March 14, 1986, through the Procurator General, sent this Congregation the text of the Rule of the Lay Fraternities of Saint Dominic in order to obtain a definitive approval of the text.

After mature consideration and paying attention to the favourable vote of the Congress, this Congregation by force of the present decrees approves the text, of which there is an exemplary in the Archives of the Congregation, together with the corrections of the Congress presented in the letter sent with it.

Anything to the contrary notwithstanding.

Given at Rome on January 15, 1987.

Jerome Cardinal Hamer, OP, Prefect

Archbishop Vincent Fagiolo, Secretary

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TO THE LAY FRATERNITIES OF SAINT DOMINIC

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord and Saint Dominic:

Joyfully I give you the text of the Rule of the Lay Fraternities of Saint Dominic, which has very recently (January 15, 1987) been definitively approved by the Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes.

The text of the preceding Rule, promulgated by Father Aniceto Fernandez in 1969, was approved by the Holy See on an experimental basis. The General Chapter held in Rome in 1983 commissioned the Master General of the order to hold an international meeting of the Dominican Laity in order to renew and adapt the Rule of the Dominican Laity. This meeting, held in Montreal, Canada, June 24-29, 1985, produced the text which is now definitively approved.

Let this Rule be in your hearts and in your fraternities as a gospel ferment to nourish holiness and promote the apostolate together with the whole Dominican Family.

Greetings in the Lord.

Given at Rome, January 28, 1987, on the Feast of Saint Thomas Aquinas.

Damian Byrne, OP
Master of the Order

THE RULE OF THE LAY FRATERNITIES OF SAINT DOMINIC

I. THE FUNDAMENTAL CONSTITUTION FOR THE DOMINICAN LAITY

Laity in the Church

1. Among the disciples of Christ, men and women living in the world, have in virtue of Baptism and Confirmation, been made sharers in the prophetic, priestly and royal office of our Lord Jesus Christ.

They are called to this so that Christ's presence may be brought to life in the midst of peoples and that "the divine message of salvation be made known and accepted by all people throughout the world". (*Vatican Council II, Apostolicam actuositatem, Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, 4, par. 3*).

Dominican Laity

2. Some of them, moved by the Holy Spirit to live a life according to the spirit and charism of Saint Dominic, are incorporated into the Order by a special promise according to statutes proper to them.

Dominican Family

3. They are united in communities, and they constitute with other groups of the Order, one Family. (*Book of the Constitutions and Ordinations of the Friars of the Order of Preachers, LCO, 141*)

Special Character of the Dominican Laity

4. They are accordingly marked out both by their own kind of spiritual life and by their service to God and neighbour in the Church. As members of the Order, they share its apostolic mission, by study, prayer and preaching according to the state proper to lay persons.

Apostolic Mission

5. They follow the example of Saint Dominic, Saint Catherine of Siena and our forbears who illumined the life of the Order and the Church, and strengthened by their fraternal communion, bear witness above all to their own faith, listen to the needs of their contemporaries, and serve the truth.

6. They pay careful attention to the principal goals of the church's present-day apostolate, driven in a special way to show real compassion to all who are troubled, to defend liberty and to promote justice and peace.

7. Inspired by the charism of the Order, they are mindful that apostolic activity comes out of an abundance of contemplation.

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II. LIFE OF THE FRATERNITIES

Life of the Fraternities

8. They are, to the best of their ability, to live in true fraternal communion inspired by the beatitudes, and to express this in all circumstances by exercising the works of mercy and by sharing what they have with members of the fraternities, especially the poor and the sick; by offering suffrages for the deceased; so that that all may ever have one heart and one mind in God. (*Acts, 4:32*).

9. Whilst taking part in the apostolate with the brothers and sisters of the Order, members of the fraternities are to share actively in the life of the Church, always prepared to work with other apostolic associations.

10. The following are the chief sources from which the lay members of Saint Dominic draw strength to advance in their proper vocation, which combines at one and the same time the contemplative and the apostolic:

- a. listening to the Word of God and reading the Sacred Scripture, especially the New Testament;
- b. daily participation (as far as possible) in the celebration of the liturgy and participation in the Eucharistic sacrifice;
- c. frequent celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation;
- d. celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours in union with the entire Dominican Family, as well as prayer in private, such as meditation and the Marian Rosary;
- e. conversion of heart according to the spirit and practice of evangelical penance;
- f. assiduous study of revealed truth and constant reflection on contemporary problems under the light of faith;
- g. devotion to the blessed Virgin Mary, according to the tradition of the Order, to our holy father Saint Dominic and to Saint Catherine of Siena;
- h. periodic spiritual retreats.

Formation

11. The purpose of Dominican formation is to provide for true adults in the Faith, so that they may be ready to welcome, celebrate and proclaim the Word of God. It belongs to each province to draw up a program:

- a. whether of progressive formation for beginners;
- b. or of permanent formation for all, even for members living apart from a fraternity.

12. Every Dominican must be prepared to preach the Word of God. It is in this preaching that Christians, baptised and strengthened by the Sacrament of Confirmation, exercise the prophetic office. In today's world, the preaching of the Word of God must extend in a special way to defending the dignity of the human person, as well as life and the family. Promoting

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Christian unity and dialogue with non-Christians and non-believers is also part of the Dominican vocation.¹

13. These are the principal sources to advance Dominican formation:
 - a. the Word of God and theological reflection;
 - b. liturgical prayer;
 - c. the history and tradition of the Order;
 - d. more recent documents of the Church and the Order;
 - e. awareness of the signs of our times.

Profession or Promise

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, ___ ___, promise before you ___ ___, the President of this Fraternity/Chapter, and ___ ___, the Religious Assistant, in place of the Master of the Order of Friars Preachers, that I will live according to the Rule of the Laity of Saint Dominic [for three years] or [for my entire life].

III. ORGANISATION AND GOVERNMENT OF THE FRATERNITIES

15. The Fraternity is the suitable means for the dedication of each person to the nourishment and growth of his or her own vocation. The frequency of meetings differs with fraternities. Each member's fidelity is indicated by his or her assiduity.

16. The admission of candidates, given that the prescriptions of the Directory in regard to the state of persons and the time for admission have been observed, is committed to the lay person responsible, who after having taken a decisive vote of the Council of the Fraternity, proceeds with the Religious Assistant to the reception of the candidate in a rite determined by the Directory.

1 Note: By a mistake this paragraph 12 in its second part is missing from Analecta SOP 1987 pp. 82-87, but substantial part of the only official Latin version approved by the Holy See on January 15, 1987 – Prot.#D.27-1-87

17. After the time of probation determined by the Directory and with a favorable vote of the Council of the Fraternity, the lay person responsible, together with the Religious Assistant, receives the profession, either temporary or perpetual.

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Jurisdiction of the Order and Autonomy of the Fraternities

18. Lay Fraternities are under the jurisdiction of the Order; however, they enjoy that autonomy proper to the laity, by which they may govern themselves.

(In the Whole Order)

19. a. The Master of the Order, as successor of Saint Dominic and head of the entire Dominican Family, presides over all the fraternities in the world. It is his responsibility to preserve the integral spirit of the Order in them, to establish practical norms in accordance with the needs of specific times and places and to promote the spiritual good and apostolic zeal of the members.

b. The Promoter General represents the Master of the Order for all the fraternities, and transmits their desires to the Master or the General Chapter.

(In the Province)

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

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.

c) A Provincial Council of the Laity of Saint Dominic is to be established in the territory of the province. Its members are elected by the fraternities and are regulated according to the norms defined by the Directory. It belongs to this Council to elect a provincial President.

(Governance in Fraternities)

21. a) A local Fraternity is governed by a President with his or her Council, who assume the full responsibility for direction and administration.

b) The Council is elected for a specific time and in the manner established by particular Directories. The President is elected by the councillors from among the members of the Council.

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

(National and International Councils)

22. a) Where there are several Provinces of the Order within the territory of the same nation, a National Council can be instituted, according to the norms established by particular Directories.

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b) An International Council can be formed in a similar way if it seems opportune, after the fraternities of the entire Order have been consulted.

23. Fraternity Councils can send their proposals and petitions to a Provincial Chapter of the Friars Preachers; Provincial and National Councils to a General Chapter. To these Chapters some representative members of the fraternities are to be readily invited for treating matters which concern the laity.

Statutes of the Fraternities

24. The statutes proper to the lay fraternities of St Dominic are:

- a. The Rule of the Fraternities (Fundamental Constitution of the OP Laity, the norms of life, the governance of the fraternities)
- b. General Declarations, whether of the Master of the Order, or of General Chapters.
- c. Particular Directories

To complete the legislative work concerning the Lay Fraternities of St. Dominic, we approve and promulgate the following 'General Declarations of the Rule of the Lay Fraternities of Saint Dominic' by the authority which we hold. Thus the observance of the Rule shall be attained more easily and with greater spiritual fruitfulness.

Given at Rome, on February 16, 1987

Fr. Damian Byrne, O.P.

Master of the Order

Fr. J.Martin, O.P.

Secretary

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1. *Note:* By a mistake this paragraph 12 in its second part is missing from Analecta SOP 1987 pp. 82-87, but it forms a substantial part of the only official Latin version approved by the Holy See on January 15, 1987 - Prot.#D.27-1-87.

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GENERAL DECLARATIONS

General Declarations of the rule of the lay fraternities of St Dominic²

1. The Rule by which the lay fraternities of St Dominic are governed, is the fundamental law for lay fraternities of the whole world; the present General Declarations, promulgated by the Master of the Order, are explanations or interpretations of the aforementioned Rule: national or provincial Directories drawn up by the fraternities themselves *and approved by the Master of the Order*,³ are norms particular to local fraternities.
2. So that lay brethren and sisters may fulfil their obligations “not like slaves under the law but like free persons under grace” we declare that transgressions do not constitute a moral fault.
3. Superiors of fraternities can legitimately dispense from the prescriptions of the Rule or Directory, for a time or habitually, if they judge this opportune.
4. Priors Provincial have the power to convalidate invalid acts of a Fraternity, particularly regarding admissions to profession or a promise.
5. In addition to lay Fraternities for which this Rule is intended, there are priestly Fraternities which are governed by a rule proper to them.
6. Individual Directories should determine among other things:
 - a. conditions for admission to a Fraternity;
 - b. the time for probation and profession or promise;
 - c. the frequency of Sacraments, and the prayers which the lay brethren and sisters should each day raise to God;
 - d. the frequency of fraternity meetings and the form of their celebration, also the frequency of spiritual retreats;
 - e. both the internal constitution of each fraternity and the common constitution of the fraternities of a province or country;
 - f. the procedural manner of election of those officers about whom there is found nothing determined in the Rule;
 - g. the manner and limitation of dispensation;
 - h. suffrages for deceased brothers and sisters and for the whole Order.
7. The Rosary is a traditional devotion in the Order. By it the mind is raised to an intimate contemplation of the mysteries of Christ through the mediation of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Therefore its daily recitation is commended to the lay brethren and sisters of St Dominic.

2. *Taken from Analecta SOP 1987 p. 88*

3. Modified by Ordination of the 1992 General Chapter (Mexico), no. 201: “We ordain that the Directories of the Dominican Laity, national or provincial, should be approved by the corresponding Provincial Chapter(s) of the Province(s) in which these entities are established.” Also modified by Ordination of the 2007 General Chapter (Bogotá), no. 244: “We ordain that the Directories of the Dominican Laity, national or provincial, should be approved by the Provincial with his Council in the Province(s) in which these entities are established.”

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DIRECTORY FOR MEMBERS OF THE DOMINICAN LAITY IN THE PROVINCE OF THE ASSUMPTION

I. INTRODUCTION

1. In keeping with the Statutes of Fraternities of Lay Dominicans ("The Fundamental Constitutions") and the decision of the 1974 General Chapter (Naples, n. 234), the lay members of the Dominican Family in the Province of the Assumption shall be called by the name "Dominican Laity".
2. This Directory shall apply to the Dominican Laity in the Province of the Assumption (cf Fund. Cons. n. 24(c) and General Declarations n.1).

II. FORMATION, ADMISSION, COMMITMENT AND MEMBERSHIP

Formation

3. "The purpose of Dominican formation is to produce people truly adult in the faith and so able to hear, celebrate and proclaim the word of God" (Fundamental Constitutions n. 11)

Formation is the responsibility of all Chapter members. Although this task, in the case of new members, is delegated to the Formation Director, each Chapter member, through example and authentic Dominican living, plays a vital role in the total formation process, a process of moving from membership to discipleship. Therefore, each Chapter should regularly review its agenda of formation, measuring it against our Dominican tradition and the challenges of culture and the times in which we live.

In the process of formation there are two distinct stages, initial formation and on-going or continuing formation.

Initial Formation

4. The process of initial formation is under the care and supervision of the Formation Director assisted by the Religious Promoter/Chaplain. It is to be firmly based on the agenda set out in n. 10 and n. 13 of the Fundamental Constitutions and the Gospel mandates, especially that of Matthew 25: 35-45. Thus step by step the candidate is introduced to the spirit and richness of Christian life in the tradition of the Dominican Order. This initial process is spread over a period of at least twelve months, commencing with a period of candidacy, followed by a more

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intense segment of formation, at the conclusion of which temporary profession is made.

Continuing Formation

5. (a) A vibrant Chapter life is an essential element in developing and maintaining the process of continuing formation (cf Fund. Cons. n. 8). At the heart of Chapter life is the Chapter meeting. It is here that the members come together to support each other in faith and friendship and in living according to the spirit and charism of St Dominic.
- (b) Continuing formation commences when lay Dominicans are incorporated into the Dominican Family by their act of commitment/profession and extends throughout their lives. It is an essential part of Dominican life, stressing the need for continual personal growth and development in understanding the gift of faith and the call to be a lay Dominican.
- (c) The principal sources from which members of the Dominican Laity draw strength and are sustained in continuing formation are clearly stated in the Fundamental Constitutions n. 10 and n. 13.
- (d) Contemporary documents of the Church and the Order; the principal decrees of Vatican II and letters from the Master of the Order are also very relevant to continuing formation.
- (e) Likewise, understanding the signs of the times is part of the continuing formation of a follower of St Dominic (Fund. Cons. n. 13; LCO 1: VII & VIII). The lay Dominican must recognise and respond to changes in the world and the Church. New developments and dangers should be studied and there should be reflection on the role of the laity in the Church, the dignity and equality of all and the constant search for justice and peace.

Admission, Profession and Membership

6. Candidates for admission to the Dominican Laity shall be practising Catholics of at least eighteen years of age. (See also Canon Law, nn. 298-329, esp. n. 305.1, 316.1)
7. Guidelines for admission of new members are as indicated in the Fundamental Constitutions. After an introductory period of formation, during which the candidate develops a basic knowledge of the Order, the Chapter Council may resolve to invite the candidate to be received into the Dominican Laity.

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8. The President of the Chapter together with the Religious Promoter (cf Fund. Cons. n. 16) receive the new member according to the formula set out in Appendix A. The Formation Director of the Chapter shall sponsor the new member at the ceremony.
9. After reception, the new member should continue in formation in accordance with the process outlined in this Directory (cf Fund. Cons. n. 4 and n. 4 of this Directory), under the care and instruction of the Formation Director and the Religious Promoter and participating fully in the life of the Chapter, regularly attending the Chapter meetings held during that time.
10. On completion of the initial formation period and after a request by the member, the Chapter Council may resolve to invite the member to make Temporary Profession. Temporary profession is for three years and may be made either for the whole of this period or for periods of one year renewed annually.
11. During the period of temporary profession, formation of the new member continues in accordance with the norms stated in n. 5 of this Directory.
12. On completion of three years temporary profession, a member may, on request and with the approval of the Chapter Council, proceed to Final Profession. The ceremony of temporary or final profession is set out in Appendix B.
13. The responsibilities of members of the Dominican Laity are:
 - (a) Regular attendance at Chapter meetings, as a sign of fidelity to the Order and commitment to the vocation of a lay Dominican;
 - (b) Observance of the norms for progression in spiritual life specified in the Fundamental Constitutions n. 10;
 - (c) Living in an authentic fraternal communion with other members of the Dominican Laity as defined in the Fundamental Constitutions n. 8 and including prayer for deceased members of the Laity and the Order;
 - (d) Active participation, where possible, in the life of the Church and co-operation with other apostolic groups, as recommended in the Fundamental Constitutions n. 9, through the Chapter or by individual projects;

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- (e) Readiness to preach the Word of God, as stressed in the Fundamental Constitutions n. 12;
 - (f) Participation in an annual retreat or day of recollection arranged by the Chapter and in other spiritual exercises; and
 - (g) Payment of the annual levy, as determined by the Provincial Convention from time to time, through the Chapter to the Provincial Council, this falling due on the first day of July in each year.
- 14.** Rights and Privileges of members of the Dominican Laity include:
- (a) Members may wear the small white scapular or a medal of St Dominic, St Catherine of Siena or other Dominican saints, or other insignia approved by the Provincial Council. Members may also wear a black and white Dominican badge as a public sign of their membership of and commitment to the Order;
 - (b) Deceased members may be clothed in the full habit of the Order for burial;
 - (c) Full membership of the Dominican Order in its spiritual goods, merits and prayers, both in this world and after death; and
 - (d) Plenary Indulgences, under the usual conditions, as approved by the Church for members of the Dominican Laity, on the days of reception, profession, Christmas, Easter, Our Lady of the Rosary, St Dominic, St Catherine of Siena, the Annunciation and the Assumption. (cf *Analecta S.O.P.* Oct-Dec 1967, pp 305-312)
- 15.** In circumstances such as illness or isolation, a member may be dispensed from full participation in Chapter life and become a Private Member. Provisions covering private members are set out in Appendix C. The Chapter shall be responsible for maintaining contact with the private member and ensuring continuation of Dominican formation.

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III. CHAPTER LIFE

16. As stated in n. 5(a) above, the Chapter is at the heart of the Lay Dominican's apostolic and spiritual vocation and is where lay Dominicans come together to support each other in faith and friendship. Chapters should, if possible, meet monthly and at a regular time to be determined by the Chapter.
17. The form of Chapter meetings is to be established by the Chapter but the following norms are recommended:
 - (a) Prayer, preferably liturgical, but other forms may be considered;
 - (b) Business Session, with reports by Chapter officials;
 - (c) A talk and discussion on some aspect of the Christian faith and way of life;
 - (d) Formation, as appropriate to particular needs; and
 - (e) A collection to cover all the expenses of the Chapter, including assistance for those unable to meet the cost of the annual levy.
18. Chapters are to arrange, whether singly or in conjunction with other Chapters, the annual retreat or day of recollection and other spiritual or apostolic exercises. Where possible, Chapter members might give witness by regularly attending a public Mass together.
19.
 - (a) Chapters are responsible for the collection and transmission to the Provincial Treasurer of the annual levy from each member.
 - (b) Each Chapter shall also provide a report to the Provincial Secretary, by the last day of March in each year, of the Chapter's membership and activities, in a format required by the Provincial Council.
20. The Chapter Council shall comprise from four to six members elected by the professed members of the Chapter. The election shall be by secret ballot, with the number of votes to be recorded on a valid ballot paper being equal to the number of positions to be filled and with each vote having equal value. The Council will then elect from its number a President, a Secretary and, if required, a Treasurer. The functions of the Chapter officials shall be:
 - (a) The President, who convenes and presides at meetings of the Chapter and the Council and exercises a guiding role over the

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Council and the Chapter, watching over the unity, progress and growth of the Chapter;

- (b) The Secretary, who keeps the Chapter records, acts as Minute Secretary to the Council, attends to the Chapter's correspondence and acts in other such matters as shall be required by the Council. The functions of the Secretary shall include maintaining a register of those received and professed in the Chapter, including Private Members and the Secretary shall provide the Provincial Secretary with a copy of this register by the last day of March in each year;
- (c) The Treasurer, who collects and cares for the funds of the Chapter.

The functions of the Treasurer may be performed by the Secretary if the Council so decides. Other functions of the Chapter officials shall be as determined by the Council.

The Religious Promoter (brother or sister) is appointed in accordance with the Fundamental Constitutions n. 21(c) and is an ex-officio member of the Chapter Council.

- 21. The term of office of the Chapter Council and its officials is three years. No elected member may serve more than two consecutive terms. Vacancies on the Council during the three year term are to be filled by co-option.

A Chapter may resolve that the term of office of its Council and officials shall be for a period shorter than one year. In such circumstances, no elected member of the Chapter Council may serve for a continuous period exceeding six years. For the purposes of this Directory (cf n.36), such a period of service of six years shall be deemed to represent two consecutive terms.

- 22. After the election of its officials, the Chapter Council shall appoint a Formation Director. If the Formation Director is not already a member of the Council, he or she becomes an ex-officio member of the Council. The Formation Director should be a finally professed member of the Dominican Laity and dedicated to the spirit and mission of the Dominican Order.

The new Council should review the period of appointment of the Religious Promoter with that person and nominate a replacement to the appropriate Religious Superior, when any change is to be made, or request that the present Promoter be confirmed. (*Convention 2001*).

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23. When the membership of a Chapter exceeds twenty, consideration should be given to the establishment of a new Chapter. In considering the distribution of members between the old and new Chapters, the recommendations of the 1986 General Chapter (Avila n. 85(a)) should be used as a guide. Close links should be maintained between the old and new Chapters.
24. As stated in the Bologna Document (n. 3.1) and by the General Chapter of Avila (n. 85. b), groups of lay people who agree to base themselves on the Fundamental Constitutions belong to the Dominican Family and should be encouraged in every possible way. Such groups which satisfy the requirements for admission to the Dominican Laity may apply for establishment as a Chapter of the Dominican Laity. A Religious Promoter should be appointed to care for the group and, where possible, a finally professed member of the Dominican Laity should assist as Formation Director. When a sufficient number of candidates is ready for reception into the Dominican Laity, the group may make formal application to the Prior Provincial through the Provincial Promoter for establishment as a Chapter.
25. Where a Chapter has ceased to function, the Provincial Council shall advise the Prior Provincial, through the Provincial Promoter, of this fact. The Provincial Council is then responsible for contacting individual members of the Chapter to ascertain the direction that they wish to take. All records and outstanding funds of the Chapter are to be provided to the Provincial Council.
26. The Provincial Promoter, who is an ex-officio member of the Provincial Council, is to exercise vigilant care over the Chapters of the Province on behalf of the Prior Provincial. The Provincial Promoter should visit each Chapter in the Province at least once during his term of office. Requests to the Prior Provincial for the establishment or disbanding of Chapters must be made through the Provincial Promoter and must also comply with the relevant canonical provisions. (Canons 298.1, 305.1 & 2, 312.2)

IV. ORGANISATION AND GOVERNMENT OF THE LAITY IN THE PROVINCE

27. Chapters of the Dominican Laity in the Province of the Assumption are affiliated with the Provincial Council of the Dominican Laity of the Province. All Chapters and their members have the same rights and obligations in relation to the Provincial Council and Provincial Conventions, including the right of professed members to nominate and vote for the Provincial Council and to attend Provincial Conventions.

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28. The Provincial Council shall comprise four members elected by and from the professed members of the Dominican Laity in the Province plus ex-officio members (Fund. Cons. n. 20(b) and n. 29 of this Directory). The election shall be conducted by a Returning Officer who is neither a member of the Provincial Council nor a candidate in the election and shall be in accordance with procedures determined by the Provincial Council and generally consistent with those in n. 20 above. The term of office of Provincial Councillors is three years, commencing 14 days from the date of the Letter of Notification of the election results from the Returning Officer to the Provincial Promoter, and the Prior Provincial, and all Chapters. *(last 3 lines Convention 2001).*

The Provincial Council shall elect its officials from its lay members at its first meeting following the commencement of its term of office. Vacancies on the Provincial Council are to be filled by co-option. Those elected to the Provincial Council shall not serve for more than two consecutive terms. *(1st sentence – Convention 2001).*

29. The Religious Promoters (cf Fund. Cons. 21(c)) shall elect, within three months of the calling of nominations for the election of Lay members to the Provincial Council, one of their number to represent them as an ex-officio member of the Provincial Council. The Provincial Promoter should conduct this election by postal vote or any other appropriate means, and seek permission from the appropriate Religious Superior before publicising the result of the election *(Convention 2001).*

The Religious Promoter so elected must belong to a different branch of the Dominican Family from the Provincial Promoter.

30. The Provincial Council shall meet at least once each year. It should exercise effective leadership of the Laity and its functions shall also include:
- (a) Acting as a co-ordinating body for activities and information;
 - (b) Overseeing preparations for the next Provincial Convention;
 - (c) Preparing submissions from the Chapters and the Laity concerning their own affairs to be made to the Prior Provincial and General and Provincial Chapters of the Friars;
 - (d) Submitting proposals from itself and from Provincial Conventions, concerning variations to this Directory, to the Prior Provincial for approval;

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- (e) Approving and renewing the formation process for new members, continuing formation and that of private members;
- (f) Transmitting to Chapters information from the Church and the Government of the Order, documents from the Holy See and Bishops, and the Acts of General and Provincial Chapters of the Order;
- (g) Fostering the formation of new Chapters and providing assistance for Chapters experiencing difficulties in continuing to function;
- (h) Involving the Laity in the priorities and mission of the Order, as set out by the General Chapters, in conjunction with other branches of the Dominican Family.

31. The office bearers of the Provincial Council shall be:

- (a) The Provincial President, who convenes and presides at meetings of the Provincial Council and exercises a guiding role over the Council and the Laity in the Province;
- (b) The Provincial Secretary, who keeps provincial records, acts as Minute Secretary to the Provincial Council, attends to provincial correspondence and acts in other such matters as shall be required by the Provincial Council;
- (c) The Provincial Treasurer, who collects and cares for the funds of the Provincial Council.

The Provincial Treasurer shall arrange for the account books of the Provincial Council to be audited by a qualified Auditor in time for the Auditor's report to be presented at the Provincial Convention.

32. Regional Conferences may be held by groups of Chapters in a particular area as often as once each year. These conferences have no legislative function but are to promote the unity and enthusiasm of the Chapters by acting as a forum for discussion and as a means of enhancing fellowship among the Laity in the region.

The Provincial Council may provide assistance in the arrangement of Regional Conferences and in the preparation of agenda items. The organisers of a Regional Conference should provide the Provincial Council with sufficient notice of the Conference to ensure that assistance can be organised. A record of the Regional Conference should be forwarded to the Provincial Secretary.

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33. Provincial Conventions should be arranged by the Provincial Council at least once during its term of office. Where possible, this shall be held in conjunction with other branches of the Dominican Family when a significant event is being celebrated or a program of interest to all members of the Dominican Family is being conducted. (*Convention 2001*).
34. All the members of the Laity in the Province are encouraged to attend and participate in the Provincial Convention. Voting is restricted to professed members of the Laity, including those temporarily professed. A business session at a Provincial Convention also has the same powers as the Provincial Council under n. 30(c) and (e) above, and is the only body with the power to determine the rate of the annual levy payable by members.

V. GENERAL

35. Ex-officio membership of a Chapter Council or the Provincial Council confers full voting rights.
36. Nothing in this Directory prevents a member who has previously served two consecutive terms on a Chapter Council or the Provincial Council from serving again, provided that there has been an interval of at least three years since the previous term of office.
37. All professed members (including those temporarily professed) may vote in Chapter Council and the Provincial Council elections. Ballot papers are to be destroyed on the completion of all elections. In the event of a tie in an election, up to two further ballots may be conducted for the remaining vacancy or vacancies. If the election remains tied after the third ballot, the successful candidate is to be selected by lot. Where a single vacancy is to be filled, the successful candidate must achieve an absolute majority of the votes cast, except on the third ballot, where the person with the highest number of votes is elected. A tie in the election for a new Provincial Council shall be resolved by lot.
38. Prayers for deceased members should follow the formula set out in Appendix D.
39. Dispensation has always been a fundamental element in Dominican life and is not regarded as an exception to normal practice. Dispensations may be given for sound reason. The power of dispensation in Chapter matters is vested in the Chapter President, with or without the Chapter Council. The power of dispensation in matters affecting more than one Chapter is vested in the Provincial

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President, with or without the Provincial Council. The power of dispensation from the provisions of n. 21 and n. 28 above in relation to the limits on the number of consecutive terms of office is reserved to the Prior Provincial.

40. Variations to this Directory

- (a) Proposals for variations to this Directory may be proposed by the majority vote of those present and entitled to vote at a Provincial Convention. The Provincial Secretary shall then forward the proposed variations to the Prior Provincial for approval.

Proposals for variations to this Directory which are to be considered by a Provincial Convention are to be circulated to all Chapters no later than two months before the commencement of the Provincial Convention. In order that such proposals may be circulated in the required time, they should be provided to the Provincial Secretary no later than three months before the commencement of the Provincial Convention.

- (b) Variations to this Directory which may be required due to changes to the Fundamental Constitutions or by Declarations by the Master of the Order or of General Chapters shall be drafted by the Provincial Council and submitted by the Provincial Secretary to the Prior Provincial for approval (cf n. 30(f) above).
- (c) The Provincial Council may also submit proposals for variations to this Directory to the Laity in the Province for endorsement. Proposals shall be submitted through Chapters and the Chapters are then responsible for obtaining the opinion of their Professed members, including Private Members. Chapter Secretaries shall advise the Provincial Secretary of the numbers voting for and against the proposal, within three months of the date of the proposal from the Provincial Council. Failure to respond by a Chapter to a proposal shall be taken as unanimous support by the members of the Chapter for the proposal. Any proposal that obtains the support of a majority of members of the Laity and of a majority of Chapters may then be submitted by the Provincial Secretary to the Prior Provincial for approval.

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**APPENDICIES TO THE
PROVINCIAL DIRECTORY
FOR THE DOMINICAN LAITY**

- A. CEREMONY OF ADMISSION**
- B. CEREMONY OF
COMMITMENT/PROFESSION**
- C. SPECIAL DIRECTORY FOR
PRIVATE MEMBERS**
- D. PRAYERS FOR DECEASED
MEMBERS**
- E. LAY PROVINCIAL COUNCIL:
POSITION DESCRIPTIONS**

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APPENDIX A

CEREMONY OF ADMISSION

Admission

1. The candidate comes forward accompanied by the Chapter President.
2. The Religious Promoter greets the candidate and asks (in these or similar words) if he/she wishes to become a Lay Dominican. The candidate replies:

I do.

3. The Religious Promoter says:

Lord, our God,

Listen to the prayers of our brother/sister who wishes to become a member of our family. Strengthen him/her in his/her resolve and assist him/her to be faithful to the vocation to which you have called us. Amen.

4. The scapular, medal or cross is blessed as follows:

O Christ our Lord and only Saviour bless this scapular/medal/ cross and also our brother/sister who is to wear it. So dwell within us that we may go forth with the light of hope in our eyes, and the fire of inspiration on our lips, your word on our tongue and your love in our hearts. You who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

5. The following prayer is then said:

Receive this scapular/medal/cross as a sign of your entry into the Dominican laity. May it also be a pledge of the protection which Our Lady has promised to the family of Dominic. May she guide you to follow faithfully in his footsteps. Amen.

*The Dominican Laity Handbook (1994)
P28*

NB : This ceremony will be replaced by that contained in the Rite of Admission and Profession for Fraternities of the Order of Preachers as soon as the translation of the new Rite is approved. See :http://www.australia.op.org/texts/prof_frat_03.doc for a draft translation.

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APPENDIX B

CEREMONY OF COMMITMENT (PROFESSION)

1. The Chapter President with the Religious Promoter greets the brother/sister about to make the promise and asks if he/she is conscious of and willing to undertake the obligation of the promise about to be made.

2. The Religious Promoter says the following prayer:

Accept Lord we beg you the offering of our brother/sister. May he/she offer himself/herself to you continuously and call down upon himself/herself day by day an ever greater outpouring of your Spirit. Through Christ our Lord Amen.

3. When making the promise one kneels and, holding a lighted candle, repeats the following:

In honour of Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit and of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and of Saint Dominic, I, N/N, in the presence of you, N/N, President of this Chapter, and of you, N/N, Religious Promoter, representing the Master of the Order of Preachers, promise to live according to the Rule of the Laity of Saint Dominic (for three years)/(for my whole life).

[cf Fundamental Constitutions n. 14]

4. The Religious Promoter says:

- Lord, look kindly on N/N who has promised to live according to the Rule of the Lay Dominicans. Protect and strengthen him/her so that he/she may persevere faithfully in what he/she has promised. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

*The Dominican Laity Handbook (1994)
P29*

NB : *This ceremony will be replaced by that contained in the Rite of Admission and Profession for Fraternities of the Order of Preachers as soon as the translation of the new Rite is approved. See :http://www.australia.op.org/texts/prof_frat_03.doc for a draft translation.*

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APPENDIX C

SPECIAL DIRECTORY FOR PRIVATE MEMBERS

1. Notwithstanding the centrality of the Chapter in the life of the Dominican Laity, conditions of age, health and distance can make it impossible for some to continue attending Chapter meetings and functions. In circumstances such as these, a member of the Dominican Laity can choose to become a "Private Member".
2. No matter what circumstances prevent Private Members from participating in Chapter activities, these members, especially those impeded by illness or advanced years, are truly members of the Dominican Laity, treasured for their contribution of prayer and the continuing witness of their lives.
3. Thus it is an important responsibility of each Chapter not only to maintain an accurate and current record of Private Members but also to establish regular contact with them through newsletters and active visitation.
4. Provision can be made for those who wish to join the Dominican Laity but who find it impossible to attend meetings of Chapters for whatever reason, including distance or illness. A special process of formation by post is to be initiated by the Provincial Promoter, who will also arrange for the prospective member to be in contact with a suitable Chapter.

The Provincial Promoter is commissioned to set up a Special Chapter for Private Members. The Chapter, so formed, will elect their own Council and only be required to pay the reduced levy. Any special provisions for the good running of this Chapter should be formulated and, when approved, appear as an appendix to the Directory. (*Convention 2001*).

The fourth member of the Provincial Council shall assist the Provincial Promoter in the founding of this Special Chapter and be responsible for maintaining contact details for all Private Members in the Province, whether or not they are members of this Chapter. (*Convention 2001*)

5. In accordance with the vision of both the Bologna Document (n. 3.1) and the Chapter of Avila (n. 85(a)&(b)), provision can be made for isolated and Private members who wish to form a special Chapter or group for their mutual support and to maintain links with the Dominican Laity in the Province. Such a venture should be under the care of the Provincial Promoter and should fulfil all the requirements

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of a regular Chapter. The process of formation can be carried out by post and by other means of modern communication. There is no substitute for personal visitation of these members.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' PRAYER

Dear Lord, as we pray together today, let us feel round us and in us the depth of your love and know that we are not alone. Bless our friendships with harmony and peace and help us to think of those less fortunate than ourselves. Humbly, we ask your forgiveness, ever remembering the way you taught us and showed us how to forgive each other. Let us praise you in all that is beautiful and true, and learn to tolerate what is ugly and unfriendly. Give us your strength in hardship, and in our weakness let us find understanding and sympathy for others. Let us see in your life on Earth a gentle, ever-present light, guiding us, and in your death on the Cross, the supreme act of Love, opening the way for us to Eternal Life. Let us thank you for life itself, and trust that the loving hand that made us will receive us when we die. Till the last, dear Lord, as Dominicans, let us love and search for your Truth.

Amen.

The Dominican Laity Handbook (1994)
P30-1

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APPENDIX D

PRAYERS FOR DECEASED MEMBERS

Prayer for the deceased is an ancient and strong tradition in our Order, expressed through daily, weekly and seasonal prayers. For daily prayer, we have traditionally used Psalm 129, the "De Profundis":

Antiphon: If you, O Lord, should mark our guilt,
Lord, who would survive?

Out of the depths I cry to you O Lord,
Lord, hear my voice!
O let your ears be attentive
to the voice of my pleading.

If you, O Lord, should mark our guilt,
Lord, who would survive?
But with you is found forgiveness:
for this we revere you.

My soul is waiting for the Lord,
I count on his word.
My soul is longing for the Lord
more than watchman for daybreak.
Let the watchman count on daybreak
and Israel on the Lord.

Because with the Lord there is mercy
and fullness of redemption,
Israel indeed he will redeem
from all its iniquity.

It is recommended that members say weekly the Office for the Dead in substitution for a particular Morning or Evening Prayer. This Office can be found at Page 1087 in the current edition of "Morning and Evening Prayer" or Page 458* in Volume I of the three volume Divine Office (or the version of Volume I published as "Daily Prayer"). The Office for the Dead can also be said on the three special anniversaries set aside in the Dominican Calendar. It is also recommended that Chapters arrange for Masses to be offered on these special anniversaries and that Chapter members be encouraged to attend.

TRADITIONAL PRAYERS TO SAINT DOMINIC

O LUMEN ECCLESIAE

Light of the Church, Teacher of truth, Rose of patience, Ivory of chastity, You freely poured forth the waters of wisdom. Preacher of Grace, Unite us with the blessed.

O SPEM MIRAM

O wonderful hope which you gave to those who wept for you at the hour of your death, promising after your departure to be helpful to your children.

Fulfil, father, what you have said and help us by your prayers.

You who shone by so many miracles worked on the bodies of the sick, bring us the help of Christ to heal our sick souls.

Fulfil, father, what you have said and help us by your prayers.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit.

Fulfil, father, what you have said and help us by your prayers.

Blessed Father Dominic, pray for us.

That we may be made worthy
of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray. O God, who did enlighten your Church with the merits and teaching of blessed Dominic, your confessor and our father; grant at his intercession that we may not be wanting in temporal help, and may always increase in spiritual growth.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A PRAYER OF SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA

O eternal Trinity, our supreme love and true light, enlighten us. You, who are Wisdom itself, grant us wisdom. You who are all-powerful, give us strength. Dispel our darkness, we beseech you, that we may know you perfectly for you are truth itself. Teach us how to follow you in simplicity and sincerity of heart.

The Dominican Laity Handbook (1994)
P74

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CHAPTER PRAYERS

Prayers begin with Morning or Evening Prayer, as appropriate.

Then the prayers continue as follows:

- C. Come, let us worship the Lord.
- A. And praise his holy name.
- C. The Lord be with you.
- R. And also with you.
- C. I commend to your prayers the Church and the Pope, the Bishop of this Diocese, the Master and our whole Order, and those in special need.
- Almighty God, grant to your servant .. NN .., our Pope, to all communities committed to his care and to the Bishop of this diocese, the protection and guidance of your Holy Spirit. Lord hear us ...
- R. Lord graciously hear us.
- Watch over and protect .. NN .. our Master and all our brothers and sisters in the Order, that they may continue to seek you with all their heart and obtain the fulfilment of their rightful desires. Lord hear us ...
- R. Lord graciously hear us.
- Other intentions
 - Let us pray for all the faithful departed and in a special way for all the deceased members of the Dominican Family and more in particular for those who have been recently called to the Lord:

O God the creator and redeemer of all the faithful, grant our deceased brothers and sisters and our benefactors forgiveness of all their sins; may the pardon they have always desired be accorded to them at our intercession on their behalf. Lord hear us ...
- R. Lord graciously hear us.
Psalm 129 (De Profundis) - as set out in Provincial Directory, Appendix D

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C. Our father St Dominic,

R. Pray for us.

C. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

R. Amen.

C. Let us pray:

Almighty and ever living God, give us your help from your holy place, and graciously hear the prayers of your people asking for forgiveness of their sins in the humility of their hearts, and waiting for your blessing and your grace. Kindly extend over them your right hand, and pour forth on them the plenitude of your divine benediction, by which, enriched with all blessings, they may obtain happiness and eternal life. Through Christ our Lord.

A. Amen.

C. May Almighty God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit bless you.

A. Amen.

The Dominican Laity Handbook (1994)
p75

APPENDIX E

LAY PROVINCIAL COUNCIL POSITION DESCRIPTIONS

PREAMBLE

The following Position Descriptions for the members of the Lay Dominican Provincial Council are based on the corresponding references to the Rule and Directory currently in force in the Province. The distribution of the main duties of the Provincial Council have been made to ensure that all the responsibilities set down in our legislation are assumed by elected and 'ex officio' members alike so that, as a team, they may carry out more effectively the role that the Lay Dominican Provincial Council plays in the governance and life of the Lay Dominican Chapters of the Province of the Assumption.

The Directory lays down that the Provincial Council shall meet at least once each year. It should exercise effective leadership of the Laity and its functions shall also include:

- a) Acting as a co-ordinating body for activities and information
- b) Overseeing preparations for the next Provincial Convention
- c) Preparing submissions from the Chapters and the Laity concerning their own affairs to be made to the Prior Provincial and General and Provincial Chapters of the Friars
- d) Submitting proposals from itself and from Provincial Conventions, concerning variations to this Directory, to the Prior Provincial for approval
- e) Approving and renewing the formation process for new members, continuing formation and that of private members
- f) Transmitting to Chapters information from the Church and the Government of the Order, documents from the Holy See and Bishops, and the Acts of General and Provincial Chapters of the Order
- g) Fostering the formation of new Chapters and providing assistance for Chapters experiencing difficulties in continuing to function
- h) Involving the Laity in the priorities and mission of the Order, as set out by the General Chapters, in conjunction with other branches of the Dominican family

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'Ex Officio' Members

There are two 'ex officio' members of the Lay Dominican Provincial Council, namely the Provincial Promoter of the Dominican Laity and the Representative of the Religious Promoters of the Dominican Laity

Elected Members

The Lay Dominican Provincial Council consists of 4 elected members - President, Secretary, Treasurer and an additional Councillor

The term of appointment of elected members is for 3 years from the close of the Provincial Convention at which their election is announced. These appointees shall not serve more than two consecutive terms.

The Directory lays down that these 4 members are elected as Provincial Councillors and the Provincial Council shall elect its officials from its lay members prior to the close of the Provincial Convention. Vacancies on the Provincial Council are to be filled by co-option

Members of the Council should have excellent communication and interpersonal relationship skills and the ability to work as a team member.

RELIGIOUS PROMOTER'S REPRESENTATIVE

The representative of the Religious Promoters is elected by the Religious Promoters duly appointed by the Prior Provincial, on the advice of the Provincial Promoter, after consultation with the members of the respective Chapter to which he/she is to be appointed.

The Directory requires that such a person must be chosen from a different branch of the Dominican Family from the Provincial Promoter. Traditionally this post has been held by a Sister from one of the Dominican Congregations that reside within the confines of the Province of the Assumption.

The Religious Promoter's Representative is an ex-officio member of the Provincial Council with full voting rights. He/she assists the local Religious Promoters in their work of helping Chapter members in doctrinal matters and in the spiritual life.

In particular he/she shall -

- Present to the Provincial Council suggestions for renewing the formation process for new members, continuing formation and that of

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private members; and keeping local Religious Promoters up-to-date with this process by seeing that they have suitable formation material at their disposal.

- Transmit to local Religious Promoters information from the Church and the Government of the Order, documents from the Holy See and Bishops, and the Acts of the General and Provincial Chapters of the Order, that pertain to the formation and doctrinal and spiritual instruction of members of the Chapters.
- In the absence of the Promoter, undertake to perform all the duties that do not require priestly ordination.
- In concert with the Promoter, help to promote the welfare of Laity in the Province.
- In concert with the Promoter, shall care for the spiritual and apostolic life of Laity in the Province.

PROVINCIAL PROMOTER

The Provincial Promoter 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 consulted [Rule 20(b)].

The Provincial Promoter, who is an ex-officio member of the Provincial Council, is to exercise vigilant care over the Chapters of the Province on behalf of the Prior Provincial.

The Provincial Promoter fulfils this duty of care by carrying out the various duties laid down for him in The Rule of the Lay Fraternities of St. Dominic [Rule G.D.1] and in the Provincial Directory for Lay Dominicans [Directory n.26].

In particular he/she shall -

- Visit each Chapter in the Province at least once during his/her term of office. In the course of such visits he/she should review the process of formation in each Chapter and the provision that is made for the registration of members, with the appropriate dates for each stage of formation and the preservation of these registers. He/she should also see that a Register of Deceased Members is maintained and that the required Suffrages are fulfilled.

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- Collaborate with the laity in the preparation of the Provincial Constitutions, [cf. Mexico City 1992, n.201].
- Prepare the requests for the establishment or disbanding of Chapters and forward them to the Prior Provincial after ensuring that they comply with the relevant canonical provisions [Canons 298.1, 305.1 & 2, 312.2].

The Provincial Promoter is charged with the particular care of isolated Private Members. He/she fulfils this special duty of care by -

- Initiating a special process of formation by post and by other means of modern communication and arranging for the prospective member to be in contact with a suitable Chapter.
- Acquainting those who request Private status of their obligation to maintain the observance of the Rule and Constitutions of the Lay Fraternities, especially with regard to Formation and continuous contact with the Chapter to which they are assigned by the Provincial Promoter.
- Arranging for the establishment of a special Chapter for isolated and Private members who wish to form such a group for their mutual support and to see that such groupings maintain links with the Dominican Laity in the Province and fulfil all the requirements of a regular Chapter.
- Constantly reminding members of Regular Chapters of their obligation to keep in contact with isolated and Private members who are linked to their Chapter and that there is no substitute for personal visitation of these members.
- As far as possible, visiting Private Members when in their residential area.

PROVINCIAL PRESIDENT

The Provincial President is elected from the lay members of the Provincial Council at a meeting prior to the close of the Provincial Convention.

He/she exercises a guiding role over the Lay Dominicans in the Province, watching over the unity, progress and growth by -

- Attending to any problems that are referred to the Council by a particular Chapter or may be apparent from the Annual Chapter report

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from a particular Chapter, particularly with regard to non-observance of the Rule and Constitution.

- Involving the Laity in the priorities and mission of the Order, as set out by the General Chapters, in conjunction with other branches of the Dominican Family.
- Fostering the formation of new Chapters and providing assistance for Chapters experiencing difficulties in continuing to function.
- Exercising with due diligence and compassion the power of dispensation entrusted to the Provincial President, taking care to document such instances for reference by subsequent Provincial Councils.

He/she is supported in this work by the other members of the Provincial Council and to this end he/she also exercises a guiding role over the Provincial Council. He/she does this by -

- Convening and presiding at the meetings of the Provincial Council.
- Consulting with the Provincial Secretary in the drawing up of the Agenda for meetings.
- Ensuring that the tasks assigned to the Provincial Council [Directory n.30] are distributed to the appropriate members of the Provincial Council so that the activities of the local Chapters are co-ordinated efficiently and all necessary information is supplied to members at the appropriate time.
- Overseeing preparations for the next Provincial Convention.

PROVINCIAL SECRETARY

The Provincial Secretary should have word processing skills and an excellent command of the English language.

The Provincial Secretary, who keeps up-to-date the Lay Dominican Provincial Records, acts as Minute Secretary to the Lay Provincial Council, attends to the Provincial Council's correspondence and acts in other such matters as shall be required by the Provincial Council.

The functions of the Secretary shall include -

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- Maintaining a register of those received and professed in the Province, including Private Members from the copies of local registers provided by Chapter Secretaries each year.
- Distributing and collating annual Chapter Reports and maintaining a comparative register of these reports.
- Liaising with Chapters, keeping them informed of relevant business of Lay Provincial Council meetings.
- Organising election of new Provincial Council and liaising with Returning Officer.
- Preparing documents for the Convention, including initial announcements and calls for papers and workshops.
- Preparing proposals for variations to the Lay Dominican Directory to be submitted to a Convention or outside Convention time to be submitted to Chapters for their endorsement.
- Assisting in the correct drafting of variations to the Directory which may be required due to changes to the Fundamental Constitutions or by Declarations by the Master of the Order or of General Chapters, or as a result of the endorsement of proposals as noted above.
- Submitting such variations to the Prior Provincial for approval.
- Maintaining a record of Regional Conferences and Provincial Conventions for the guidance of those hosting such events in the future.
- Updating Formator's Resource Manual.

PROVINCIAL TREASURER

The Provincial Treasurer is charged with the collection of the annual levy and cares for the funds of the Provincial Council. The diligent performance of this office requires that the Provincial Treasurer -

- Should be a person qualified to deal expertly with collecting, banking, recording and disbursing monies belonging to the Provincial Council
- Keep the financial statements of the Provincial Council up-to-date and provide detailed statements to be sent out with the Agenda for Provincial Council meetings.
- Arranges for books to be audited by a qualified auditor, in time for the Provincial Convention.

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- Be responsible for the timely payment of Chapter levies by advising Chapters of the due date each year and sending reminder notices where necessary.
- Assist the Host Chapter in the drawing up of a budget for the next Convention and being available to give advice on Convention finances where this is within the Treasurer's competence.
- Purchase and sell Holy Goods to Chapters, keep Chapters informed of stocks available and organise Holy Goods Stall at the Provincial Convention.

PROVINCIAL COUNCILLOR

The fourth member of the Provincial Council is charged with the responsibility of keeping before the Lay Dominicans of the Province issues that will provide them with areas of apostolic activity and concern, especially in the area of the four priorities of the Order. The conscientious carrying out of these duties require that on behalf of the Provincial Council this Councillor shall -

- keep the Laity informed of all relevant issues and events both international and national by articles in DLN or literature distribution to Chapters.
- represents Council at Social Justice meetings and other apostolate-oriented meetings that may be of value to the Dominican Laity.
- assist the Provincial Promoter in the founding of the Special Chapter for all Private Members;
- be responsible for maintaining contact details for all Private Members in the Province, whether or not they are members of this Chapter.
- carry out other duties as delegated by the Provincial Council from time to time.

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DOMINICAN DOCUMENTATION

CONSTITUTIONS OF THE FRIARS PREACHERS THE BOLOGNA DOCUMENT ACTS OF GENERAL CHAPTERS ACTS OF PROVINCIAL CHAPTERS

Since the General Chapter of River Forest (Chicago USA 1968) many valuable documents reflecting on Dominican life and spirituality have been published. Unfortunately as a rule not many of these documents are readily accessible to the Dominican Laity. The following section of this Handbook aims to overcome this deficiency by including excerpts from the most important of these documents, especially those of General Chapters. Although the selection is in no way exhaustive it is recommended that these extracts be used as a basis for chapter discussions and formation.

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The Acts of General and Provincial Chapters from 1994 to 2000 have been added as well as excerpts from Dominican Laity Directories & By-laws from other Provinces.

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FUNDAMENTAL CONSTITUTION OF THE ORDER OF FRIARS PREACHERS

1. I. The purpose of the Order was expressed by Pope Honorius III writing to St. Dominic and his brothers in these words: "He who ever makes His Church fruitful with new offspring, wanting to make these modern times measure up to former times, and to propagate the Catholic faith, inspired you with a holy desire by which, having embraced poverty and made profession of regular life, you have given yourselves to the proclamation of the Word of God, preaching the name of our Lord Jesus Christ throughout the world."
- II. For the Order of Friars Preachers founded by St. Dominic is known from the beginning to have been instituted especially for preaching and the salvation of souls." Our brethren, therefore, according to the command of the founder "must conduct themselves honourably and religiously as men who want to obtain their salvation and the salvation of others, following in the footsteps of the Saviour as evangelical men speaking among themselves or their neighbours either with God or about God."
- III. In order that we may be perfected in the love of God and neighbour through this following of Christ, we are incorporated into our Order by profession and consecrated totally to God, and in particular we are dedicated in a new way to the universal Church, "being appointed entirely for the complete evangelization of the Word of God. "
- IV. We also undertake as sharers of the apostolic mission the life of the Apostles in the form conceived by St. Dominic, living with one mind the common life, faithful in the profession of the evangelical counsels, fervent in the common celebration of the liturgy, especially of the Eucharist and the divine office as well as other prayer, assiduous in study, and persevering in regular observance. All these practices contribute not only to the glory of God and our sanctification, but serve directly the salvation of mankind, since they prepare harmoniously for preaching, furnish its incentive, form its character, and in turn are influenced by it. These elements are closely interconnected and carefully balanced, mutually enriching one another, so that in their synthesis the proper life of the Order is established: a life in the fullest sense apostolic, in which preaching and teaching must proceed from an abundance of contemplation.
- V. Made co-operators of the episcopal order by priestly ordination, we have as our special function the prophetic office by which the

Section Four: Documentation - Constitutions of the Friars

Gospel of Jesus Christ is proclaimed everywhere both by word and example, with due consideration for the conditions of persons, times, and places so that faith is awakened or penetrates more deeply all life in the building up of the body of Christ, which is perfected by the sacraments of faith .

- VI. The structure of the Order as a religious society arises from its mission and fraternal communion. Since the ministry of the word and of the sacraments of faith is a priestly office, ours is a clerical Order, whose mission the co-operator brothers, exercising in a special way the common priesthood, also share in many ways. Moreover, the total commission of the Preachers to the proclamation of the Gospel by word and work is revealed in the fact that by solemn profession they are entirely and perpetually united with the life and mission of Christ.

Since our Order in union with the entire Church has been sent to all nations, it has a universal character. In order that its mission may be fulfilled more suitably, it enjoys exemption, and is strengthened by a sound unity in its head, the Master of the Order, to whom all the brethren are bound immediately by profession since study and evangelization require mobility of everyone.

From that same mission of the Order the personal responsibility and gifts of the brethren are affirmed and promoted in a special way. On the completion of his formation every brother is regarded as a mature adult, since he can instruct others and undertake various works in the Order. For this reason the Order maintains that its own laws do not bind under sin, so that the brethren may wisely embrace them "not like slaves under the law, but like freemen established under grace."

Finally, by reason of the purpose of the Order, a superior has the faculty of dispensation "when it seems to him to be expedient, especially in those matters which seem to impede study, preaching, or the good of souls."

- VII. The communion and universality of our religious life shape its government as well. Its government is noted for an organic and balanced participation of all its members for pursuing the special end of the Order. For the Order is not restricted to a conventual fraternity even though this is its fundamental unit, but extends to the communion of convents which constitutes a province, and to the communion of provinces which constitutes it as a whole. For this reason its authority which is universal in its head, namely a general chapter and the Master of the Order, is shared

Section Four: Documentation - The Bologna Document.

proportionately and with corresponding autonomy by the provinces and convents. Consequently our government is communitarian in a special way, for superiors ordinarily take office through election by the brethren and confirmation by a higher superior. Furthermore, through chapter and council, communities in many ways have a role in exercising their own government and in settling important matters.

This communitarian form of government is particularly suitable for the Order's development and frequent renewal. Superiors and the brethren through their delegates with equal right and freedom in general chapters of provincials and of diffinitors, provide in common so that the Order's mission may be advanced and the Order itself be suitably renewed. This continual revision of the Order is necessary, not only on account of a spirit of perennial Christian conversion, but also on account of the special vocation of the Order which impels it to accommodate its presence in the world for each generation.

VIII. The fundamental purpose of the Order and the form of life flowing from it retain their value in every age of the Church. Nevertheless in times of greater change and evolution, as we are taught by our tradition, understanding and evaluation of these matters become particularly urgent. In these circumstances, it is characteristic of the Order to renew itself courageously and to adjust itself to these circumstances by discerning and testing what is good and useful in mankind's aspirations and by introducing the results into the unchangeable harmony of the fundamental elements of its life.

These elements, indeed, cannot be changed substantially among us, and they must continue to inspire forms of living and of preaching suited to the needs of the Church and of mankind.

IX. The Dominican Family comprises clerical and co-operator brothers, nuns, sisters, members of secular institutes and fraternities of priests and lay people.

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Section Four: Documentation - Constitutions of the Friars

KEY SECTIONS OF THE CONSTITUTIONS OF THE ORDER

- 141.** All the groups constituting the Dominican Family (cf. 1, IX) share its common vocation, and each of them in its own manner carries out the mission of the Order in the world.
- 149.I** Lay fraternities of the Order are associations of lay people who, gathered together by a special gift of God in the apostolic spirit of St. Dominic, aim to achieve the salvation of themselves and of others by the profession of the evangelical life according to the way of life adapted by the Order for their state of life in the world, and duly approved.
- 150.** The brethren should take great care to encourage these fraternities and to establish collaboration with them, so that the ministry of the Order may be more fully carried out in different fields, both in the Church and in the world.
- 151.** The organisation and government of these fraternities are determined in their own rule.

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THE BOLOGNA DOCUMENT 'ON THE DOMINICAN FAMILY'

1. Prologue

God continually calls a people out of darkness into the light of the good news of Jesus Christ. He has always called men and women to worship him and to proclaim his name. Dominic heard his call in the cry of the men and women of his time and brought them a message of hope and freedom. From the very beginning people followed in the footsteps of Dominic. Today Dominican men and women are attentive, as Dominic was, to the needs of our time.

The Church, the people of God, is open to the gospel values wherever they are found and proclaims these values to the ends of the earth. The followers of Dominic, because of their diversity, are a microcosm of the Church, in the local community and throughout the world, fully engaged in spreading the Word of God. Faithful to the example of Christ and the vision of Dominic, we are open to the spirit continually calling the Church to make the risen Lord present in every age and culture.

2. Charism Of Dominic

2.1 Dominic was a man of the gospel in word and in deed. He had only one passion: to know and to experience the Word of God in truth and from this experience to announce the compassion of God to men and women.

2.2 The word of God who became man in the womb of Mary now takes flesh in us, a Word contemplated, celebrated in joy, studied attentively, lived and announced as good news.

Dominic was at the heart of the Church in the service of the world. He was sensitive to the Word spoken in the heart of every man and woman, especially those who were enslaved in misery and need. We share in that charism and his prophetic vision, proclaiming the Word that the Lord puts into our heart.

Our apostolic way of life is continually renewed in dialogue with our brothers and sisters and challenged by the values of the gospel. Dominic associated women with his mission, thus affirming their place in the Church and its mission. As his heirs we have the task of manifesting the equality and complementarity of men and women.

Section Four: Documentation – The Bologna Document.

We are open to the world, celebrating the goodness of creation and encouraged to use our freedom and develop the gifts God has given us.

3. Followers of Dominic

- 3.1 From the very beginning the charism of Dominic was realised in different groups. New forms are still emerging, but all find their roots in Dominic. He is their common father.

The first group to be called into existence by Dominic's preaching was the nuns. In the first stage they formed part of the Jesu Christi Praedicatio of which Dominic was the leader. After he had Established an Order, the nuns became part of that Order. They were deeply rooted in Dominic's work of preaching by their totally contemplative way of life. The nuns retain their original relationship to the Order through their profession made to the Master of the Order, the successor of Dominic.

In 1215 Dominic founded his Order of Preaching Friars, whose purpose was summed up by Honorius III. "God has inspired you to embrace a life of poverty and regular observance and to devote yourselves to preaching the Word of God, making known the name of our Lord Jesus Christ throughout the world." The friars comprise priests and brothers forming a branch of the Dominican Family, under the Master.

From the beginning groups of lay people associated themselves with the Order, some of whom committed themselves to its life and mission in a more integral way, either in fraternities or as "Brothers and Sisters of Penance of St. Dominic", with their own proper rule. The Dominican Laity is directly under the authority of the Master.

In a similar way fraternities of priests arose, who wished to be integrated into the life and charism of Dominic and his Order.

Over a period, especially in the nineteenth century, different congregations of sisters were formed, who by their mission shared directly in the Order's charism of preaching. Each congregation is independent and profession incorporates the sisters into their congregation and the Order. In the twentieth century secular institutes sprang up. Their call to evangelisation is by way of a presence to the world in which they live out their total gift of themselves to God. They make profession of counsels in the spirit of Dominic.

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A phenomenon of our time is the emergence of groups with looser structures who look to Dominic and the Order for inspiration. These new groups, together with members of associations connected with the Order along with relatives, friends and collaborators belong to the Dominican Family in a broad sense.

- 3.2** Sharing in Dominic's charism these various groups participate in the one Dominican vocation. In complementarity and mutual collaboration, these branches constitute the Dominican Family and realise their mission while respecting the autonomy and vocation proper to each.

The principle and sign of unity of the Dominican Family is the Master of the Order, successor of St. Dominic, the one who grants aggregation to the Order, the one who outside the General Chapter guarantees and promotes fidelity to the spirit of St. Dominic.

On the basis of their equality the different branches discover their responsibility for one another. This care for one another is expressed by regional, national and international organisations. All of these serve to foster co-operation at the local level, which remains the most fundamental area of mission and unity.

4. Evangelisation As Common Mission For The Kingdom

- 4.1** The members of the Dominican Family live out their baptismal commitment and their special Dominican charism. The particular mission we receive is the proclamation of the Word of God, above all by sharing, as Dominic did, God's mercy as a sign of liberation.

In the spirit of Dominic this Word is addressed to all, to "the sinners, the destitute and the afflicted" (Cf. Blessed Jordan of Saxony, Lib, 12), and is awaited especially by the poor, the blind, captives and those on the margins of society.

Preaching in the various forms as understood in the Dominican tradition, is the indispensable liberating force most needed in the contemporary world and without it the command to spread the Kingdom cannot be fulfilled.

Open to the actual needs of the time we search for a path to young people and their world.

The Dominican Family, especially the Dominican Laity, show to its contemporaries the richness of an authentic apostolic lay spirituality.

Section Four: Documentation – The Bologna Document.

- 4.2 The Dominican charism of preaching is continually nourished by the Word shared in community. Thus, in the proclamation of the Word of God the Dominican Family expresses a unity centred on the Word of God and seeks to give common witness to the good news.
- 4.3 So that we might be effective preachers we see ongoing formation as a central task. Our study is, above all, of the Word of God, but we must also seek to understand the world in which that Word is proclaimed. In a rapidly changing world Dominicans listen to and welcome the Word of God already present in the cultures in which we live. We must also be in the vanguard in proclaiming the liberating good news in diverse cultures.

5. Conclusion

The Dominican Family is present with a certain vitality in all five continents. We are united to one another by the deepest bonds of the Lord's love. We affirm our solidarity with all our suffering brothers and sisters, especially those who are persecuted for their fearless proclamation of the gospel of peace and justice. Grounded in the profound peace of our common vocation we move full of hope into the future. We pray the Holy Spirit to renew in us the courage to continue in the footsteps of Dominic, "speaking only to God and of God".

*(General Chapter, Rome 1983)
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TALLAGHT 1971

N. 173

We exhort the General Promoter of the laity of St. Dominic, either personally or through the national and regional promoters, to urgently promote the fraternities for the following reasons:

1. The doctrinal mission of the Order of Preachers today cannot be adequately achieved without the participation and active assistance of lay people, who are concerned with present-day problems and questions of scientific investigation and are also united in the spirit of the Order.
2. To foster a more intimate connection with the Order, these lay people should testify with their lives what they propose by word. To help them to more fully fulfil this task their participation in the spiritual life of the Order should be promoted, they should be led to a more profound commitment. With their co-operation we can expect a more effective promotion of the Order and of vocations.

MADONNA DELL' ARCO 1974

N. 232

Mindful of the words of Vatican Council II "The Church is not truly established nor is it a perfect sign of Christ unless there is a genuine laity existing and working alongside the hierarchy" (Ad Gentes, 21) and also what is stated in LCO n. 150 (The brethren should take great care to encourage these lay fraternities and to collaborate with them, so that the ministry of the Order may be more fully carried out in different fields both in the Church and in the world) we exhort the brethren to work hard to set up in all our communities a well established lay apostolate which would foster and promote lay Dominican vocations.

To achieve this, the traditional forms of the laity of the Order should be carefully examined, so that they, might respond to the needs of the local Church and, joined with an appropriate pastoral activity, should become more suitable to the wishes of today's people.

New forms of lay fraternities should be tried, which would discover newness in fidelity to the spirit of St. Dominic and St. Catherine, so that especially the youth who are associated with us might be attracted to the Order.

Section Four: Documentation – Acts of Provincial Chapters.

Communication between the various fraternities should be actively encouraged so that through mutual knowledge of the apostolate of each they might better help one another and more efficiently fulfil the lay activity of the Order in today's world.

And so, the brethren should take very special care of the spiritual and apostolic formation of the laity. "They should recognise and promote the dignity and responsibility of the laity in the Church" and in the Order; "they should willingly use their prudent advice and confidently assign duties to them ... Leaving them freedom and scope for acting; indeed they should give them the courage to undertake works on their own initiative and they must recognise and respect the liberty which belongs to all in the terrestrial city" (Lumen Gentium,37)

Moreover, we encourage our co-operator brothers and the sisters to willingly offer their services in promoting the life of lay fraternities, and if needs be, to undertake the office of fraternity assistant.

QUEZON CITY 1977

'ON THE DOMINICAN FAMILY'

N. 64

The Dominican Order must at all times, both in its life and in its work, be alert to the great authentic movements of the age in which it finds itself. This contemporaneous quality was a special mark of the original vision of St. Dominic in founding the Order and imparted to it its original force and freshness. Today it is no less true that the Order must reflect in itself the hopes, the legitimate values and the rediscovered ideals of contemporary man, if it is to remain a vital force in the spreading of the Gospel.

At this time, the Order is confronted with two great movements in the Church and in the World -- the emergence of the laity as an indispensable element in the establishing of the Kingdom of God, and the more recent and constantly growing movement towards the liberation of women and the recognition of their equality with men. Indeed, both of these movements are but a fulfilment of the words of St. Paul: "There is now neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor freeman, neither male nor female, but all are one in Christ" (Gal. 3, 28).

The Order of Preachers has in germ anticipated these movements both in its foundation and in its more recent legislation. St. Dominic founded first a community of Nuns then later of the Brethren; not long afterwards, in virtue of his inspiration, groups of committed lay-people were established, some of whom remained as lay-people, others of whom began to live vowed lives in

Section Four: Documentation - Acts of General Chapters.

common. Here we see the beginnings of what will later be referred to as the Dominican Family, an association of men and of women, of clerics and of laity bound together by a common ideal, a common living inspiration, and a common name, Dominican. Both the Basic Constitution of the Order and the general legislation of the Brethren call attention to this idea of the Dominican Family which, having been lived in a very intense way at the Congress of Missioners in Madrid (1973), finds its most explicit expression in the legislation of Madonna dell'Arco.

The Master of the Order in his report to the Chapter states that the idea of the Dominican Family is one that has given rise to great hopes within the Order and is expected to be a source of inspiration and creative development for the future. The fact that the notion Dominican Family has been widely accepted throughout all the branches of the Order would seem to constitute a special sign of the Spirit working in all those who profess to be sons and daughters of St. Dominic.

The Branches of the Dominican Family are bound together by a common name and by the common apostolic and spiritual traditions which have their source in St. Dominic. They are bound together also in that all serve, each in its own way, the mission of the Order (cf. LCO 141; Madonna dell'Arco 224). "This communion in the spirit and design of St. Dominic is perhaps the deepest bond of unity just as in the Church it is the Spirit of Christ and common responsibility for the mission which He entrusted to the Church which binds its diverse members into one Body. In the Order the Master, as successor of St. Dominic, is "the principle and sign of Unity of the Dominican Family" (Madonna dell'Arco 224). Would it not, then, be a clearer expression of unity and strengthen our sense of belonging to the one Family, if all, in the formula of their profession made explicit reference to this principle of Unity?

St. Dominic created his Family, not for itself, but to be at the service of the Church and its mission to the world. In terms of human potential there are vast resources within the Family. We must admit that this tremendous potential is not fully realised through lack of co-operation. The development of an authentic Dominican spirit and of Dominican formation have suffered because of the lack of closer bonds within the Dominican Family. The mutual development of vocations which could have taken place has also suffered. Most seriously there has been a diminished effectiveness of each branch of the Family due to a lack of mutual enrichment between them, leading to one-dimensional viewpoints. It is the genius of the Order that there is in principle a wonderful balance whereby each of the branches of the Family reinforces and supplements the others. But unless this delicate balance is maintained, the total apostolate of the Order suffers.

The sons and daughters of St. Dominic have always been conscious that a precious part of their heritage is the great respect that the Family has for the dignity, freedom and responsibility of the individual members. We have

Section Four: Documentation – Acts of Provincial Chapters.

always zealously defended this heritage and are anxious now to preserve it in a world of mass-culture in which the individual can so easily be disregarded and even sometimes be discarded. But we might ask ourselves if we have not exaggerated this element to the detriment of other equally important facets of our heritage which if lost would perhaps endanger our Dominican vocation. We might ask ourselves why we find it so difficult to implement and give expression to the communitarian nature of our vocation. Is it because of an exaggerated and distorted notion of individualism? But surely it is a sign of maturity when the individual can enter the social life of a group without fear of losing his or her freedom or identity. Communion and collaboration are the test and proof of a healthy individualism.

This is indeed a great moment for the Dominican Order to fulfil that initial vision of St. Dominic, its founder. The two world-wide movements towards an emerging laity and full equality for women coincide in a singular manner with what St. Dominic has sown within the very idea of the Order. That seed and the reason for its harvest have at this moment in history come together. Now is the acceptable time for the Dominican Family to achieve true equality and complementarity among its different branches. If we believe that the Holy Spirit truly speaks to us in and through the signs of the times, we cannot ignore this call to develop among all the branches of the Order a greater collaboration in all our ministries, and we cannot neglect to undertake efforts to study and promote greater organic unity between these branches. What lies before us at this time is a challenge to become what St. Dominic had begun: a Family joined in unity of life and complementarity of service to the Church and the World.

Section Four: Documentation - Acts of General Chapters.

AVILA 1986

REPORT TO AVILA CHAPTER BY FR D BYRNE OP

DOMINICAN FAMILY

The Symposium of the entire Dominican Family which took place at Bologna in April 1983 reminds us of the great strides that have been made in trying to define our idea of family. For some it is not all yet clear but there is no doubting the common bonds that unite all the various branches of our family and of the great devotion to our common father, Dominic. The Symposium was meant to propose new ideas to the family and, afterwards, in the words of Fr. Vincent de Couesnongle it was for "each group and each entity to see, according to its proper statutes, what it ought to do".

There are two elements to be remembered in regard to the Dominican Family:

- (a) that it is "not an institution, but a movement, and since this movement lives in local regions, the same movement will be realised in different ways because of the various local circumstances". (Rome 271) and
- (b) it is for each group and entity to decide what "it ought to do" e.g. to promote co-operation among themselves and in the apostolate.

LAITY

The recommendation of Rome 283 to hold an International Congress of the Laity "in which a study should be made with regard to the adaptation and renewal of the rule" was implemented at Montreal in June, 1985. The preparations for the Congress and the discussion at the Congress itself, made it clear that there is need for two distinct possibilities of fraternities for our laity.

The Congress dealt with the traditional fraternity agreeing to a fundamental Charter and to the basic elements for formation programmes. These must be approved by the Congregation for religious. There is a need for another type of fraternity especially for youth who are allied to the family in some specific apostolic activity. An outline proposal, prepared by Fr. Olivier and approved by the General Council is enclosed for the consideration of the Provinces and for discussion at the General Chapter. The main elements of the document are:

- (a) it envisages adherence to the Fundamental Charter of the Laity.
- (b) and to the formation programme of each province.

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- (c) formal affiliation is based on, and continues for the period of a specific apostolic work and is determined at provincial level. The main difficulty to be resolved is the participation, or not, of these groups at Provincial gatherings of the Laity.

The real hope for the fraternities in the words of LCO is "so that the ministry of the Order may be more fully carried out in different areas of both the Church and the world".

It is not a question of discovering the laity because there is a shortage of priest or sisters but rather a deeper appreciation of their own specific role within the Church and of what they can teach us in matters of faith and of leadership.

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ACTS OF AVILA CHAPTER

CHAPTER VI

I. THE LAITY AND THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE ORDER

N. 83

The forthcoming Synod of Bishops which has as its focus, the vocation and mission of the laity in the Church and society obliges all of us in the Order to study more deeply the teaching of the Second Vatican Council on the subject, take it to heart, and to apply it more zealously in our work.

The cardinal points of the conciliar doctrine on the laity are the following:

- a) It is through Baptism and the other Sacraments of Initiation that each and every Christian is incorporated into Christ and consequently shares in his saving mission;
- b) The laity therefore, precisely as baptised and confirmed and communicant members of the Church share fully in its saving mission which is itself a continuation of the mission of Christ;
- c) By the same token share in their own way in the threefold office of Christ as priest, prophet and king;
- d) It is more specifically by their involvement in the secular affairs of the world that the laity play their indispensable part in the Church's saving mission;
- e) Unless they do in fact play this part, local Churches cannot thoroughly take root among the various peoples of the world or achieve the necessary inculturation of the Gospel;
- f) Such inculturation is necessary in order that the whole Church, both as communion and as institution, may be a sign and sacrament of the union of humankind with God and with one another.

Accordingly, we exhort the brethren:

1. To take to heart, and constantly bear in mind that the laity have an irreplaceable mission in the Church and world of today, and that furthermore, our own proper mission as the Order of Preachers

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cannot be effectively accomplished unless the laity are responsibly carrying out their proper mission;

2. To be faithful to their vocation to serve the truth by intensifying their reflection on the ecclesiology of the laity; on the possible variety of lay ministries in the local Churches; on the question of participation in ecclesiastical jurisdiction; on the role of women in the life, mission and authority of the Church; on the place in the Church of the basic communities which lay people are founding;
3. To contribute to the more thorough theological formation of the laity, so that those already proficient in the human and social sciences may be enabled the better to shed the light of the Gospel on the critical problems facing the world, such as over-population, bio-ethical questions, armaments, the economic and political orders, famine, fundamental human rights, etc., and to take their rightful place at the points where for better or worse such issues are decided.

II. THE LAITY IN THE ORDER OF ST DOMINIC

N. 85

As the Master of the Order has said, the matter of the Dominican laity should be regarded as one of the most important to be dealt with by the Chapter. Two questions in particular come to mind: i) What message should we address to the fraternities (chapters) of lay Dominicans, who have a history of more than seven centuries? ii) How are we to respond to the stirrings among lay people, so characteristic of the present day, which among other manifestations prompt them to form new groups and associations faithful to the spirit of St Dominic?

A) TRADITIONAL FRATERNITIES OF LAY DOMINICANS

In the 13th century a religious upsurge took hold of a great number of lay people. In 1285 the Master of the Order, Munio de Zamora, wanted to give them a more solid and evangelical structure, and so he proposed a rule for those who were more closely associated with the Order. Not all of them accepted this offer. Those who did so realised that it opened up for them a new way of directly and actively participating in the Order's apostolic ministry. This is how the Third Order of St Dominic came into being.

In *Evangelii Nuntiandi* Paul VI summed up the form of evangelization appropriate for the laity: "Their proper field of activity in the task of evangelization is the vast and complicated

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world of politics and social affairs, of the economy and culture, the sciences and the arts, international life and the mass media" (EN 70). What is true for the Christian laity as a whole applies a fortiori to lay Dominicans. And they are faced with a particular problem at the present time: in their fraternities there is a notable absence of younger persons, and hence a certain lack of vitality. Could this perhaps be at least in part a result of unawareness of the teaching of the Church since Vatican II on the subject, and hence a failure to put it into practice?

However, in an effort to meet this problem, and in response to initiatives made by the last two General Chapters, an international Congress of lay Dominicans met at Montreal in 1985. It adapted and renewed the Rule of what had hitherto been known as the Third Order, as it had been asked to do, and in its 'fundamental constitution' (Statutes of Montreal, 1-7) emphasis was laid on the essential need for a commitment to the apostolic life.

A large crowd of people cannot effectively carry out together the kind of work the Church hopes for from lay people today. This means that no fraternity (chapter) should have too many members. Otherwise it risks, together with a decline of fervour, a loosening of the ties of friendship and close collaboration which should unite it. Fraternities which have too many members should therefore split up into smaller ones. To this end account should be taken of the age of candidates and members, their professions, tastes, particular apostolic preferences and so on. There could also be family fraternities, fraternities of the sick and those engaged in health services, of academics and lawyers, of persons concerned with justice and peace, above all fraternities of young people, just as there are fraternities of the elderly. Certainly one would envisage that these smaller groups would meet all together from time to time in order to share their experiences and recall their ties with what was the parent fraternity.

B) NEW ASSOCIATIONS OF LAY DOMINICANS

Almost everywhere in the Order one comes across the desire to form new associations or groups of lay people. The last Chapter was in favour of this development and asked for a study to be made of these new forms (Act. Rom. 284 and 285). By their very existence and dynamism they illustrate the vitality of the lay Dominican ideal, and bear witness to the wide influence of the Order.

To be fully integrated into the Dominican family they should base themselves on the fundamental constitution of the Montreal

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Statutes referred to above. They are to be encouraged in every way possible by the brethren, especially by the promoters of lay fraternities and of the Dominican family (ibid. n. 286).

What we are concerned with in fact, as the Bologna document stated (III, 1, fin.) is "the appearance, as a phenomenon characteristic of our time, of groups of lay people with their own types of organisation, who draw their inspiration from the charism of St Dominic and his Order". It is a matter of creating more flexible associations, capable above all of attracting young people by their freedom and breadth of outlook. The only requirement, in order for them to be accepted as belonging fully to the Dominican family, is as we have said that they should base themselves on the fundamental constitution of the Montreal Statutes. Each group, of course, will choose its own favoured form of apostolate, but the most important common denominator must always be their inspiration by St Dominic as *vir apostolicus*, as a man combining intense contemplation of divine truth with an active mission to the world.

C) DOMINICAN SECULAR INSTITUTES

Secular Institutes are the most recent form of consecrated life to arise in the Church. They are also to be found within the Order, though there are as yet no more than 500 members of such Dominican Institutes.

At present these are all women; lay people consecrated to God by the vows of celibacy, poverty and obedience, which is what distinguishes them from the fraternities and other groups of lay Dominicans. They are very little known, but like other members of the Dominican Family they devote themselves to the task of spreading the gospel. Though sometimes engaged in helping the clergy in parochial work, catechesis, works of charity and so on, what they prefer to do is to have some civil profession or employment in which they can face "the great forces of the world", as John Paul II puts it. In so doing these women dedicated to the Lord are at one and the same time contemplative and actively apostolic.

Furthermore, the knowledge and experience they have of the world means that they can be of great help to the brethren and sisters of the Order in understanding the many critical situations in society, and in knowing what to do or say in order to give the countless "wrecks of the modern world" a more human kind of life, and bring them eventually into a genuine relationship with God.

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III. FORMATION FOR THE APOSTOLATE

N.93

The apostolate of the Order, laity as well as the brethren, can be fully realised only when there is a solid and complete formation. Those who would serve the Truth and preach it must first be formed in its principles and doctrine. Such formation must be based upon the doctrine and tradition of the Church and the Order. Likewise, it must respond to present needs within the Church and society and seek new places and forms to extend the saving mission of Christ true to the spirit of St. Dominic.

Formation for the lay apostolate, whether Dominican laity or others, demands a formation that is human, integral and accommodated to the abilities of each. The more the laity increase their share in the Church's life admission in the world, the more they will feel the need for a solid formation that is at once doctrinal, social and apostolic. It is in these areas especially that the lives and work of the brethren can serve as a catalyst and example for the laity.

A) COMMUNITY, THE LOCUS OF FORMATION

Since Christ founded a community of believers we reaffirm this same community as the proper context for the formation of the laity. In this context the parish, various kinds of groups and movements and associations are of special importance. Within the Dominican Family this is strongly supported by various efforts to form and renew ourselves individually and collectively within our groups and communities. It is this aspect that is most often attractive to the young.

In these communities of faith and action a true formation can be achieved for each member. This is where we share our reactions, listen to those who share our opinions, or again, to those who think differently, which is often more valuable. Here we become aware of new experiences, and we recognise and encourage those with special talents that help solve difficulties and transform our lives.

Formation for the Dominican also involves study and contemplation and the sharing of these fruits with others. Often this first takes place within the group or community to which we belong. So important are study and contemplation to the life of the Dominican community that without them such a group would not be truly Dominican.

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Groups of lay Dominicans should also be in communication with other parts of the Dominican Family, inviting them to share their insights and difficulties. In this way they can come to know one another better and understand the common bonds which make them one within the community of the Church and the Order.

B) GENUINE LAY SPIRITUALITY

The origin and source of the apostolate of the Church is Christ, hence the effectiveness of any individual apostolate depends upon a vital relationship with Him. So too, then, the apostolic work of the laity. Lay persons must use all the spiritual helps available in such a way that the fulfilling of their temporal responsibilities, in the midst of the ordinary circumstances of life, intensifies rather than separates them from Christ.

The presence of Christian lay persons in the world and what they do for its development must have, above all, its motivation in God and their love for Him, rather than in any purely human consideration. At the same time, the laity should not, like some monks, flee from the realities and problems of the world, but persevere in being actively present in the thick of these realities, and there to encounter Christ who through them can transform the world.

A genuine lay spirituality will allow lay persons to recognise always and everywhere "the God in whom we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17, 28), to seek the will of God in all the activities of life, to contemplate Christ in all men and women and to judge rightly the true meaning and value of material things.

The mission of the laity is often full of conflict and tension because of their faith. They must, then, in such cases, strive to renew their Christian identity in contact with the word of God, and by living in closer intimacy with the Lord through a rich sacramental and prayer life. To renew one's identity that is to say to be more and more one's self, is to become capable of facing the world and the difficulties of one's faith and mission.

For the Dominican lay person the life of St. Dominic should serve as the supreme model of a life of action grounded in a rich spirituality and communion with the Lord. It is said of him that he spoke only about God or to God. He spoke about God in his preaching; and as for what he said to God, his first brethren testify that he repeated again and again the same words, "My God, my mercy, what will become of sinners?" So he spoke to God about those he had met during the day. Blessed Jordan of Saxony adds

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that he used to pray continually not only for sinners, but also for the poor and unfortunate. Thus in his prayer there was only God and all who suffered. In all this he was confirmed to Christ, Our Lord. Thus we should take as our motto "Be conformed to Christ in order to transform the world".

OAKLAND 1989

N. 75

We recommend that all the Dominican Laity broaden their activities through a proper theological formation so that they might increasingly be heralds of the word of faith, creative and free in different situations and responsive to new questions that arise.

Appendix II

XII - THE DOMINICAN FAMILY (extract)

We also need to foster the Dominican Laity. The Chapter of Avila gave the possibility of promoting "groups with looser structures who look to Dominic and the Order for inspiration," as was stated in the Bologna document. It is important that these groups be approved by the Provincial authorities and that they receive the formation mandated by the Province.

Provinces need to include our Sisters in their promotion of and directing of these lay groups.

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MEXICO CITY 1992

REPORT TO MEXICO CITY CHAPTER BY FR. D. BYRNE OP

(from Appendix I)

LAITY

It seems to me that there is a great deal of inertia among the Brethren when it comes to promoting the Dominican Laity.

They have been an integral part of the Order almost from the very beginning and down the centuries have been exemplary in their devotion to the Order and to the twin pillars of Christian life, viz. prayer and penance. But as the Chapter at Avila stated (n. 85): "We are confronted with a concrete problem: in the fraternities there is a notable absence of young people and, as a consequence, a certain lack of vitality".

The statement went on to point out "the essential need for a commitment to the apostolate". This is the key, I believe, to a revitalisation of the Dominican Laity. Accordingly, the Avila Chapter, following on the recommendations of the Montreal Congress, made it possible for groups attached to our churches and schools to be incorporated into the Dominican Family. This has had good results in many countries but needs to be developed much more.

ACTS OF MEXICO CITY CHAPTER

CHAPTER V - DOMINICAN FAMILY: D. LAITY

N. 128

We exhort our Dominican Laity:

- a. to deepen their specific lay vocation to be church in the world as well as being presence of the world in the church;
- b. to become aware of their real membership in the Dominican Family in moral equality with the other members;
- c. that the lay fraternities accept new groups of Dominican laity that have arisen, in accord with the direction of the Avila General Chapter (n. 85);
- d. to promote new forms of Dominican laity;
- e. to establish channels of communication among the various groups of Dominican Laity;

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- f. to commit themselves to their own formation, together with the other members of the Dominican Family, as preparation for their specific mission within the Order;
- g. to join with mission teams of the Order, committing themselves to the priorities and orientations of the recent General Chapters, especially the promotion of justice and peace.

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HOMILY FROM FR TIMOTHY RADCLIFFE, MASTER OF THE ORDER, TO THE DOMINICAN FAMILY OF MEXICO (Lake of Guadalupe 11 July 1992)

Jesus said to his disciples: "When you go to preach do not take any bag or haversack or sandals". He had the freedom of sending his disciples out that way because he had confidence that wherever they went they would find a true home, a family that would welcome them. I have discovered that Jesus was right; I arrived in Mexico with one tunic only, as stated in the Gospels, but I shall leave Mexico with three tunics, without mentioning a suit and a pair of trousers. And all this because my Mexican family has given me an evangelical welcome. The Gospel says that one has to go out with nothing. It does not say that one is not supposed to bring back anything with him.

Jesus invites us to have confidence, not to be afraid. He sends his disciples like sheep among wolves. There is danger. They might be eaten. Jesus takes risks with his disciples, his family. I ask myself what kind of family Jesus institutes when he puts his brothers and sisters in a risky situation.

Today we celebrate the fact that we are a family. We, Sisters, Nuns, Laity and Friars, we are St Dominic's Family. But what kind of family? There are families that offer their members security, no danger at all, where foreigners and strangers are kept away. These families maybe given an impression of being happy and contented; nevertheless they foment fear. On the other hand, the family that Jesus creates is not like this. He pushes us to leave our nests.

There is a picture in my room in London, or rather what used to be my room in London before the Friars pushed me out of the nest. It is a picture by Van Gogh. It depicts a mother helping her daughter take her first steps. On the other side of the picture is the father waiting with open arms. This is the first, terrifying, journey the little girl is making. She has to learn to walk on her own.

A truly Christian family should give us confidence as we walk. Confidence means literally "to believe with", "to have faith together with". The little girl can start walking because her mother and father have faith with her.

We, the Dominican Family should give confidence and encouragement to each other. A kind of confidence that would allow us to go on to new tasks. When we Friars preach it is not only for you to listen, but also for you to become preachers as well. Our preaching should make you preach. Here

in Mexico, I know there is a magnificent tradition of the Dominican Laity preaching in the suburbs.

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Now is your turn to give us courage and confidence. That terrific and wonderful "Tertiary" that was Catherine of Siena used to get infuriated with the brethren when they were afraid to stand in defence of truth and St Rose of Lima never tolerated the never ending discussion of our brethren with the Franciscans about the Immaculate Conception, scolding them to go and preach.

There is too much fear in the Church, fear of change and fear of tradition, fear of dissension, fear to control. But fear destroys the family. Let us remember that real love does not have a place for fear.

When St Dominic sent his first Friars to preach, people must have thought he was crazy. He sent his brothers to faraway and untamed places, places full of wolves, like in England; no need to go far away! Would we dare to do the same thing today? Do we have the same confidence? This is the fundamental question before us in this General Chapter.

How did Jesus dare to send his brethren out without anything? It was because he saw to what extent they were capable of receiving. To be a disciple is to be capable of receiving or accepting gifts. All of our Dominican formation, all our studies, prepare us to create the capacity to open our eyes to gifts wherever they are, the gifts of the Scriptures, of Tradition, the gift in which the other person is the one who counts.

When the Europeans arrived in the Americas, they were looking for riches. But there are different species of riches. The Conquistadors found the riches of gold, a deity they worshipped. Nevertheless, some of our brothers, like Bartolome de las Casas, found a different kind of richness, the human richness in our brothers and sisters, the first inhabitants of that land. This was really God's gift to us, the gift of a bigger family.

It is normal human nature to have a family. This family is the one that makes us human, at least for a while. When God became man, he was born into a family. He not only had a mother, but also uncles and cousins like John the Baptist. It was the whole family that contributed to the Word to become flesh and to live among us. Nevertheless the family found itself spread like sheep among wolves.

In order for our Dominican Family to become the sign of divine life it has to break free from the chains and show confidence. But let us not be afraid. Maybe the wolves only have false teeth.

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R. p55

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GENERAL CHAPTER OF CALERUEGA – 1995.

CHAPTER VI

DOMINICAN FAMILY

Prologue

92. As members of the Dominican Family, we accept the invitation of the General Chapter in Mexico, which in number 11 of its Acts, asks us to direct “an attentive reading and mature reflection” of the documents written about the Dominican Family. It seems to us, after analysis of the events of recent years, that the time has come where we might propose more concrete steps to both ourselves and to the other members of the Dominican Family.

In fact, over the last 30 years “we have noticed the recovery and development of an old reality: that of the Dominican Family (Mexico, 116) in such a way that at the present moment many strengths or positive results show a desire to see the men and women in a single, world-wide organization which discovers in St. Dominic a model and inspiration to proclaim together the good news of Christ Jesus to today’s world.”

We consider among our recent achievements: the various teachings that have been affirmed by General Chapters, historical investigations, letters from the Master of the Order and through studies and publications by the sisters and laity in magazines, days of reflection, journals on Dominican life, congresses and seminars; and in some parts of the world, visible signs of organization.

While these efforts are very encouraging, the Dominican Family still remains a dream or an ideal to many people. The partially attained collaboration between the different branches of the Dominican Family has not grown in proportion to expectations if we consider the lived reality in some areas or countries. We note that the friars are not sufficiently prepared for working in collaboration with the sisters and the laity.

The General Chapter of Mexico noted this: “authentic collaboration cannot be realized without planning” (116). In fact, utopia and doctrine will not bring commitment as long as they do not express their “spiritual and moral” basis (Madonna dell’Arco, 225) in a larger organization that shows in which areas all its members enjoy equality in proposals, decisions and actions.

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Proposal

93. In order that the Dominican Family might develop a greater consistency in its identity and mission, it should produce its own organizational project, with the participation and commitment of “friars, nuns, sisters of active life, members of secular institutes and fraternities of priests and laity” (LCO 1, IX).

In recent years, we have witnessed signs of a process of an international organization in some branches of the Dominican Family: the International Commission of Nuns, the International Movement of Dominican Sisters, the European Congress of Lay Dominicans. In Latin America, where the Dominican Family is strongly present, instances of coordination between the various branches can be seen, as in the case of joint meetings between CODAL and CIDAL. Here and in other areas there are secretariats for the Dominican Family. Bearing in mind these experiences, we set as an objective that within six years, the first General Assembly of the Dominican Family will be convoked by the Master of Order, as a source of unity, with the agreement of the representatives of the other branches of the Dominican Family. At this occasion, the representatives of all the previously organized branches of the Dominican Family, will be able to jointly study proposals that might foster common projects with regard to formation, collaboration and action.

In order to attain this goal, we suggest that the Dominican Family initiate a process that will allow it first to receive and study this proposal of the General Chapter of Caleruega. Such a reflection should reinforce already existing local or regional centers of coordination among the distinct branches, and create them where there are none yet. Once this is done, better forms of organization and representation to the General Assembly of the Dominican Family can be set up. It is only then, at this level of organization, that we shall be able to answer most of the questions concerning the Dominican Family. As it follows this path, the Dominican Family will continue with its style of collaboration, and the sense of belonging to the charism of St. Dominic as it has until today, empowering them and broadening their participation in assemblies and meetings at different levels; and, at the same time, each member and each branch will be aware of deepening their own identity, as well as their own commitment with the common mission of the Dominican Family.

Let us go forward on this road with St. Dominic, thinking of Christ our Lord.

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Petition

94. We ask the Master of the Order to institute an Assistant for the Dominican Family.

Recommendations

95. We recommend that the delegate of the Master of Order, for the nuns and the International Commission of Nuns:
- a) propose to the Master of the Order the nun's number of representatives at General Chapters and their manner of selection,
 - b) study the participation of the representation of the nuns in the decisions of the General Chapters directly related to nuns and monasteries, and in the election of the Master of the Order.
96. We recommend that the Assistant of the Master of the Order for the Dominican Family count among his tasks:
- a) to promote among the brothers the proposal that this Chapter makes about the Dominican Family and its projection into the future;
 - b) to coordinate with the delegates or representatives of the other branches whatever has to do with the life, mission and organization of the Dominican Family.

Exhortations

97. Inspired by the growing role that the laity, and particularly women, are filling in ecclesiastical life, we appeal to our brethren to:
- a) pay special attention to the laity in the Dominican Family, both in promoting them and encouraging their growth in the charism and mission of the Order.
 - b) to support those friars who are able to create a sense of welcome and organization for youth movements with a Dominican inspiration.
 - c) to explicitly encourage the charism and vocation of the Order among youth, associating them with our mission, and if suitable, with a temporary commitment.

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- d) to accompany young people in the discernment and process of their definitive incorporation into the Dominican Family.

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GENERAL CHAPTER OF BOLONGA - 1998:

CHAPTER V

DOMINICAN FAMILY

Prologue

- 1) The Dominican Family has its roots in the vocation and charism of Dominic de Guzman, preacher of the Good News of Jesus Christ. This charism has been lived in many different forms throughout the centuries. It is incarnated in old and new forms in the lives of men and women, young and old, who upon hearing the call of the Spirit decide to follow the way of the preacher.

It is from the silence of monasteries to the noise of a youth gathering, from the tranquillity of the classroom to the deafening noise of the factory, from the pain of hospitals to the heroic involvement of missionaries, that the charism of Dominic gives unity to the life and mission of those who have followed in his steps.

The positive experience of working together in the areas of formation, prayer and ministries within the Dominican Family and the need to proclaim the Good News encourage us to continue promoting in complementary and mutual collaboration the diverse experiences of the Dominican vocation, while realising the mission in the Church and the world in an attitude of respect for the autonomies and particular characteristics.

Though the Master of the Order plays the same role with all the branches in promoting fidelity to the spirit of Saint Dominic, we have to take into account that his relation with them varies in order and degree. So he enjoys full authority over the friars, according to their constitutions; the nuns, who have their own constitutions approved by the Holy See, profess obedience to him, as their own proper and immediate regular superior (cf. LCM 238); he has a particular relationship with the priestly and lay fraternities but the congregations of sisters and secular institutes are fully autonomous.

At the 1983 Symposium of the Dominican Family in Bologna the different branches acknowledged that, as successor of Saint Dominic, the Master is the principle and sign of unity of the Dominican Family. As such, he grants aggregation to the Order whether directly or through an entity.

On the threshold of the Jubilee year 2000, and in accordance with the proposal of the General Chapter in Caleruega 1995, we acknowledge the need to concentrate our efforts in the next few years on the

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assemblies, national and regional, of the Dominican Family. Following in the steps of the Symposium of Bologna, these Assemblies will invite representatives from the different branches of the Family so that together they may continue to celebrate and reflect on our Dominican vocation and call to collaboration for the sake of our common mission. Order of Preachers and Dominican family

- 2) In the past years the titles of Order of Preachers and Dominican Family have been used interchangeably. Both concepts describe the Dominican reality from different perspectives. We believe it is time to clarify these realities so that all branches of the Dominican Family arrive at a common understanding and acceptance.

Recommendation

- 3) We recommend that the International Commission of the Dominican Family appoints a group of qualified members to:
 - 4) Study and clarify the difference between Order of Preachers and Dominican Family.
 - 5) Circulate this study to the national assemblies of the Dominican Family for discussion and feed back.
 - 6) The General Chapter suggests the following text to the Commission for reflection:

The word 'Order' should be understood in a dynamic way as the special task or mission that constitutes a group of persons that is publicly recognised and entrusted with carrying it out. Our Order is sent for the proclamation of the Word of God (Fundamental Constitution, I).

"Order of Preachers" refers to the religious society of all those who, through their public engagement, are incorporated into the Dominican mission as it is recognised by the universal church.

The Order generates a family. This is especially appropriate, since preaching is not merely instruction directed to individuals, but its fruit appears in the creation of community.

"Family" is a metaphor that evokes and expresses the experience of belonging together, sharing the same name and roots, recognising and offering mutual support in a loving relationship as brothers and sisters.

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Therefore the "Dominican Family" is that communion of friars, nuns, apostolic sisters, members of secular institutes, fraternities of priests and laity, associations attached to the Order, who, through a shared charism, are ordered to assume a similar mission of preaching and compassion.

The family seeks to establish an Order. In its turn the family seeks to organise itself as an order, through defining the roles and responsibilities of its members and thereby assuring them of their place within the whole. Other persons may consider themselves members of the Dominican Family in the sense that they either individually or through various associations have been attracted by the mission of the Order and continue to look to it for inspiration and support. In this sense the Dominican Family can be considered as a movement, which is open to new forms of life and mission. (Rome 271).

INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF THE DOMINICAN FAMILY.

- 7) The International Commission of the Dominican Family is a consultative body convoked by the Master of the Order and is composed of the Master of the Order, the Promoter of the Nuns, the Promoter of the Laity and a representative of "Dominican Sisters International".

Recommendation

- 8) The appointment of an Assistant for the Dominican Family requested by the Chapter of Caleruega was a visionary response to the needs of the Family. New times though present new needs, and the need for a more collaborative approach moves us to propose the following:

We request that the International Commission of the Dominican Family consider the following as their task:

- 9) To promote collaboration of the Dominican Family in mission projects pertaining to the Order.
- 10) To encourage and aid all the entities of the Dominican Family world-wide. To co-ordinate the work done by the Secretariats of the Dominican Family in their respective territories.
- 11) To organize periodical regional and international meetings for representatives and members of the branches of the Dominican Family.
- 12) To share the work done by the Dominican Family in their respective territories.

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GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE DOMINICAN FAMILY

Petition and Commendation

- 13) We petition the Master of the Order to convene an international committee of the Dominican Family - of no more than (10) ten members - to co-ordinate the planning and implementation of the Assembly of the Dominican Family in the year 2000.
- 14) We recommend those existing provincials, regional and national commissions/councils/secretariats/assemblies of the Dominican Family and we encourage their creation in the provinces, regions or countries where they do not exist.
- 15) The provincial commissions/councils/secretariats/assemblies, regional and national of the Dominican Family and where they do not exist, the Prior Provincials, the Vicar Generals, Regional and Provincial Vicars shall convoke a meeting of representatives of the Dominican Family. In this meeting they shall discuss and prepare suggestions for the Assembly, which they shall send to the International Committee convoked by the Master.
- 16) We commend the spirit of collaboration that inspired the creation of new structures and projects, such as Dominican Sisters International, the Commission of the Nuns and, the International Dominican Youth Movement.
- 17) We encourage the use of modern means of communication in the planning and implementation of the year 2000 Assembly.

THE NUNS

Declaration

- 18) In the spirit of number 95 of the General Chapter of Caleruega, we recognize as very positive the presence and participation of the Nuns at the last General Chapters. Petitions
- 19) We petition the Master of the Order to study the question of the authority of the Master and the General Chapter over the Nuns and the real implications in relation to their government in light of the democratic principle "what concerns everyone should be decided by everyone"
- 20) We petition that we continue inviting nuns, representing the different regions of the world, to the General Chapters in no greater number than (10) ten.

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- 21) We petition the Master of the Order that, respecting the processes established in no 182 of the LCM, he name a commission to study the revision and changes of the LCM.

INTERNATIONAL DOMINICAN YOUTH MOVEMENT

Declarations and Exhortations

- 22) We rejoice at the development of the International Dominican Youth Movement as a sign of the Spirit working in our times. This movement supports the renewal of the Order.
- 23) The IDYM is composed of groups of mainly young lay people who are committed to be disciples of Jesus Christ and they assume in their lives the basic Dominican values of prayer, study, community and preaching.
- 24) We acknowledge them to be members of the Dominican Family and we encourage all the branches to support this movement. Cf. Caleruega # 97
- 25) We exhort all our communities to develop and support this movement, especially our houses of formation and those dedicated to work with youth.
- 26) We encourage the members of the IDYM to reach out to the other branches through participation in the diverse ministries of the Order. We exhort the members of the Dominican Family, especially the friars, to welcome the members of IDYM as collaborators in their ministries.
- 27) In view of their commitment to the common mission of the Order, we encourage the members of the IDYM to value formation as an integral element of their vocation. International Dominican volunteer movement
- 28) Among the members of the Dominican Family there are lay people who are expressing, ever more urgently, a desire to participate in the mission of preaching given by St. Dominic to his sons and daughters. This aspiration is present in many and diverse groups. Is not this the moment to open to lay Dominicans, especially the youth, the possibility of working in a distant mission, to live their vocation as preachers in "a new world"? To respond to the necessities of these desires of the laity, especially the youth, the project of the Volunteer Dominicans is being developed. The success of this project will depend in a great way on the support it receives from the whole Dominican Family.

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Declaration and Recommendation

- 29) We *commend* those Provinces, Congregations and Regions of the Dominican Family who have created and developed Dominican volunteer programs.
- 30) To encourage lay people to share our mission especially in ministries of solidarity and justice with marginalised people, we recommend the foundation of an International Dominican Volunteer Movement. We wish that it reflects the charism of St. Dominic, especially the compassionate way he lived the mission.
- 31) We would like this project to be a collaborative experience among the Dominican Family in the recruiting, forming and sending of volunteers towards Dominican mission programs in various parts of the world.
- 32) We *encourage* the Prior Provincials, General - and Regional Vicars to create and promote the International Dominican Volunteer Movement in their territories. We also invite all branches of the Dominican Family to join in this project. Where our sisters have commenced such programs, we encourage the friars to dialogue and collaborate with them.

PROMOTER OF THE LAITY

Recommendation

- 33) We recommend that the Master of the Order appoints a Promoter for the Laity, preferably a lay person: 1) To represent the laity at the international level. 2) To encourage contact among the different groups within the Dominican Laity. 3) To encourage the laity to form regional and continental organisations.

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ASSOCIATE MOVEMENTS WITH THE CONGREGATIONS OF DOMINICAN SISTERS

Commendation and Declaration

- 34) We commend the development of the Associate Movement with some Congregations of Dominican Sisters. This movement is composed of lay men and women who are committed to the Dominican mission as the sisters experience it. These associates embrace the basic Dominican values of prayers, study, community and ministry.
- 35) We recognize that the Prioress Generals of the Dominican Congregations have the right to accept associate laymen and laywomen as members of the Dominican Family. Laity associated with the Friars
- 36) In many places, lay groups have appeared as alternatives to the traditional Dominican fraternities. In general, these lay people do not primarily desire to integrate themselves into a structure, but to participate in the mission of the Order as individuals or a family aggregated to some community of friars and their work.

Recommendation

- 37) We recommend to the Prior Provincials and their Council that they use the possibilities offered at the General Chapter of Avila (# 85B, 88,89) to grant these groups admission to the Dominican Family.
- 38) We recommend to the Prior Provincials and their Councils and equally to the Prioress Generals, that they establish basic criteria of admission that integrate the four fundamental pillars of Dominican Life: prayer, study, community and ministry.

Proposal of some basic criteria for the aggregation and admission of new groups.

Recommendation

- 39) As an explanation of these basic criteria we offer the following suggestions:
 - 1) Participation in the Dominican mission of preaching and teaching the Word of God.
 - 2) Active participation and collaboration in the concrete carrying out of the local and universal mission of the Order.
 - 3) A government that expresses the democratic and communitarian tradition of the Order.

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- 4) Community of life and prayer, unity in prayer with the whole Order; formation and study for the ministry of salvation and apostolic works to which they have been called.
- 5) Knowledge of and acceptance of the history of the Order; its origins and spirituality.
- 6) A commitment, at least temporary, to the mission of the Order, expressed as a profession, promise or other form of formal commitment.
- 7) As well as being admitted by the Superior Generals in the case of the movements of the associates to the congregations of sisters, and by the Master of the Order, in the case of groups associated to the friars or others who desire to belong to the Order, they should be recognised by the commission/ council/secretariat of the Dominican Family of the area.

FEAST OF ST. VINCENT FERRER

Recommendation

178. We recommend that the Liturgical Commission of the Order undertake the necessary procedures for moving the date of the feast of St. Vincent Ferrer outside of the Lenten season so it can be properly celebrated.

ACTS OF PROVINCIAL CHAPTERS

PROVINCIAL CHAPTER 1993

PROMOTION

Commission

73. We commission the Promoter of the Dominican Laity to continue the review of directories of the Dominican Laity in the province, and present them for approval to the next Provincial Chapter.

COLLABORATION

Exhortation

75. We encourage our communities to develop ways of collaborative preaching with members of the Dominican Family (cf. *Mexico*, nn. 82, 112).

DOMINICAN FAMILY CONFERENCE AND SECRETARIAT

COMMISSION

81. WE COMMISSION the Provincial to communicate with the Dominican Family regarding the implementation of n. 121 of the *Acts of the General Chapter of Mexico*.

MISSION

Commendation

82. WE COMMEND the work being done to extend the membership of the Dominican Laity in our Solomon Islands -Papua New Guinea Vicariate.

PROVINCIAL CHAPTER 1997

3.17 WE EXHORT that the brothers to do their best to attract young men and women to the Dominican Laity, forming new chapters as appropriate, especially among tertiary students.

6.3 WE COMMEND the Promoters of the Dominican Laity and the members of the Provincial Council of the Laity for their work in producing the new *Dominican Laity Handbook*.

Ordination

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80. We ordain that the following be added to the *Statute of the Province*:

37A. After the convocation of the Chapter, the Provincial with the advice of the Council, may invite to some part of the Chapter:

- i. representatives of Dominican sisters;
- ii. representatives of Dominican Laity;
- iii. specialists in accord with *LCO* 485.

PROVINCIAL CHAPTER 2000

Signs of the times regarding vocations

Some provinces of our Order and some other religious congregations and ecclesial movements, in comparable demographic, economic and cultural circumstances to our own, are attracting significant numbers of vocations today. We seek to read the signs of the times here for us. In particular we recognize the importance of:

- a clear sense of our distinctive corporate and individual identity, and visibility as Dominicans
- a love for our Dominican tradition, for the teachings of the Church, and above all for the Gospel which we are called by Christ to preach
- a good community life in which the brothers really care for each other
- a spirituality, into which the young are invited, expressed in liturgy, contemplation, community, study and preaching
- apostolates which bring us into contact with the young
- unembarrassed enthusiasm for inviting others to join us in our life and work
- openness and commitment to welcoming those who are searching for their vocation
- a formation community committed to fostering new vocations and supporting the younger brethren in their vocation
- encouragement from and involvement of the laity

Some of us may have been diffident about attracting new brethren and supporting the younger friars in the past. We now appreciate that these are very urgent concerns.

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DOMINICAN INTELLECTUAL AND SPIRITUAL PATRIMONY

- 4.17 WE COMMISSION the Regent to construct accessible courses of study on the intellectual patrimony of the Order, especially the thought of St Thomas Aquinas, which could be taught by different brothers and could be undertaken by our students, as well as by Dominican laity and interested others.
- 4.18 WE NOTE the success of the Dominican Spirituality Conference involving fr Paul Murray and others and WE EXHORT the new Provincial and Promoter of the Dominican Family to arrange another conference on Dominican spirituality to which members of all branches of the Dominican family be invited.



CODE OF CANON LAW & COMMENTARY

ASSOCIATIONS OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITHFUL

CANONS 298-311.

Section Four: Documentation - Other Directories & By Laws

CANONS AND COMMENTARY

CHAPTER 1
ASSOCIATIONS OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITHFUL
COMMON NORMS

[cc. 298-311]

Definition

Canon 298

§1. In the Church there are associations distinct from institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life, in which the Christian faithful, either clergy or laity, or clergy and laity together, strive by common effort to promote a more perfect life or to foster public worship or Christian doctrine or to exercise other apostolic works, namely to engage in efforts of evangelization, to exercise works of piety or charity and to animate the temporal order with the Christian spirit.

The general characteristic of "associations of the Christian faithful" within the Church is of a group of persons, not under vow - by contrast with the institutes of consecrated life - but nonetheless, they strive to promote "a more perfect life or to foster public worship or Christian doctrine or to exercise other apostolic works" that those other associations also aspire to. The distinction lies primarily in the absence of vows or promises or other "bonds" drawing the members toward the goals of the association. It might be remarked here that the canons of this title suggest a subtle orientation toward the clerical outlook, at least in that only its three final canons are addressed specifically to "Special Norms for Associations of the Laity."

It is interesting also that the three general aims of associations of the faithful described here echo what were indicated in former law as the complete list of *all* associations of the faithful: third orders (toward the perfection of personal life), confraternities (of public worship and Christian doctrine), and pious unions (defined in former law as established for "the exercise of some work of piety or charity," and broadened in the present law to include works of the apostolate reaching from evangelization to the explicit Christianization of the secular order).¹ The absence in the 1983 law of two of these names - confraternities and pious unions - and the hypothetical list of possible members proposed earlier suggest that the range of potential "associations of the Christian faithful" is enormous. The norms that follow, however, draw limits.

§2. The Christian faithful should enrol especially in associations which are erected or praised or recommended by competent ecclesiastical authority.

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The faithful are exhorted first, as an introduction, to give their allegiance "especially" to those associations that have been either "recommended" by the competent ecclesiastical authority (who will be defined later, in c. 312) or "established" by that authority. That difference is critically important - and will be defined immediately, in the following norms. The unmistakable implication is of a guarded uneasiness regarding membership in any association that has not been granted endorsement or outright establishment by "competent ecclesiastical authority."

Two major classes of associations of the faithful are recognized - based upon either the "establishment" of the association or upon its mere "recommendation" or "commendation" by the authority. The first brings into being a "public" association with certain express rights and limitations of supervision that come with its status as a "juridic person." The second - simple endorsement - brings into being a recognized association of the faithful within the Church; it, however, has only "private" status.

Right To Establish: "Private" Associations

Canon 299

The Christian faithful are free, by means of a private agreement made among themselves, to establish associations to attain the aims mentioned in can. 298, §1, with due regard for the prescriptions of can. 301, §1.

The right to form a private association is recognized first. Its aims are the three general ones described earlier (perfection of life, public worship, apostolic work). Two qualifications, however, are stated (a third will be added in §3 of this canon). The agreement of the prospective members is *of its nature* "private" - i.e. in the sense of lacking official ecclesiastical establishment. This is not in any sense an indication of its public exposure or secrecy or, above all, of the forbidden "secret societies" of nineteenth-century American church experience. Rather, it is a common covenant agreed upon among members, in a religious matter; it, however, lacks the specific establishment granted by "the authority competent to erect public associations" of canon 312 (the Holy See, national conference, or diocesan bishop). Second, this private agreement may not licitly be one directed toward a specific religious purpose that is of its very nature reserved to the ecclesiastical authority. Canon 301, §1, in turn, will spell this out:

Competent ecclesiastical authority alone has the right to erect associations of the Christian faithful which set out to teach Christian doctrine in the name of the Church or to promote public worship or which aim at other ends whose pursuit by their nature is reserved to the same ecclesiastical authority.

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A private association for the granting of ecclesiastical declarations of nullity would not meet with very high enthusiasm - much less establishment. Less clear would be the legitimacy, as a private association within the Church, of a dissident group establishing within a local church its own school of religion: is it proclaiming Christian doctrine "in the name of the Church"?

§2. Such associations are called private associations even though they are praised or recommended by ecclesiastical authority.

The law states that associations remain "private" in nature until they are, technically, "established" by the ecclesiastical authority. Commendation, praise, and even support, do not supply this. The Knights of Columbus, the May Day Rosary Procession, Marriage Encounters national or local, remain essentially private associations within the meaning of church law; they are warmly commended - and indeed recommended - but not established by, the hierarchy. (An earlier view held that the *only* instance of a "public" association - outside the triad of third orders, confraternities, and pious unions - was *Action Catholique* of four decades ago.) The distinction now is critical. With emergence as a public association of the Church, in this technical sense, the group becomes a full-fledged ecclesiastical entity, and the civil authority may lack all competence in regard to it - at least in internal matters. Neither can the civil authority interfere in its activity - insofar as the work of the association did not involve some public good. Hospital public health standards, as opposed to, for instance, the designation of a clerical chaplain, may come into play here.

§3. No private association of the Christian faithful in the Church is recognized unless its statutes are reviewed by competent authority.

A minimal level of endorsement from the larger Church is stated here, i.e. a certain level of recognition that is short of full acceptance as a "private" juridic person but yet beyond mere praise and commendation. It is necessary in every private association, if it is to be "recognized" by the Church, that its statutes be "reviewed by" the competent ecclesiastical authority. Neither of these terms is defined. Generally the first at least implies a somewhat modified acceptance and approval of the condition in which the body presents itself. The second at least implies, and perhaps strongly, careful scrutiny. In any event a direct statement by the authority that the disputed statutes are not recognized would effectively deny approval to the petitioning body.

"Catholic" in Title

Canon 300

No association shall assume the name "Catholic" without the consent of competent ecclesiastical authority, in accord with the norm of can. 312.

The name "Catholic" attached to an association, private or public, carries with it an unmistakable connotation of acting in some way for the larger ecclesiastical community. That larger community has a right to demand that those who represent it do so competently, and the name "Catholic" may hence be incorporated into the title of the association only with the consent of the competent authorities designated later - Holy See, national conference of bishops, or diocesan bishop. These in turn may legitimately *demand* that the name be removed from the title of an offending association. Judgment in this would seem to rest with the diocesan bishop.

Right To Establish: "Public" Associations

Canon 301

§1. Competent ecclesiastical authority alone has the right to erect associations of the Christian faithful which set out to teach Christian doctrine in the name of the Church or to promote public worship or which aim at other ends whose pursuit by their nature is reserved to the same ecclesiastical authority.

Certain areas of competence in spiritual things are held to be "reserved" to specific ecclesiastical authorities. Here the purpose of a proposed association is of its very nature a function reserved to ecclesiastical authority (and doctrinal teaching and public worship are in this canon specifically instanced as examples of this), the competent authority then "has the right to erect" the proposed association, rather than merely *praising* or *recommending* it. The law requires that the authority must thereby bring the association under the multiple requirements for *public* associations, which are the object of this chapter of the law on the People of God. The uneasy conjunction of *magisterium* and academic theological research comes into view here. Must, for example, the Catholic Theological Society of America be offered a charter of *establishment* by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops as a "public" association of the faithful and, therefore, a juridic person within the Church? The association certainly acquires juridic, or moral, personality by reason of its civil incorporation. It could correctly claim, however, that it does not "teach Christian doctrine in the name of the Church," and hence would not fall within this framework.'

§2. Competent ecclesiastical authority, if it judges it expedient, can also erect associations of the Christian faithful in order to attain directly

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or indirectly other spiritual ends whose accomplishment has not been sufficiently provided for by the efforts of private persons.

The goals of proclamation of the gospel and of public worship are not the only ones pursued by associations of the Christian faithful that must become "public" juridic persons within the Church. The competent authority reserves the right to establish certain even "indirectly" spiritually oriented public associations in order to attain ends not successfully initiated or accomplished by private enterprises (e.g. the Bishops' Catholic Relief Services).

§3. Associations of the Christian faithful which are erected by competent ecclesiastical authority are called public associations.

The term "public," in short, is attached only to those associations that have been "erected" by competent ecclesiastical authority; this distinguishes them from those "private" associations that are merely "praised or recommended."

Clerical Associations

Canon 302

Associations of the Christian faithful are called clerical associations when they are under the direction of the clergy, when they presume the exercise of sacred orders, and when they are recognized as such by competent authority.

"Clerical" associations are designated as those governed by clerics (i.e. those of the order of deacon, priest, or bishop), exercising sacred orders, and officially acknowledged as clerical. The intent of this norm is not spelled out - however clear are the terms used to designate the specifically "clerical" association. Since the law recognizes, in canon 298, §1, the possibility of groups of mixed membership as regards clerics or lay persons, it must be assumed that this present norm fixes eligibility for those functions within the Church that are expressly to be confined to clerics. In any event, the "exercise of sacred orders" would be confined to the clerical members in a mixed association. The designation of the association as expressly "clerical" would then be dependent upon the function of a cleric as the "moderator"; equally clearly, such a designation would have to be the product of a statutory requirement (e.g. the casual election of a priest to the presidency of the Ushers' Club would not make it thereby an expressly "clerical" association).

Third Orders

Canon 303

Associations whose members lead an apostolic life and strive for Christian perfection while living in the world and who share the spirit of some religious institute under the higher direction of that same institute are called third orders or some other appropriate name.

It has been noted that earlier legislation recognized only three associations of the faithful - third orders, confraternities, and pious unions. The first alone is now explicitly mentioned in church law. Traditionally, the "first order" was that of men religious - not necessarily ordained - pursuing the evangelical counsels under vow and in common life according to the rule and life-style offered by the founder. The "second order" was of women religious pursuing similar goals, following much the same rule, and normally under the spiritual guidance of a member of the first order. Medieval records show numerous lay persons associating themselves with either institution, sometimes living literally within them or in their shadow, pursuing a life in the spirit of the community but without the bond of vow, and to a greater or a lesser extent still involved in "the world." These "third orders" were initially formalized by Francis of Assisi, although there had been earlier a Benedictine tradition of 'oblates'. There are now reported to be some nine "third orders" with recognition as juridic persons in the Church - following Benedictine, Franciscan, "Norbertine," Dominican, Carmelite, Augustinian, Francesco de Paolo, Servite, and Trinitarian traditions.' (These are third orders *secular*. Third orders *regular* add the formality of vow and common life and become, for all practical purposes, clones of the first order.)

Statutes

Canon 304

§1 All associations of the Christian faithful, whether public or private, by whatever title or name they are called, are to have their own statutes which define the end of the association or its social objective, its headquarters, its government, the conditions of membership and by whom its policies are to be determined, according to the need or utility of time and place.

Social tranquility demands a measure of guidelines and constitutional limits and privileges. It is now required that all associations within the Church, whether public or private, have a clearly drawn-up constitution by which each may be held accountable both to the competent superior and to its own body. Five requisites for this body of statutes are indicated herein: a statement of the association's goals and objectives, the locale of the association, its rules of governance, the conditions for membership, and the

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determiner of its policies. The final requisite is to be adapted to the culture in which it is embedded. The competent authority is quite correct in withholding even an informal endorsement of a group that has not yet clarified its aims according to these guidelines.

§2 They are to choose a title or name for themselves which is adapted to the usage of their time and place, selected especially in view of their intended purpose.

Furthermore, honest representation of the goals of the association is demanded in the name or title of the group, as suitable to the culture in which it is set. The qualification of legitimate use of the term "Catholic," as stated in canon 300, has already been seen. It would seem that an ordinary or other competent superior could require correction of any false or misleading title - under pain of withdrawal of approbation.

Vigilance and Accountability

Canon 305

§1 All associations of the Christian faithful are subject to the vigilance of competent ecclesiastical authority, whose duty it is to take care that integrity of faith and morals is preserved in them and to watch lest abuse creep into ecclesiastical discipline; therefore that authority has the right and duty to visit them in accord with the norm of law and the statutes; such associations are also subject to the governance of the same authority according to the prescriptions of the following canons.

Central to the concept of associations of the Christian faithful within the church community is that there be official recognition and endorsement of the group - whether it has public or private status - by either of the routes already discussed. In conjunction with becoming either a public or a private juridic entity, however, there comes to either kind of association a reciprocal relationship of accountability. This is specified here as being directed to the appropriate ecclesiastical authority that had either endorsed or established the association. The thrust of this supervision is clearly twofold: (1) preservation of the integrity of faith and morals and (2) verification by the authority that there is no abuse of ecclesiastical discipline. These guidelines, from the point of view of the authority, are derived from those of the general function of the pastor of the local church (in its broadest sense), i.e. the diocesan bishop. His functions are crystallized in canons 375, 386, 391, and 396, described later in this volume. There must always be due regard for the exemption of religious houses - and as is implied in the above commentary on canon 303, a "third order" might indeed stand at the threshold between public cult (under a bishop's superintendence) and internal devotion (under that of the first order). From the point of view of any association, it is al-

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ways liable to examination upon the guidelines of its own internal statutes already described in canon 304, § 1, as well as in certain specific areas to be described in the later norms.

§2 Associations of any kind whatever are subject to the vigilance of the Holy See; diocesan associations and also other associations to the extent that they work in the diocese are subject to the vigilance of the local ordinary.

The range of supervision represents a kind of inverted umbrella: that of the Holy See covers all associations, whether public or private, whether universal or purely local. Obviously, the latter diocesan associations are under the immediate governance and "vigilance" of the bishop of the jurisdiction in which they are founded or based. More importantly, the current guidelines expressly allow the ordinary of a local church to supervise those associations whose seat may be elsewhere but are nonetheless active within the territory of his own jurisdiction. Again, the norms of public cult - versus the purely internal devotions of religious houses - are applicable: that threshold may not be ignored, and only the public function of the association is liable to supervision and "vigilance."

Benefits

Canon 306

In order for a person to enjoy the rights and privileges, indulgences and other spiritual favours granted to the association, it is necessary and suffices that the person has been validly received into it and not legitimately dismissed from it, in accord with the prescriptions of the law and the proper statutes of the association.

Only two requirements are stated in the law as being necessary for participation in the spiritual benefits of the association: valid reception and continued membership. It is to be noted that these "favours" granted to the members seem to emphasize the "spiritual" realm exclusively; for example, rights, privileges, indulgences, and other spiritual favours. The canon simply does not address itself to insurance benefits or the right to wear a red cape. These matters are to be settled according to the statutes of the association and adjudicated according to its own internal processes and norms. In addition, the qualifications for "valid" reception are not spelled out - unless that pivotal concept of law is itself addressed within the constitution of the association. In its effect, this means that the "benefits" of the association are not in the least lost either through inactivity within the association or failure to observe other of its statutes. (In addition, obviously, the statutes are not binding in conscience - beyond the demands of the quality of fidelity.) Unless the constitutions and by-laws indicate either

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expulsion or the penalty of non-participation, the benefits continue to inhere in the members of the association indefinitely.

Membership

again, to their constitutions, in considering such a group. Former legislation forbade that "which could not be reconciled" with the purposes of the applicant's institute. Contemporary law in effect remands this to the judgment of the superior as he grants or withholds approval.

Canon 307

§1 The reception of members is to be done in accord with the norm of law and the statutes of each association.

For membership and its attendant ritual, it has already been noted that the constitution or rule of the association is the determinant. The rule might or might not address itself to the canonical legances of validating or invalidating circumstances.

Dismissal

Canon 308

No one who has been legitimately enrolled may be dismissed from an association except for a just cause in accord with the norm of law and the statutes.

§2 The same person can be enrolled in several associations.

A proportionate and just cause is required for the dismissal of a duly inscribed member. This may be defined in the statutes of the association; lacking this criterion or in a dispute, recourse might ultimately be made to any of the following: (1) the general standard of "the reasonable judgment of prudent persons"; (2) a process for the settlement of disputes that is expressed in the statutes themselves; or (3) a course of action that is appropriate to the administrative procedures or the Due Process Board.

Previous concern with multiple and perhaps conflicting association memberships is removed by the present law. Earlier legislation" forbade members of one third order to enrol in that of another religious institute.

There is no such limitation in the 1983 Code. One person can be ascribed to several associations. There is no contraindication to holding membership in multiple associations within the Church.

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Rights and Obligations of the Juridic Person

§3 Members of religious institutes can enrol in associations in accord with their own law with the consent of their superior.

Canon 309

Legitimately constituted associations have the right, in accord with the law and the statutes, to issue particular norms respecting the association itself, to hold meetings, to designate moderators, officials, other officers and administrators of goods.

Members of institutes of consecrated life may also join associations of the faithful. No limitations are stated beyond that of their own statutes. (Theoretically, a devout Jesuit might become, at his own risk and in his own house, a member of the third order of Saint Dominic.) They are referred to their own superior for an appropriate approval and, once brought into being by endorsement (private) or establishment (public), an association has a right to the formalities of its own proper norms, to hold assemblies, to designate officers, and so on. The "law and the statutes" that are referred to here are those of the association itself, rather than those of the Code. It is an expression of regard, within the earlier limitations of ecclesiastical "vigilance" (examined in the commentary on c. 305), both for the essential autonomy of the association and for the encouragement of its own spontaneous development and growth within the Church's life. It represents one pole of a tension - of which the other is the primarily spiritual superintendence by the competent ecclesiastical authority. This canon is a bulwark against the intrusion of that authority into the legitimate autonomy of the association. It would seem that only, for instance, where gross fiscal mismanagement by the association or its public utterances are a grave jeopardy to the larger Church might the competent higher authority intervene. This is a difficult minefield lying between the opposing claims of autonomy on the one hand and the common welfare on the other.

Canon 310

A private association which has not been constituted a juridic person cannot as such be a subject of obligations and rights; however, the christian faithful associated together in it can jointly contract obligations and acquire rights and possess goods as co-owners and co-possessors; they can exercise their rights and obligations through an agent or proxy.

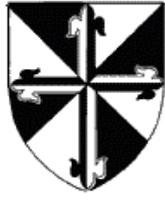
ASSOCIATIONS OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITHFUL

Ellsworth Kneal

The setting of title V, '*Associations of the Christian Faithful*', and even its introductory language, are interesting and significant. First the setting. Within the very last weeks before promulgation of the 1983 Code, this entire title was transplanted. It had been set up in an entirely different area. It was an adjunct to and a kind of appendix to the canons on religious institutes of consecrated life. In its final form, it stands amidst the area of law dealing explicitly with the rights and duties of the *Christifideles* - whether the Christian faithful be ordained or not.

Second, the language has remained largely unchanged. This history affects the whole interpretation of these canons; it throws considerable light upon the language of the very first canon. It is imperative to recall that these canons describe institutes within the Church that are parallel to, and adjunct to, religious life - despite this new setting. What they describe are groups of non-vowed Christians (usually non-ordained and therefore 'lay' - but not necessarily so) who are joined together in associations that have precisely the spiritual aims of varying religious institutes. It is significant to recall that until the last months before the publication of these canons, the title was in fact '*Other Associations of the Faithful*'. Those to which they were contrasted, and to which they were linked both in placement and in spirit, were institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life. This legislation, therefore, has a precise and narrowed intent (that is spelled out in §1).

Therein lies a difficulty. The tendency will be to explore the extent to which certain clearly recognizable and highly visible 'associations of the Christian faithful' within the Church can or should be fitted within these canons. Upon that discovery a great deal lies - notably governance and supervision and accountability. To what extent, it may be asked, is a 1980 association, '*The Association for the Rights of Catholics in the Church*', to be governed by these norms? The same question may be asked regarding the following: a diocesan hospital; the National Federation of Priests' Councils; contemplative women establishing a new foundation that would be less bound by cloister (and directed by the Holy See to call themselves a 'pious union');² 'Christ life communities', once known as 'sodalities'; and the Chicago Association of Priests. The tension between autonomy and governance makes this question critical for such varied associations. Financial assets, appointments of officers, goals and apostolates themselves will fall under this governance - or will not - according to the norms of title V.



**DIRECTORIES & BY LAWS OF THE
DOMINICAN LAITY IN OTHER PROVINCES**

**EXTRACTS FROM DIRECTORY & BY-LAWS
OF THE DOMINICAN LAITY IN THE
TERRITORY OF THE PHILIPPINE PROVINCE,
1992**

INCORPORATION INTO THE DOMINICAN LAITY

**ACTS OF THE CANADIAN PROVINCIAL
FRATERNITIES OF THE DOMINICAN LAITY**

EXTRACTS FROM DIRECTORY & BY-LAWS OF THE DOMINICAN LAITY IN THE TERRITORY OF THE PHILIPPINE PROVINCE, 1992

INCORPORATION INTO THE DOMINICAN LAITY

6. Following the provisions of the Statues of Fraternities of Lay Dominicans, the stages of formation for new individual members of the local Chapters are herein provided:

6.1 Admission and Training

The following have the power to admit aspirants into the Dominican Laity of the Order of Preachers -

- a) The Master of the Order, or the Prior Provincial, or the Provincial Promoter of the Dominican Laity of the Order of Preachers, Philippine Province.
- b) The lawfully appointed religious promoter / (spiritual director) of the Chapter, or a Father delegated by the Prior Provincial for the local Chapter. The delegation granted by the Prior Provincial requires confirmation of his successor.

6.2 Aspirancy

Requisites for admission

A well disposed person, practicing Catholic, living a devout life and of good repute, sincerely desirous of Christian perfection, may ask to be interviewed by an authorized person of the local Chapter of the Dominican Laity.

- a) The aspirant must be at least 18 years of age; male or female; single, or if married, with the consent of the spouse.
- b) The aspirant must secure a letter of recommendation from his Parish Priest.
- c) The aspirant must not belong to any religious congregation or to another Third Order.

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6.3 Postulancy

- a) A stage of Postulancy may require the aspirant a period of at least 6 months to 1 year of probation to further determine one's aspiration to become a Lay Dominican of the Order of Preachers.

He/she will be observed as an ardent follower of the Rule, and as a zealous promoter of the truth of the Catholic faith.

He/she is loyal to the Church and to the Holy Father and will adhere to the Dominican Order with filial allegiance.

- b) For the purposes mentioned above, the postulant should -
- 1) Attend classes on basic Christian Doctrine and the Rule and Constitutions of the Dominican Laity under the Director of Postulants.
 - 2) Strive to attend Mass and receive Holy Communion frequently, daily if possible.
 - 3) Recite and meditate on the 5 decades of the Rosary daily.
 - 4) Spend at least 15 minutes in meditation and spiritual reading daily.
 - 5) Recite daily the Christian Prayer as provided in par. 5.8b (one should try to recite daily the Office of Readings, Morning Prayer, Daytime Prayer, Evening Prayer and Night Prayer of the Liturgy of the Hours. If this is not possible, one may recite the Little Office).
 - 6) Go to confession at least once a month to a regular confessor, if possible to a Dominican Priest.
 - 7) Attend Chapter meetings regularly.
 - 8) Observe and participate in the Chapter's communal activities; such as the recollection, retreat, triduum for St. Dominic and St. Catherine of Siena, liturgy of the hours, other prayers for specified days, suffrages, and other duties and practices as required by the Rule.

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c) Vestition

Admission for incorporation into the Dominican Laity Chapter of a candidate for the Novitiate is premised on the following:

- 1) Interview on
 - a) His knowledge of the Creed and the Commandments, and
 - b) A general knowledge of -
 - the Sacraments and Prayers
 - and the Rule
- 2) The favourable vote of at least a majority of the members of the Chapter Council, after listening to the result of the interview.

The postulant, then, is informed that he is admitted to the Novitiate by the Director of Postulants.

- 3) Reception to the Novitiate is conducted by the religious promoter/(spiritual director), the President and the Director of Postulants, in a special religious ceremony in accordance with the Investiture Ceremonies herein appended, and which form an integral part of the Rule (Appendix 'A').
- 4) The Postulant is invested with a small scapular, described in par. 5.9a.
- 5) After the investiture of the Postulant, he enters into the duties of a Novice.

6.4 The Novitiate

This stage, after postulancy, may take another period of at least 1 year, within which period the habit of study inculcated before is now intensified.

- a) In wider and greater detail, the Novice shall receive regular instruction on the Creed, the Sacraments, the Commandments, and the Rule under the direction of the Director of Novices.
- b) Recite daily the Christian Prayer as provided in par. 5.8b. (see above).

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- c) Attend daily Mass and receive Holy Communion, if possible.
- d) Spend at least 15 minutes in meditation and spiritual reading daily.
- e) Recite and meditate on the 5 decades of the Rosary daily.
- f) Attend the regular meetings of the Chapter.
- g) Go to confession at least once a month to a regular confessor, if possible to a Dominican priest.
- h) Observe suffrages and other prayers, duties and practices enjoined by the Rule.

6.5 Temporary Profession

Before temporary profession, the Novice having observed the requirements or the conditions stated in par. 6.4 must have -

- a) A previous interview, with a greater emphasis as that required under par. 6.3c 1. On the Creed, the Commandments, the Sacraments and Prayers, and the Rule.
- b) A favourable vote of the majority of the members of the Chapter Council, after deliberation on the observations of the Directors and the interviewers.
- c) The Novice is informed that he will be temporarily professed in the Dominican Laity for not less than 3 years by the Director of Novices.
- d) The temporary profession shall be conducted in a religious ceremony, with the candidate pledging to live according to the spirit of St. Dominic and in accordance with the way of life indicated in the Directory, in conformity with the rite prescribed in the profession ceremonies appended herein (Appendix A) and which is made an integral part hereof, in the presence of the Religious Promoter/(Spiritual Director), the President, and the Director of Novices, with the recitation of the formulary (for temporary profession) of the Statutes of Fraternities of Lay Dominicans (no. 14).

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- e) This formal promise enjoins the temporarily professed during the period to observe and practice what has been undergone during the stages of postulancy and novitiate and study in a greater degree for a period of at least three (3) years.
- f) The temporarily professed, after the period of three (3) years of living according to the spirit of St. Dominic and the way of life of the Lay Dominican, may continue to make the perpetual profession, upon the favorable vote of the majority of the members of the Chapter Council, after having undergone a satisfactory interview on the candidate's learning of Sacred Truth, the Creed, the Commandments, the Sacraments, the Rule and deeper spiritual life formation.

Should the candidate fail to be perpetually professed, he may renew his temporary profession for a period of at least one (1) year but not for more than another three (3) years; after which he is either admitted to perpetual profession or dismissed.

7.2 Perpetual Profession

The commitment to live the way of life set by St. Dominic, as previously indicated in the preceding paragraphs, may be made by a formal promise 'for my whole life', at a religious ceremony, prescribed in the profession ceremonies appended herein, (Appendix 'A') and made an integral part of the Rule, in the presence of the religious promoter/(spiritual director), the President and the Director of Temporarily Professed, with the use of the formulary set by the Statutes (no. 14)

- a) The perpetually professed with faith and good will has the duty to continue the study engendered in the previous formation, taking into full consideration the principal sources of Dominican formation prescribed by the Statutes (nos. 10 & 13) which are the springboard to a freshened and intensified love for God.
- b) This is best accomplished by following a well-organized course on Scriptures, Theology and deeper understanding of Dominican spirituality to be given at Chapter meetings or at other times by the religious promoter/(spiritual director) or by other competent teachers, and personal readings of literature on the same matters.

This course should be accompanied by the reading of the lives of our Dominican Saints and Blesseds to serve as models in the daily life of a Lay Dominican

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7.3 The Private (Isolated) Lay Dominican

As circumstances necessitate it, according to the findings of the Council of the local Chapter and upon its favourable recommendation, the Provincial Promoter, or if delegated, the religious promoter/(spiritual director), may dispense with a perpetually professed Lay Dominican's attendance at the regular meetings of the Chapter, without in any instance forfeiting the duties as a Lay Dominican provided in this Directory.

- a) The Private Lay Dominican shall fulfil and observe the requisites of the Rule while in that status.
- b) The Private Lay Dominican shall be in communion with the local Chapter where he shall endeavour to fulfil the duties and practices generally enjoined on members of the local Chapter, as set forth in this Directory.

7.4 Transfer

A Lay Dominican, whether a Novice or Professed, may transfer in any of the following ways:

- a) From our Chapter to another Chapter in our Province, in which case, the novice or professed Lay Dominican shall be required to obtain the consent of the religious promoter/(spiritual director) and the majority of the members of the Council of the former Chapter.

The transferring Lay Dominican shall be received with clarity, in the same status enjoyed from the former Chapter with the consent of the religious promoter/(spiritual director) and the majority of the Council of the receiving Chapter.

Otherwise, the receiving Chapter may require a probation period not exceeding one (1) year.

- b) When the Lay Dominican of a Chapter of the Philippine Province transfers to another Province or Vicariate, the Provincial Promoter of the Dominican Laity of the Order of Preachers, Philippine Province, shall furnish the Provincial Promoter of the Province or Vicariate to which the Lay Dominican wishes to transfer, the information that the latter Province may require concerning the transferring Lay Dominican.

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- a) When a Lay Dominican wishes to join a religious community, the Provincial Promoter of the Dominican Laity, Philippine Province shall furnish such information concerning the Lay Dominican transferee, as may be required by the Superior of the religious community.

7.2 Organization of Chapters

The Dominican Laity Chapter is governed by the President with his Council, fully responsible for its government and administration. The local Chapter is initially formed and organized in accordance with the Rule established in this Directory. After having been organized and erected canonically, the Chapter flows into the mainstream of activities of all existing Chapters. The Provincial Council must, therefore, be financially and morally supported by the Chapters.

a) Initial organization of a local Chapter

A local Chapter is lawfully organized upon compliance with the requirements stated below:

- 1) The organization is initially made by a group of at least six (6) perpetually professed Lay Dominicans, who are habitual residents of the locality, and;
 - a) agree to form a new Chapter
 - b) are able to attend monthly meetings required of a Chapter
 - c) have placed this agreement in writing on their free and voluntary consent, among themselves
- 1) A written consent of the Parish Priest of the locality must be obtained upon petition of the newly formed group.

The petition shall include the following information:

- a) a list of names comprising the group
- b) the proposed name of the Chapter
- c) the proposed religious promoter/(spiritual director) of the Chapter
- d) the proposed patron/patroness of the Chapter
- e) the place designated as the official seat of the Chapter, and

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- f) the clear indication of the territory of the Chapter
- 1) Written approval of the local Ordinary must be obtained before the erection of the new Chapter.
- 2) An official document from the Prior Provincial, Order of Preachers, must be issued designating:
 - a) Place of Chapter
 - b) Patron of the Chapter
 - c) Territory it covers
 - d) Confirmation of election of first officers and council members
 - e) Appointment of religious promoter/(spiritual director)
 - f) Date of the Chapter's canonical erection and inauguration
 - g) Document of erection done by him or his delegate signed by two (2) duly qualified witnesses.
- 1) The following books of the Chapter must be canonically opened by the Prior Provincial or his delegate:
 - a) Registration book
 - b) Council book of minutes and book of attendance
 - c) Chapter book of minutes and book of attendance
 - d) Treasurer's book
- e) Newly Former Chapter Council

Every Chapter is initially organized by and composed of at least six (6) perpetually professed members.

Prior to erection of the Chapter, the group shall elect the members of the Chapter Council

Only professed members may vote and be voted upon

Election shall be by simple majority vote.

- 1) Among themselves, the six (6) members elect three (3) councillors, who form the Council, together with the

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religious promoter/(spiritual director), as ex-officio member of the Council.

- 2) The six (6) perpetually professed members then again elect from the three (3) elected councillors, three (3) officers, namely: President, a Director (of Postulants, Novices and Temporarily Professed) and a Secretary-Treasurer
- 3) The term of office of the councillors and the officers is regulated by the religious promoter/(spiritual director) and the whole Chapter, until the Chapter has twelve (12) active members, in which case its organization shall be as established in the manner provided in this Directory (par. 7.3)
- 4) In all other aspects as to structure and government, the provisions of this Directory applies to the initially organized Chapter.
- 5) The newly formed Chapter shall comply with all other provisions of this Directory pertaining to the spiritual life formation, admission and training.

7.3 Local Chapter Council and Officers

- a) This is composed of not less than eight (8) but not more than twelve(12) perpetually professed Lay Dominicans who are elected by the members of each Chapter at a meeting called for the purpose.

They are elected by majority vote.

Only perpetually professed members may vote or be voted upon

Upon election of the councillors, they meet to organize and assume their functions as provided in this Directory.

- 1) The Council elects, from among themselves, the following officers, namely: President, Vice-President, Director of Postulants, Director of Novices, Director of Temporarily Professed, Secretary and Treasurer; the religious promoter/(spiritual director) is an ex-officio member of the Chapter Council
- 2) When the circumstances demand, and with the consent of the Council, the following officers may be appointed by the President, namely: the Secretary, the Treasurer and the Directors of Postulants, Novices and Temporarily Professed.

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- 3) The term of office for all councillors and elective officers is three (3) years, but not exceeding two (2) consecutive terms.
- 4) Vacancies among officers are filled by electing the successor for three (3) full years from the date of such election, in order to give a certain continuity among the officers
- 5) Councillors, are divided into three (3) groups. The first group is elected for one (1) year, the second for two (2) years, and the third for three (3) years. Subsequent elections are for three (3) years.
- 6) In order to keep the staggering among the councillors, vacancies among councillors who are not officers are filled only for the unexpired term.

Such incomplete term is not counted in determining eligibility for re-election. In any case, par. 3) is observed.

a) Council Meeting

The frequency of the Council meeting is determined by the President and Council.

Attendance at such meeting is recorded by the Secretary of the Council.

A council member who misses to attend more than half of the meetings in one year, except in case of illness or other grave reason is automatically dropped from the council, in which case, the professed members of the Chapter elect his successor.

A council officer who is remiss in the performance of his duties for whatever reason, may be requested to resign by the Council.

b) Chapter Regular Meeting

This is held at least once a month.

- 1) All members who attend such meetings manifest their presence by signing the attendance book. Any member who cannot attend should notify in advance the President or Secretary, or any council member.

At the end of each year, those who missed more than five meetings – except in the case of illness or grave reason – are warned by the President.

Those who, in two years, attend less than half the meetings, except in the case of illness or other grave reason – are

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warned and taken off from the list of active members. The council may decide to deprive them for two consecutive years of their right to vote.

- 1) Chapter meeting should include the choral recitation of at least one liturgical hour; absolution of faults, instruction by the religious promoter/(spiritual director), and business meeting under the direction of the President.

The meeting should also include community prayer whenever called for in the Directory.

7.4 The Provincial Council

The Provincial Council of the Dominican Laity in the Philippine Province of the Order of Preachers.

This body is established for the primary purpose of assisting the Provincial Promoter in coordinating the activities and needs of all the Chapters in the several regions within the Provincial territory.

*S. Directory & By-Laws of the Dominican Laity
In the Territory of the Philippine Province of the Order of Preachers, 1992*

**ACTS OF THE CANADIAN PROVINCIAL FRATERNITIES
OF THE DOMINICAN LAITY**

INTRODUCTION

This is a report of the amendments which were studied and adopted during the five Chapters which took place between 1979 and 1995. All matters which no longer apply have been deleted.

The amendments were divided into four major groups:

1. Mission
2. Commitment
3. Organization
4. Formation

The dates of the Provincial Chapters were;

1. June 9 & 10, 1979
2. October 16, 17 & 18, 1981
3. June 8, 9 & 10, 1984
4. April 24, 25 & 26, 1987
5. October 7, 8 & 9, 1995

We would like to note also that in 1985 there was the **INTERNATIONAL CHAPTER OF THE LAITY** held in Montreal. It was at this Chapter that the **RULE OF THE LAY FRATERNITIES OF ST. DOMINIC** was written for the first time after 700 years of being a part of the Dominican Family. This document is the fundamental constitution of the Dominican Laity.

THE MISSION

25. Following the example of Saint Dominic, the Lay Dominicans are attentive to others, to events, to signs of their times and:

They testify by their prayers, their joy of living, their willingness to serve, their welcoming disposition, their openness towards others, their collaboration with all members of the Dominican Family and their ministry among their brothers and sisters of the Dominican Laity;

They preach in their respective environments, their families, their workplace, even when they are far away by their desire and their prayer as did Saint Dominic and Saint Catherine of Siena;

They pursue the education of their faith by a research of **TRUTH** by means of the Word of God, contemplation and apostolate.

26. In 1979, the Provincial Chapter of the Dominican Laity respectfully submitted the following to the Master of the Order:

“That a general Charter be promulgated to establish for all branches of the Dominican Family, the spirit and purpose of Saint Dominic, that is to say, the nature of the Dominican Vocation, the spirituality of the Order and its mission in the Church”.

27. It was also proposed that a petition be sent to the General Chapter of the Order to be held in Walberberg in 1980 to support the elaboration and promulgation of such a General Charter as the International Symposium of the Dominican Family proposes to establish.

28. The Directory will clearly indicate the essential elements of the Dominican Spirituality. In particular, it will state explicitly the importance of prayer (liturgical prayer, private meditation and the Rosary), penitence, the study of Sacred Science, silence, evangelical counsel and community life in the Lay Fraternity.

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THE COMMITMENT

1. SPIRITUAL

29. Each Lay Dominican is strongly encouraged to recite each day all or part of the “**Liturgy of the Hours**” or the “**Prayers of the Fraternity**”. This having been stated, the choice of each member must be respected.
30. The Directory will emphasize the importance of the devotion to Mary in all its forms and especially the practice of the Rosary as a school of contemplation of the mysteries of Christ with Mary’s help.
31. Considering that Rosary devotions have their place in the life of a Lay Dominican, it is proposed:
 - A. That we use the new methods at our disposal to better pray the Rosary;
 - B. That it be a deliberate act where by one discovers the unfathomable riches of Christ through the mysteries of the Rosary.
32. In 1979, the Provincial Chapter of the Dominican Laity respectfully submitted to the Master of the Order that all members of the Dominican Family (priests, brothers, religious and lay members) be bound to recite the Salve Regina every night as a symbol and act of unity in the Dominican Family.
33. The Directory will mention each lay Dominican’s obligation to hold or to participate in three (3) Masses for the deceased of the Order and to hold or participate in one Mass and say the Rosary for the peaceful reposal of the soul when a member of their Fraternity dies.
34. It is recommended that a Lay Dominican participate in one retreat each year. If it is impossible that this retreat be preached by a Dominican in our respective surroundings, it is proposed that:
 - A. Lay members be informed of retreats preached by our Priests, Sisters or Lay Dominicans by means of the **New Bond**;
 - B. These retreats be taped on cassettes to be sent to our sick members.

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35. Concerning the day of spiritual revival held in the regions, it is proposed that:
 - A. Each Fraternity study its possibility and report to the Provincial Council,
 - B. It be open to the public,
 - C. The reflections of that day be sent to the distant Fraternities or that they be recorded on cassettes.
36. A large gathering or pilgrimage, typically Dominican, could be organized on the feast days of Saint Dominic and Saint Catherine of Siena, alternating each year. This would stimulate the fervour and the Fraternity of all Lay Dominicans.

2. APOSTOLIC

37. Lay Dominicans will have an enlightened and effective apostolic action with a view to reducing their lack of understanding by a sustained attention to events and by a deepening of their faith through the Word of God and the teaching of the Church.
38. Each Lay Dominican will have a spiritual life that is profound and informed enough to ensure that each will open themselves cordially to all needs of today's world and be able, whenever possible, to bring in it a word of salvation.
39. While each Lay Dominican is supposed to have a basic formation, it is recommended that, in each Fraternity, Study Committees and Action Committees be formed which will have the following tasks:
 - A. Take heed of already existing commitments and from these commitments, draw an outline of a more specific apostolate;
 - B. The goal of this is to proceed towards a Dominican apostolic action and to form members that are truly committed in common apostolic fields with all the Dominican Family.
40. As the Lay Dominican Fraternities are asked to commit themselves in very different manners and keeping in mind the

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needs of the various locations, it was recommended that the following criteria be accepted to ensure that our apostolic commitments will become truly Dominican apostolic actions:

- A. Everything that deals with rediscovery of the mysteries of Christ through the mysteries of the Rosary;
- B. Everything that deals with the passionate research and seeking of Truth and Justice;
- C. Everything that deals with the testimony of Christ, with the preaching of the Gospel and with the defending of the Faith and the Church.

This holds in all situations in which we may find ourselves: family, work, leisure or in public life.

- 41. Not content to dwell on the social injustices, we should be, in our "affluent" world, witnesses of the poverty of Christ, who made himself poor in every sense of the word to contend with unjust wealth and to inspire within us the poverty of "liberation". In other words, one should seek how one can become poor in the literal sense of the word, in order to be poor with the poor and free like the impoverished Christ.
- 42. Each Fraternity, in union with the ecclesiastic authority, (Provincial Council and Diocesan Authority), will undertake all action (social, political and legal) to contend with social injustice.

THE ORGANIZATION

I. THE FRATERNITY

1.1 The Meetings

43. The meetings of a Fraternity are the privileged place of the birth, growth and development of the Dominican life of each of its members.
44. In order to answer to a need, it is proposed that a spiritual advisor alternate their presence between two Fraternities.
45. In the same spirit, a Lay Moderator could help a Fraternity for a certain period of time.
46. A minimum of one meeting a month is desirable.
47. In order to ensure a better formation of Lay Members and increase their interest in the Laity, we encourage the Fraternities to regularly hold two meetings per month.
48. To improve the Dominican quality of our meetings, we ask that we devote sufficient time to study and dialogue and this time is to be in addition to the time allotted to the celebration of the Holy Eucharist.
49. The content of the meetings of the Fraternity is established as follows:
 - a. Dominican community prayer which would vary according to the needs of the hour and the wishes of the members.
 - b. The study of the Rule.
 - c. Biblical study with full member participation.
 - d. A general theme chosen by the Provincial Council with guidance from the spiritual advisor.
 - e. An exchange between members.
 - f. Study of the lives of the Dominican Saints.
 - g. The Holy Eucharist.

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50. Within each of its publications, the **NEW BOND** will present a brief reminder of the new **Rule of the Lay Fraternities of Saint Dominic**.
51. Throughout the entire Province, the Fraternity meetings will take their inspiration from Dominican and Biblical themes and also from the many questions forwarded from the Provincial level; that is, either from the Provincial Promoter or a committee named for this purpose.
52. For any meeting of the Fraternity, a specified goal will be fixed by the Fraternity's Council, preferably one chosen from the **NEW BOND**.
53. In order for more and more members to feel responsible in the Fraternities, members will be appointed, each in their turn, to be responsible for the preparation and facilitation of regular meetings according to a theme chosen by the Fraternity.
54. Aspirants will be invited to participate in our monthly meetings in such a manner that they receive adequate information before committing themselves.
55. It is proposed that meetings be set up between the different Fraternities. This would allow a truly fraternal acquaintance, a better spirit of mutual aid and an increased interest in the realization of common projects.
56. The ideal would be for the Fraternities to become parish-oriented with an annual meeting to invite a group of Fraternities to participate.
57. Once a year, on the occasion of a Dominican feast, members of the Fraternity will renew their profession as a reminder of their fidelity and to increase their sense of responsibility.
58. The Fraternities will all submit themselves to the authority of the Provincial Council of the Dominican Laity.
59. It is proposed that at the end of each meeting of the Fraternity, an evaluation be made to ensure the efficiency of the meeting.

1.2 The Books

60. Two books will be formed:

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- A. The first, to be entirely reconstituted, will deal with the Fraternity. This is the Directory;
- B. The second will contain the Office, ritual prayers and some prints of the Saints of the Order. It will also contain the special prayers of the Order: the Rosary, Prayers for the sick and the dead, etc. and also the Salve Regina in Latin and English.

The second book will establish a powerful bond through prayer between all of the local members and those who are far away and cannot attend.

- 61. The Rule of the Lay Fraternities of Saint Dominic is presently maintained as a separate book.
- 62. The Provincial Promoter will establish a list of books which have appeared recently and are adapted to the members of the Lay Dominican Fraternities.
- 63. The Fraternities which are in possession of two or more of the same books should give their extra copies to a Fraternity that does not have them.

1.3 The Moderator

- 64. The Moderator of a Fraternity and its Council will have as functions:
 - A. To ensure the Dominican way of life and the survival of the Fraternity, even when the priest or religious is absent;
 - B. To put into action the directives of the Provincial Council, the Provincial Promoter or different provincial committees;
 - C. To support the person responsible for formation.

In fact this is where the soul of the Fraternity lies.

- 65. If it is impossible to find within the Fraternity or among the members of the Council a suitable person to assume the

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responsibility of the Fraternity, the question is to be submitted to the Provincial Council who will find a way to ensure the presence of a Moderator.

66. Within the realm of possibility, it is proposed that a Dominican Friar or Sister be present at the meetings of the Fraternity even when the Order has given its Lay members the necessary formation to take charge of the Fraternity's conduct.
67. It is desirable that each Fraternity have a Dominican Friar as spiritual advisor.
68. Every election of a Fraternity Moderator should be approved by the Provincial Council after reviewing the results of the vote.

1.4 The Members

69. It is proposed that the status of "isolated member" be extremely restricted for the following reasons:
 - A. An isolated member is cut-off from all relations with the Fraternity of the Order, which is the normal link with the Order.
 - B. An isolated member often remains without resources for his or her formation and without any Dominican information.
 - C. The motive of being unable to come to the meetings is susceptible to a more thorough analysis, given the value and necessity of this proceeding.
 - D. An isolated member will be attached to a Fraternity so that this member can receive necessary information concerning the Dominican Laity.
70. The Council of the Fraternity of the Dominican Laity approves the integration to its Fraternity of any secular priest or permanent deacon interested in the Dominican spirituality, unless the number of secular priests and permanent deacons is sufficient to form a Fraternity.
71. Notwithstanding paragraph 10B of the Rule of the Lay Fraternities of St. Dominic:

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“In certain particular cases and with the permission of the major Superiors, certain persons may be admitted outside of a Fraternity. Their admission will be acknowledged in writing”.

72. Considering the fact that, according to actual experience, the Fraternities where there are couples, function better than others, it is strongly suggested that we be attentive to admitting couples into the Fraternity.
73. Seeing the need for a re-establishment, it would be advantageous to interest younger people in the Dominican Laity:
 - A. It is proposed that our attention be turned towards persons of 18 to 40 years of age;
 - B. That these younger people be welcomed by the elder members;
 - C. That a bond of mutual aid and collaboration be established with groups of younger people already committed in the Church;
 - D. That contacts be established with groups animated by the Dominicans with a view to insuring a larger Fraternity without modifying the structures of the Dominican Laity
74. The lay members of the Order will be identified by the title: **LAY DOMINICANS**; They may add to their names the initials: **O.P.L.** (Order of Preachers, Laity).

1.5 The Council

75. Seeing that all responsibility in the Fraternity lies mostly on the shoulders of the Council, the members of the council should be chosen by secret ballot, by the majority, for their sense of responsibility, their Dominican spirit and their shining example.
76. The Council of the Fraternity will be composed of at least three members. If this is impossible, the case will be submitted to the Provincial Council.

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77. The outgoing representatives are eligible for re-election, but one must lean towards a progressive transformation of the Council. Members are elected for a period of **THREE** (3) years and one-third (1/3) of the Council are replaced each year.
78. Only the active members of the Fraternity will have the right to nominate and to vote at the elections of the Council of the Fraternity.
79. An active member is one who, while attending the monthly meetings regularly, has not been absent without reason more than three times in the year.
80. The members of the Council will delegate certain tasks in order to discover the human resources of each member. Hence, each member is given a value through the consciousness of his or her possibilities.
81. A WISH: that the Lay Dominican will be so well formed that he or she can survive in the absence of a spiritual advisor.

II THE ORDER

2.1 Frequency of the Chapters

82. At the beginning of the Order, for the promotion and constitution of his Order, Saint Dominic reunited his brothers in Chapter every year.
83. As much as possible, a Chapter will be held every three years, but not longer than five years.

2.2 The Promoter's Role

84. To frequently visit all the Fraternities, even those that are furthest away.

To reunite the members of the Provincial Council three or four times a year. In principle, the expenses for these meetings cannot be absorbed by the members of the Council.

To reunite the Moderators of the Fraternities and also those who are responsible for formation, in sessions of two or three

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days with the purpose of establishing the programs with them and giving them certain rules of animation.

85. Could a Lay Dominican be named as Promoter of the Laity? This proposition was remanded for further study at the next Chapter of the Laity.

III THE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL

3.1 The Council

86. The Provincial Council will consist of five elected members with the possibility of adding other members as the situation requires. They shall hold office until the next Chapter.
87. They will have the responsibility to meet at least FOUR (4) times a year for the revision and orientation of the life of the Dominican Laity.
88. A member cannot be elected to the Council for more than two consecutive terms. If it is impossible to find a replacement for a member, the case will be submitted to the Provincial Promoter.
89. The Provincial Council will name an executive composed of the Provincial Promoter, a secretary, a treasurer and a Provincial Moderator, (a lay person preferably) with all of the rights and powers delegated to him or her by the Provincial Council.
90. It is proposed that the quorum of the Provincial Council meeting will be half of the members plus one.
91. The Provincial Council elected by the Dominican Laity may set up all the committees that it judges are necessary to conduct the affairs of the Dominican Laity. It will be responsible for the life of the Fraternities and for their survival.
92. All financial concerns of the Provincial Council will be regulated by them.

THE FORMATION

1. The Laity

93. Belonging to the Dominican Laity is entirely different from belonging to a prayer group or a faith-sharing group. As stated in the Rule, being a member of the Dominican Laity is an authentic vocation, a call from God to follow in the footsteps of Saint Dominic. One does not become a member on the spur of the moment but rather by following the different stages of formation.

Here are some propositions concerning the information as well as the formation given by the Dominican Laity:

1. It is proposed that the information to aspirants should stress knowledge of the Order and its Founder, the place of the Order in the Church, the special charisms of the Order and its mission.
2. It is proposed that the formation to postulants presents a clear picture of Saint Dominic, specifies the nature and goal of the Dominican Laity, states the role and place of the Lay Dominican in the Church and gives a first rapid view of the Dominican Spirituality.

This stage would enable candidates to clarify their motivation as to the reason why they wish to enter the Dominican Laity, to discern whether they are truly called to live in the Dominican Spirituality and to seek out God's will in their lives.

3. It is proposed that the formation to novices should invite them to discover the personality of Saint Dominic and the history of the Order, help them to adapt to the Rule and to develop their interior lives (prayer and contemplation) and aid them in their study of the Truth. This stage should also familiarize the candidates with the apostolic preoccupations of the Order and help them discover their participation in the mystery of the Cross through penance.

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It is proposed that the time for formation be set to the personal rhythm of each candidate and be planned for the integral development of the whole person. The goal should be to realize a greater unity of the candidate's being and life through a better relationship with God and others.

2. The Stages of Formation

94. The aspirant will be presented to the Fraternity by a sponsor to help him or her acquire more confidence and certainty.
95. To help in the work of the Director of novices, the sponsor can suggest some Dominican literature to be read and encourage participation in Dominican Activities.
96. No time limit has been set for the transfer from "aspirant" to the next stage, that of "postulant".
97. For eventual participation the Lay Fraternity of Saint Dominic, certain conditions are strictly necessary:

To have received the Sacraments of Christian Initiation; Human maturity and spiritual growth; Must be at least eighteen (18) years of age; Lead a life in conformity with the Gospel and the teachings of the Catholic Church; Have a strong desire to be a part of the way of Christian spiritual growth; Demonstrate a strong interest in the various aspects of Dominican life: prayer, study and apostolic service; Already involved in an apostolate or have a strong desire to do so.
98. It is proposed that it be left to the Council of the Fraternity, after the recommendation of the Director of Formation, to admit those candidates who have motivations that coincide with the true Dominican spirit.
99. Concerning the formation of postulants and novices, it is proposed that the Director of Formation, named by the Council of the Fraternity and having taken sessions on formation, be responsible for the formation of novices and postulants and that the place and frequency of these sessions be left to his or her discretion.
100. The preliminary stage of the novitiate will last between twelve and eighteen months.
101. To be admitted to the novitiate, the aspirant must demonstrate clearly:

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- A. His or her choice for the person of Jesus Christ;
- B. His or her desire to serve the Church in the particular way of Saint Dominic, by giving testimony of his or her faith.

- 102. The novitiate will be conducted under the direction of the Director of Formation, who will have already completed formation.
- 103. The temporary commitment will be taken with a promise and will last for a minimum of three years and a maximum of five years.
- 104. The Dominican formation of the temporary professed members will continue throughout their Dominican lifetime.

3. The Director of Formation

- 105. The Director of Formation will receive support such as correspondence, cassettes, consultations, visits, etc. The goal is to assure the same formation program throughout the Dominican Laity of the Province.
- 106. The Director will have among other goals:

to collaborate with God's actions in the realization of his plans of love because the initiative is his in the choice and formation of the persons that he wishes to have at his service.
- 107. A formation program will be drawn up in order to support the Director of Formation.
- 108. In order that there be continuity in the formation program, a precise plan will be drawn up by the formation committee working under the Provincial Council in order to assure that the same Dominican Formation will be given to all members of the Laity.
- 109. It is also suggested that young Dominican Friars be invited to address meetings on topical questions.

4. Formation Sessions

- 110. Seminars will be scheduled for the practical and solid training of Directors of Formation.

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- 111.** The Council of the Fraternity will undertake to name a member as Director of Formation for the new members of the Fraternity and who will commit her or himself to follow the above-mentioned formation seminars.
- 112.** These formation seminars will be open to all members.
- 113.** It is strongly suggested that the Director of Formation allow the members of the Council of the Fraternity to benefit from the formation seminars in which she or he will have participated, at least for the next two or three years.
- 114.** The expenses of the Director of Formation to attend the seminars will be absorbed by the Fraternity while the other members who attend will pay their own expenses.

In the beginning

was the Word

and the Word was with God

and the Word was God

He was with God

in the beginning

John 1, 1 & 2

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**DOMINICAN LAITY CONVENTIONS &
DOMINICAN FAMILY CONFERENCES**

LIST OF DATES, THEMES & SPEAKERS

SELECTED TALKS, WORKSHOPS & REPORTS

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DOMINICAN LAITY CONVENTIONS

FIRST

4 - 5 March, 1967
Blackfriars, Canberra

Sessions

'The Spirit and Function of the Third Order
in the Post-Conciliar Church'
Father T. Fitzgerald OP

'The Third Order as a means of Spiritual Maturity'
Mr. J. Wade, Provincial President

'Should the Third Order have a specific apostolic work?'
Father D. Barton OP

SECOND

23 - 24 May, 1970
Mannix College, Melbourne

Sessions

THIRD

31 August - 2 September, 1973
Maitland NSW

Sessions

'Prayer and/or Eucharist'
Father T. Fitzgerald OP

'The Liturgy and Tertiary Life'
Father P. Galvin OP

'Tertiaries Overseas'
Father G. Tegen OP

'Tertiary Life in the Order in Australia today'
Sr. M. St. Jude OP

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FOURTH

27-29 August, 1976
John XXIII College, Canberra

Sessions

'The Role of Dominican Fraternities Today'
Father B. Farrelly OP

'Teenage Tertiaries'
Sr. M. Cecilia OP

'The Holy Spirit in the Dominican Order'
Mr. G. McInerney

'Dominican Spirituality'
Mr. B. Edgeworth

'The Tertiary and Social Justice'
Mr. H. Craft

FIFTH

24-26 August, 1979
St. Albert's College, Armidale NSW

Sessions

'The Dominican Family'
Father P. Galvin OP

'Dominican Laity in the Dominican Order'
Mrs. M. Ternovy

'The Role of the Sister Assistant'
Sr. M. Concepta OP

'The Dominican Laity through young eyes'
'The Dominican Laity through other eyes'
Mr. P. McAllister
Mr. M. Hales
Ms. C. Allan
Ms. C. Hibble

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SIXTH

14-16 May, 1982
Perth WA

Sessions

'Towards a Lay Dominican Spirituality for our Province'
Father T. Fitzgerald OP

'The Dynamics of Dominican Spirituality'
Sr. M. Concepta OP

'History of our Order and of the Dominican Laity'
Sr. M. Albertus OP

SEVENTH

6-8 September, 1985
St. Joseph's College, Hunter's Hill, Sydney 1985

Sessions

'The Dominican Laity & Justice and Peace for our Time'
Father R. Mutlow OP

T. 'The Divine Office'
Ms. S. Wick OPL

'Dominican Spirituality as a Practical Thing for the Laity'
Mr. J. Trew OPL

U. 'Our Lady of the Rosary'
Sr. P. Davis OP

EIGHTH

16-18 September, 1988
Brisbane, Qld

Sessions

'The Vocation and Mission of the Laity 20 years after Vatican II'
R. & M. Pirola'

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NINTH

27-29 September, 1991
Mannix College, Melbourne

Sessions

'Breaking open the Scriptures'
Father F. Malone OP

'Let them Preach'
Father T. Fitzgerald OP
'The Psalms'
Father M. O'Brien OP

'The Scriptures, Prayer and Dominican Spirituality'
Sr. M. Fields OP

TENTH

23-25 September, 1994
Aquinas College, Adelaide

Sessions

'Let them Preach'
Father T. Fitzgerald OP

'Towards 2000'
Mrs M. Ternovy OPL

'A Project for every Chapter'
Rev. Deacon J. Ford

"
Mrs Monique Burston OPL

ELEVENTH

9-11 May, 1997

Aquinas College, Tamworth

Sessions

'Living the Truth: Is there a Specifically Dominican Morality?'

Father A. Fisher OP

'Praying the Psalms'

Father M. O'Brien OP

TWELFTH

19-21 January, 2001

Mannix College, Melbourne

Sessions

'An Old Message with a New Voice'

Father K. Toomey, OP

'100% Dominican and 100% Laity'

Father J. Stookey, OP

'Being Free, Being Alone'

Father H. Martin, OP

'Dominican Spirituality, a Living Experience'

Sr M. Fields, OP

'The Spirit of St Dominic'

Fr T. Fitzgerald, OP

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IST NATIONAL TERTIARY CONVENTION CANBERRA 1967

SHOULD THE THIRD ORDER HAVE A SPECIFIC APOSTOLIC WORK?

D. Barton, OP

At the closing session of the conference, Fr. Barton spoke on this all-important subject mentioned during the opening session (Chapter Reports). A summary of Fr. Barton's talk is given below.

Taking as his text 'Holiness is inseparable from the apostolate' Father said that this holiness belongs to all Christians. Christ told us this - "Follow me - go into the world and preach the gospel to every creature'. In the whole course of the preaching ministry Christ hardly ever gave a directive that was not concerned with the 'outward going' of those whom he was trying to influence. He continually spoke in terms of what they could and should do for others. Love God and love your fellow-man. All Christians are committed to doing good for others, going out to others, sharing with others the good things they have received and supplying to them those things they need. This is according to the mind of Christ.

Within the organisation that the Church is, this community of those who believe, we have other organisations, other committees. Why are they there? After all, it is within the Church that we are saved. The kind of holiness that we can have is capable of being realised in us in many ways and in many kinds of apostolic activity. Religious organisations within the main organisation, the Church, exist in order that a particular person who belongs to a secondary organisation might be sanctified in a way that suits him. Thus he is enabled to express his holiness to others. There is no an effective organisation within the Church that does not combine holiness and action, holiness and action of a particular kind.

So it follows that every organisation must have an activity in some way specific to itself. If it does not then ultimately there is no reason for it existing. Christian holiness, general holiness, comes from the main organisation, the Church itself, there is no need to go to a particular organisation to get it. But such an organisation does help beach one to reach and to express that holiness. What the third Order has lacked in the past is a sense of a definite purpose.

We have noted that our membership is not a youthful one in the sense that young people are not being received into it. Men are not attracted to it in the same way as women. I propose that we give to ourselves (as indeed we may) a specific objective. If we do not I think we shall not get from this conference the good we could get. In fact, I would propose two objectives,

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one concerned with our spiritual formation, the other concerned with the apostolic work we do.

As a specific activity appropriate to you as Tertiaries, I would suggest that we set ourselves to doing work which I think would be accepted by most thinking Christians as a work most needful of being done. That we interest ourselves in a practical way in the conditions of the people, in the religious, moral and material conditions of the people, of Asia and the South West Pacific. Thus we would be doing something that would make our Chapters vital and effective as they have never been before and induce into them a membership such as they have never had before. This could be done in a way that would not make us aware of ourselves as a vital organisation. It is possible to contact particular groups in India, say, who would correspond and be anxious to be corresponded with by Australian groups. It would be possible to convey to them ideas that are present in the Church in Australia, send them literature, contribute to their well-being.

I propose, therefore, that we adopt, as far as possible, the Indian continent and try as far as we can as members of the Dominican Third Order to bring the good news of Christ to it, indirectly but really, by correspondence, literature, and by way of helping ever so little in its material needs.

Secondly, I propose with regard to the particular formation of members that they have something a little more specific and a little more definite laid down for them than is laid down by the general Rule. What I propose is that every Chapter over the course of a year undertake a course of study in which it is directed by the Ecclesiastical Assistant. It should not be too demanding, but suited to the members of the Chapter and practical.

If these things were done in all Chapters in conjunction with real direction by Spiritual Directors in all important matters, people would be receiving some thing worthwhile.

I would like to propose that a determination be made by this Convention that the Third Order in Australia will have as specific objectives for the coming two years the two suggestions put above. These proposals should be treated experimentally so that they may be clarified or changed in the light of experience.

*Father Barton
National Convention 1967*

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IIIRD NATIONAL TERTIARY CONVENTION MAITLAND 1973

TERTIARY PRAYER

Our Holy Father, St. Dominic, spoke only to God or of God - he worshipped and praised, he interceded, he did penance for his own sins and for the sins of the world, he gave thanks. He prayed with his brethren at Mass and in the Divine Office; he prayed silently, alone with God; he prayed aloud. He prayed before working; he prayed as he travelled to work; he prayed after work. He read and studied and thought in preparation for his prayer.

In all this he was an example for us to follow - he was the friend of God and the servant of man in relation to God. He was what we all must be an 'expert in God', a man of prayer.

Today in some quarters there is too much emphasis upon activity and upon social involvement and not enough emphasis upon prayer which alone can give depth and the right direction to work, which alone can turn work into a Christian apostolate and our life into a Christian pilgrimage.

The Dominican Tertiary, in fulfilment of his/her Christian vocation and in imitation of our Holy Father must be a man/woman of prayer.

You are Lay people and you are very busy people - so your prayer must be appropriate both to your lay (consecrated, remember) state and to your state in life; to be trying to be some sort of 'religious in the world', or to be giving time to your devotions which should be given to fulfilling the duties of your state in life would be to misunderstand the place of prayer in your life (to misunderstand your 'secular' vocation). Of course, to be a Tertiary and not to pray enough would be to misunderstand everything.

As an example of so many Tertiaries from St. Catherine to our own day shows, you can become truly contemplative, true men/women of prayer in the midst of your daily work and family life - according to your state in life - busy people - think of St. Catherine of Siena - you have her as your example.

I feel that many are prevented from becoming Tertiaries, or from being practical Tertiaries, by fear of prayer, a fear which is generated by misunderstanding rather than by a distaste for God and the things of God.

Is there any way of clarifying for you the way by which you are to live your life of prayer as a Tertiary? I think there is:

- a) First, you must attend constantly and joyfully to the teachings of the Faith which speaks to you of God and Christ and of your risen life with Christ in God. As baptised people you are a holy people, members of God's pilgrim people. His friends, the recipients of His confidence.

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You can converse with Him as a friend converses with a friend. For you, God is not and never could be dead.

- b) Then, there is your realistic psychology and self-understanding which tells you that you cannot love someone whom you do not know, and that to know God one has to learn about Him and to think over what one has learned. The Church teaches us about God through the Scriptures, through the pronouncements of Pope and Bishops, through the writing of theologians and the sermons of preachers. All of these, in our own way, we must attend to - not necessarily with the idea of becoming theologians (though why should not a lay Tertiary be a theologian?), but simply to learn about God so as to know God.
- c) Then, we must realise that we are born to be contemplatives in our own approach to life. We alone of all God's earthly creatures can think, can see beneath the appearance of things, can reach even God Himself through His Grace which enlightens our minds and warms our hearts with love.
- d) This birthright of thinking and loving must be developed by practice, assiduous and continual grace-inspired practice. In a word, we must learn and think and pray, using all the means available to us.

To help us to do this we have -

- a) The Mass, with its components of the liturgy of the word (readings, homily), and the liturgy of the Eucharist (sacrament/sacrifices and communion). We have, in a word, the Word made audible and the Word made flesh.
- b) The Sacraments which we receive or witness, especially in a day to day sense, the sacraments of Confession and Holy Communion, which put us into touch with God.
- c) Traditional forms of prayer (eg. the Our Father, Hail Mary, scriptural doxologies, Psalms and Canticles, the Rosary, 'Flash Prayers' or aspirations, our favourite prayers like the Memorare, the Hail Holy Queen, and so on) which help to direct our thoughts to God, especially at times when our thoughts are arid and our words halting. It is surprising how few of the children know these traditional forms of prayer - the Our Father, Hail Mary perhaps.
- d) Your Tertiary Office which incorporates so many of the above scriptural and traditional elements.

How much of all this can you do in your busy daily lay life?

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All of it to some degree of other - you are thinking all your waking hours, so why not think about God now and then, no matter where you are or what you are doing? You go to Mass at least every Sunday, see to it that you really attend to what you are doing at Mass, and see if you can't go to Mass once or twice during the week as well and, of course, always receive Holy Communion at Mass. Keep up (or get back to) your practice of weekly Confession. Aim at saying at least five decades of the Rosary each week, each day, if possible. You surely read something each day. Why not read something about God from time to time? The Office is sometimes seen as a difficulty. Don't be overawed by it. Morning and Evening Prayer (Laud and Vespers) take only a few minutes each, and when you get used to these offices they can be a sheer delight, filling our minds with the finest and holiest of inspired thoughts and putting on our lips words that are just right to express our friendship with God.

Perhaps the best advice for me to give in this whole matter is - find out what you can do and do it; find out what you cannot do and don't do it!

Just see to it, though, that your mind and heart are habitually concerned with God and His affairs. For, you are Tertiaries, men and women dedicated to a life of prayer as well as work for the Kingdom of God, in imitation of our Holy Father St. Dominic.

*Father Tom Fitzgerald
Third National Convention of Dominican Tertiaries
St. Mary's Priory, Maitland
1973*

THE LITURGY AND TERTIARY LIFE

The important place which the liturgy holds in the life of the Dominican Order is stated clearly in the opening paragraphs of the chapter on liturgy and prayer in our Book of Constitutions (LCO 57,58). "The solemn and communal celebration of the liturgy must always be considered, according to the desire of St. Dominic, as one of the principal duties of our vocation. In the liturgy, especially in the Eucharist, the mystery of our salvation is present at work. We share in this mystery, we contemplate it and proclaim it to others by our preaching so that through the sacraments of faith they may be incorporated in Christ. In the liturgy, together with Christ, we give glory to God for His eternal plan for us and the wonderful workings of His grace, and we intercede with the Father of all mercy for the whole Church and for the needs and salvation of all the world. Therefore, the celebration of the liturgy is the heart and centre of our whole life - the deep source of its unity. The brethren should celebrate the community Mass and Divine Office publicly, and since the liturgy is an act of the whole people of God, we should encourage the faithful to take part in our celebrations."

For a Dominican, the daily celebration of the Community Mass and the choral celebration of the Divine Office or the Liturgy of the Hours are the liturgical events around which his life revolves. As members of the Third Order of St. Dominic, it is your desire to be associated with us in the life of the Order, including its liturgical life.

In your handbook there are frequent reminders of this aspect of Dominican life.

p27, Meetings should be centred around some liturgical function like Mass or the Divine Office or Benediction

p29, i-iii Members of the Third Order of St. Dominic should aim at attending daily Mass if at all possible.

The Sacrament of Eucharist and Penance should be received frequently.

The daily prayers of Dominican Tertiaries be -

- a) Five decades of the Rosary, or
- b) Lauds and Vespers of an approved Office, or
- c) Form of morning and evening prayer devised for their use and approach by the Provincial)

p36 Dominican prayers as such revolve around the Holy sacrifice of the Mass and the reception at Mass of Holy Communion. The Divine Office chanted in choir prepares for Mass and then continues its effects throughout the day by keeping us in the presence of Christ in His mysteries. The Dominican tertiary is

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a lay person, and so is caught up in the day to day business of running a home or an office or a job. These responsibilities do not leave much time for prayer; yet the Third Order member, where possible, will try to get to daily Mass and Holy Communion, will go to Confession each week or fortnight, might even say a part of the Divine Office or one of the shorter approved Offices each day”

I am sure that all of you participate in the offering of Mass and receive Holy Communion fruitfully as often as possible, and go to Confession often liturgical actions which bring the grace of Christ to us. In this lecture, I wish to confine myself to those liturgical celebrations which are perhaps not so familiar to the majority of lay people, but of which a Dominican Tertiary should have some knowledge. I am referring to the Divine Office, especially the official morning and evening and daily prayers of the Church, known as Lauds (morning prayer) and Vespers (evening prayer) and Terce, Sext and None (or the Middle Hour). As you probably know, the Divine Office has, for some time now like the rest of the liturgy, been undergoing revision. This is now complete, and the new books containing the Liturgy of the Hours (another name for the Divine Office) will be available, we hope, at the beginning of Advent this year. In this lecture I will be replying extensively on the General Instruction on the Liturgy of the Hours issued by the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship on 2 February, 1971, which explains the revised Office. I will limit myself to Lauds and Vespers, with a brief word about the middle Hour, because Lauds and Vespers are the two most important hours of the Divine Office and the ones in which lay people are, in particular, encouraged to participate or to say privately, and you have a form of Lauds and Vespers and the Middle Hour printed in your own Handbook.

In this introduction to the General Instruction on the Liturgy of the Hours, Archbishop Bugnini, Secretary of the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship, makes the following observation - “The awareness of the Liturgy of the Hours as something belonging essentially to the whole Church, has, regrettably, hardly been in evidence for many centuries. It had come to be considered as the preserve of religious and clergy. Liturgical services however are not private functions, or reserved to groups of elites, they are celebrations of the Church which is the ‘sacrament of unity’. They pertain to the whole body of the Church, although they concern different members of the Church in different ways according to the diversity of holy orders, functions, and degrees of participation. As can be seen from the very structure of the Hours, with their psalms, readings, hymns, responsories and prayers, they are designed for celebration in common’.

*Third National Convention of Dominican Tertiaries
St. Mary's Priory, Maitland
1973*

VITH NATIONAL TERTIARY CONVENTION
PERTH 1982

**A SPIRITUALITY FOR LAY DOMINICANS IN
AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND**

Thomas F. Fitzgerald, O.P.

Provincial Promoter. T.O.P

There is an incident related in the life of the great Cardinal Newman in which a Bishop, not in the best of moods, obviously, and feeling, perhaps, somewhat threatened and on the defensive in the lively Church of Vatican 1, grumbled, "The Laity, what are they?" To which Cardinal Newman is said to have replied, "Well, the Church would look rather foolish without them".

Thank God, the Dominican Order has never had any doubts about Lay People and their intrinsic value and place in the Church. For, we date from the even livelier Church of the thirteenth century when from Lay initiative had come, albeit with some stumbling or even wayward steps here and there, the great movement towards reform, towards a more evangelical approach to material creation and the possession of property, and towards a more effective preaching of the Gospel, which had its finest flowering in the foundation of the Friars Minor and the Preaching Friars.

From very early in the story of our life as an Order we have been associated with lay men and women, as with our brothers and sisters, members of our Dominican Third Order. The Dominican Family as the Basic Constitution of the Friars reminds us "comprises clerical and cooperator brothers, nuns, sisters members of secular institutes and fraternities of priests and lay folk." (IX) The Constitutions of the Friars (LCO 1499 150) further spell out what the Dominican Laity are and the place they occupy in the Order. Let me remind you of what the Constitutions say:

"149 1. Lay fraternities of the Order (Tertiaries) are associations of lay people who, organized by a special gift of God in the apostolic spirit of St. Dominic, aim to achieve the salvation of themselves and of others, 'by the profession of the evangelical life according to the way of life adapted by the Order for their state of life in the world, and duly approved.

150. The brethren should take great care to encourage these fraternities and to have reciprocal collaboration with them so that the ministry of the Order may be more fully carried out in different fields, both in the Church and in the world."

What is perfectly obvious from the above, and indeed from the whole history of the Third Order, is that to be a Tertiary is to be concerned with what the

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Church is concerned with viz. Holiness, salvation for oneself and others, spirituality.

Our Order was founded for preaching and the salvation of souls. One of our most cherished and oft-quoted mottoes is.. "To give to others the fruits of our contemplation". To be a Dominican is to seek to be a contemplative not merely in order for ourselves to shine as stars in the firmament of heaven, but also so as to be able to illumine others with the light of Christ's own holiness which people should be able to catch from us. We are all, then, in the business of spirituality, you Laity no less than the Sisters and the Friars.

You have come to us for help in living the spiritual, the Christian, life. We are clerics and religious; you are lay people. There is always a danger that we might seek to give you a scaled-down version of the Religious Life adapted from the spirituality of priests and religious for people who don't take public vows and who don't live in community, wear a habit or get ordained. There is a danger, too, that you might seek such a watered down version of monastic or conventual religious life.

The Laity are not just those in the Church who happen not to be priests, not to be religious. The Church has never thought of you in those negative terms. As long ago as the third century ecclesiastical writers were saying to you, "Hear these things then laymen also, the elect Church of God You are the Catholic Church, the holy and perfect, a royal priesthood, a holy multitude, a people for inheritance, the great Church, the bride adorned for the Lord God." (Didascalia Apostolorum, 9)

At our Baptism and Confirmation, long before we made vows or were ordained, or entered upon a career in the single or married state, we were all anointed with chrism. As St. Isidore put it as long ago as the 7th century in his work "On the Offices of the Church, "After Our Lord, the true King and eternal Priest, was anointed by God the Father with a mystic and heavenly unction, not only priests and kings, but the whole Church is consecrated by the unction of chrism, because each is a member of the eternal King and Priest. Therefore because we are a royal and priestly race, after baptism we are anointed that we may be called by the name of Christ."

Vatican II simply re-iterated and clarified and brought up to date those wonderful notions of the Laity which the Church has always treasured in her Tradition. Martin H. Work in his Introduction in Abbott's edition of the Conciliar Document on the Laity, points out the Church's present thinking on the Laity thus: "As one layman put it pungently, 'The Lay Apostolate has been simmering on the 'back burner' of the Church's apostolic life for nearly 2000 years, and finally the Fathers of this Council moved it up to the 'front burner' and turned the heat up all the way. (cf. Abbott, P. 486). It is interesting to reflect that the Council's document on the Laity is the first ever

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conciliar theology of the Laity.

In the Council's document on The Church, the Fathers put its treatment of the Laity in the Church immediately after the chapter on Bishops and before those on Priests and Religious. In N.31 of that document we find a summary of the Church's thinking on the Laity:

- i. By Baptism they are made one with Christ and established among the People of God.
- ii. "They are in their own way made sharers in the priestly, prophetic and kingly function of Christ."
- iii. "They carry out their own part in the mission of the whole Christian people with respect to the Church and world."
- iv. "... the Laity, by their very vocation, seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and by ordering them according to the plan of God".
- v. "They live in the ordinary circumstances of family and social life from which the very web of their existence is woven."
- vi. They are called to "work for the sanctification of the world from within."

Layfolk, as the Church sees them have their own witness to give and their own responsibility to exercise by virtue of their Baptism. As well, they are also called upon to share in the apostolate of the Hierarchy in many ways.

The Laity are to be assisted in appropriate ways in the exercise of their Christian initiatives by the clergy and religious, but these latter are not to take the lead in matters which concern the Laity in particular. It is now thirty years since I first heard that stated by a prominent ecclesiastic, Archbishop Carboni, the then Apostolic Delegate to Australia, and he said it to a group of young University undergraduates in Armidale, NSW.

The Laity are, as Martin Work reminds us, "co-responsible with bishops, priests and religious for the Church's mission on earth", and he goes on to say (cf. Abbott, p. 488), "this sense of co-responsibility is vital because of the widening gap between the modern world and the message of the Gospel."

Pope Paul VI summed all this up when he said that the Lay person is the Church's "bridge to the modern world".

In just the same way, to come at last to our own selves, our Dominican Laity, our Tertiaries, are to be the Order's "bridge to the modern world." No-one

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knows so well as you do the secular world and its society in which you live. No religious or priest can know that world from within. Its problems are your problems. Its possibilities, even its crises, are your opportunities. Its needs cry out for your apostolate. What the Decree on the Laity of Vatican II says of the Laity in general applies also to you in particular: "Modern conditions demand that their apostolate be thoroughly broadened and intensified. The constant expansion of population, scientific and technical progress, and the tightening of bonds between men have not only immensely widened the field of the lay apostolate, a field which is for the most part accessible only to them. These developments have themselves raised new problems which cry out for the skilful concern and attention of the Laity." (N.1)

What you have to do is to bring your Dominican charism to the work of the lay apostolate. You have a task to perform for the secular world from within it, a task which is not that of the rest of the Order.

We will help you all we can by our encouragement, by such philosophical, scriptural and theological expertise as we possess, by our knowledge of the history of the Order and of its nature and traditions, and, of course, by our prayers. But, it is you who must forge ahead in the living out of your Dominican spirituality. You must be men and women seeking perfection and holiness and Christ-likeness in your own secular environment, drawing inspiration from St. Dominic and strength and direction from your own Rule and Constitutions.

You are free to follow your own Dominican initiatives not only gaining help and inspiration from the rest of us, but helping us and instructing us in those areas where only a lay mentality, lay experience and expertise can help.

A Convention such as this will, please God, help us all to identify what those initiatives might be and what those areas are.

Let us note, though, that so far as the goal of the Spiritual Life is concerned, there is only one "spirituality" - not a different one for each branch of the Dominican Family. That unifying goal is "that they may know thee, the one true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." We are all, by virtue of our Baptism, called to the perfect following of Christ whose character and stamp we bear upon us.

So far as the way to the goal is concerned, that in one for all of us also, for, it is Christ, who as man, St. Thomas tells us, is the way by which mankind goes to God. Lay, Religious and Cleric, we are all first and foremost Christians.

The Dominican Family is simple a particular groups of Christian men and women, some lay, some religious, some clerics as well.

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Its goal is the following of Christ in the footsteps of St. Dominic, the way to its goal, the Dominican way, is laid down by St. Dominic and developed over seven and a half centuries, viz. Truth, received (by Faith), studies, prayer and preached, and above all, lived.

The manner in which the Truth is lived will, of course, differ with the differing status of those who live it: the way of life of a clerical religious in vows will differ from that of the non-clerical religious with the same vows. The way of life and the obligations of the Priest will differ from that of those who are not Priests. Men and women will have their own differing but complementary special approach as to the Truth lived and loved, as will married and single people.

The Order, in giving you a large measure of autonomy in the conduct of your affairs, and in inviting you to make submissions to the Provincial and General Chapters which draw up your Constitutions and Rule, recognises that your approach to the Dominican Life will be lay, neither clerical nor religious. Your religious sisters and brothers in the Order who are chosen (with your approval now, note) to help you in the life of your Chapters and Fraternities are not called, nor are they in fact, Directors, but Religious Assistants and Priest Assistants.

So, it is you, the Dominican Laity, who must shape your own lives and apostolate according to the special goal and way in which the Dominican charism consists.

You must describe for us what the Lay Dominican Spirituality is, or should be, in its practical, everyday details. You must come to us with suggestions as to what your apostolate might be. You must ask us for such help as you think we can give you.

Perhaps you will allow me now, as a Friars of 42 years' standing, who has spent all those years pondering the nature of the Dominican charism (though for most of those years I would not have called it that!) and more than half of them in association with Dominican Laity (though it's only in the last few years that we've called you that) to tough out for you what I see as being the salient characteristics of that hard to define, but very definite reality, the Dominican Spirit. Then it will be over to you to embody those characteristics in your Dominican lay life and apostolate.

It all starts and ends, of course, with the Truth studied, loved and lived.

My thinking about Dominican Spirituality since I began to prepare this paper, at the insistence of dear Betty Coffey immediately after the last National Convention, has crystallized out around the word 'nuclei', as I tried to explain to the Santa Sabina Chapter at their annual Retreat Day last year. Dominican Spirituality, it seems to me, should be *Creational, Incarnation,*

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Operational. In other words, it should be centred upon God our Creator, on God-incarnate our Redeemer; and it should not be something merely speculative but should be directed to apostolic activity whereby Truth contemplated is given to others for their sanctification and salvation. Let us take these notions one by one.

By reason of our creational approach to spirituality, to life in Christ, in other words, Dominicans love Being. They exult in the thought that God has given them being; that, by analogy, they may know something, therefore, of the Being of God Himself. They love being wherever they find it and see all things as good because they have been created by God who saw that all the things which He had made were very good. Their characteristic attitude is one of joy and optimism and hope and of confidence in God, in mankind, in the world. It is an attitude of worship and of awe and love for God the Creator. The Mass, therefore, the supreme sacrifice of praise, and the Divine Office, or Prayer of the Church, are our principal devotions. Contemplation, whereby we see at the heart of every created thing, at the core of each being the stamp of its divine origin, whereby we are lovingly aware of the presence of God in all that He has made, not as circumscribed by them but as transcending them, is something which, Dominicans see as the normal flowering of the seed of grace planted in our souls at Baptism. It might be rare, but it is normal. Not to be a contemplative is, in a sense, to be abnormal - certainly not to want to be is, in a sense, to be abnormal - certainly not to want to be is! The study of God and His creation is our life-long preoccupation. Wherever being is to be found and appreciated and developed you can find life-long preoccupation. Wherever being is to be found and appreciated and developed you can find a proper place for your Dominican creational approach to life as Christians.

Ivory tower academicism has never been a part of Dominicanism. Learning, yes, but no esoteric approach to reality. Our approach is more Aristotelian than Platonic, in the sense that it is not so much ideas, as incarnate ideas which attract us. This has to be so, of course, because we are Christians who follow the Word-made flesh as our Leader. Devotion to Christ and His Holy Mother has always been an essential and characteristic part of our life. The study of Sacred Scripture, therefore, has always been seen as the principal object of our study. Nor, is it any accident that since at least the fourteenth century Dominicans have thrown the weight of their preaching behind the Rosary, that "pocket edition" of the Gospels, the Psalter of Mary. From our Incarnational approach to the Christian Life comes our love for the Church, for Christ and his Members, the "great Sacrament"; comes also our love for and constant use of the sacraments of the Church. A non-sacramental Dominican would be a contradiction in terms. From the same approach comes our love for people and our trust in them. We are still among the relatively few Orders who elect even their local superiors. We respect people's freedom. There is really no "Dominican mould" into which we all must be poured. There is no such thing, apart from our habit, as a "typically

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Dominican look". Dominicanism goes deeper and more humanly than that. Our love for the common life for fraternity, is a precious consequence of our international approach to the living of the Christian life. Indeed, we echo the Psalm, "how pleasant and good a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." The Communion of Saints, both living and dead, is a very precious concept to us. One would hope that dialogue, as distinct from the more common parallel monologues, would be a characteristic of Dominicanism flowing from our international approach to life. Others, too, embody something of God's truth which we should long to hear, even should we find it surprising or, perhaps, unpalatable.

Finally, because our life is to be lived and not merely thought about and spoken about, we must be up and doing. We must be operational, to continue with the third of my catch-words. We must seek always to illumine others, as St. Thomas tells us, and not merely shine. We must, and you Lay Dominicans must, seek to give to others the fruits of our contemplation. Dominican Friars, Sisters and Tertiaries have always tried to do this. They have been, and I hope are, active, energetic, practical, joyful, positive, critical in a constructive sense, trusting in God, in themselves and others. They have been, and I hope are, courageous, as well as intelligent, when innovation was needed, while showing fidelity in conserving traditions that have stood the test of time. Of course, Dominicans could not be any of the above unless they in their life and apostolic enterprises combine docility (the ability and readiness to learn from others) with a reasonable independence of thought (which St. Thomas numbered among the integral parts of Prudence), and unless they see their freedom, in the phrase of Vatican II (Church N. 43), as being perfected by obedience, obedience to God and to all who hold God's authority in Church and State, and to each other as embodying God's will for us and as echoes of His voice.

During his recent visitation of our Province, the Master of the Order, Fr. Vincent de Couesnongle, had some specific directives for Tertiaries, and remember he is the Master of Dominican Tertiaries as he is of the Friars. He encouraged the Dominican Laity - and commanded us to encourage you - to

- a) take a greater part in the liturgical life of the Order - to join us where possible in choir at Mass and Office;
- b) take a greater part in the community life of the Order, joining us where possible in discussions and social functions and in community apostolates;
- c) take a greater part in the material administration of our foundations, taking over from us where possible the sorts of tasks for which you and not we are trained.

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It seems to me that were you to keep in mind those three directives of the Master, in the light of the ideas of the Church and the Order regarding the Laity which I have tried to outline in this paper, you would have gone a long way towards laying the foundations of a truly Dominican, truly lay spirituality in our Province.

I began with Cardinal Newman - who loved the Laity but had little time for the Dominican Order which he regarded as being a great idea extinct - let me end with him. What he says about the Laity he wanted to see in the Church of Vatican I could be a description of the sort of Laity the Dominican Order wants you to be today in the same Church of Vatican II.

"I want a laity, not arrogant, not rash in speech. not disputatious, but men (and women now!) who know their religion, who enter into it, who know just where they stand, who know what they hold, and what they do not, who know their creed so well that they can give an account of it, who know so much of history that they can defend it. I want an intelligent, well- instructed laity." (cf. *The Present Position of Catholics in England*).

That thank God, you already are. May your spiritual life flourish for the good of the Order and the Church in Australia and New Zealand as you seek under grace and with Dominic's help and inspiration to embody his ideal in your lay life.

VII NATIONAL TERTIARY CONVENTION
SYDNEY 1985

REPORT BY THE EX-PROVINCIAL PROMOTER
OF THE DOMINICAN LAITY

I was privileged to take over the Provincial Promotership of the Dominican Third Order from Father F. X. Curry OP after the Provincial Chapter of 1964. During the 21 years from then until the Provincial Chapter of 1985 when I handed over to Father Peter Murnane OP, no appointment given to me was a source of greater personal happiness than the task of promoting the Third Order, now called the Dominican Laity.

Prior to 1964, I had worked with Tertiaries in Wahroonga, Santa Sabina, Maitland and Tamworth in Australia, and in Dunedin, New Zealand. I knew them to be a group of most loyal and prayerful Lay Dominicans, imbued with the spirit of the Order and dedicated to its apostolate in Australia and New Zealand.

In 1964 we had chapters of Tertiaries in Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne, Canberra, Sydney, Maitland, Tamworth and Brisbane in Australia, and in Dunedin, Oamaru and Auckland in New Zealand.

The years since 1964 have seen new Tertiary foundations in Perth (the famous 'Juniors'), Bunbury (WA), Moss Vale (NSW) and Invercargill (NZ).

Like all lasting institutions each of the Tertiary Chapters has had its days of early fervour, its doldrum days and its days of renewal. Only a very few Chapters, not more than two, I think, have ceased entirely to be operational.

At present most Chapters are enjoying a vigorous life, and some, like Brisbane and Wahroonga, are experiencing a sort of 'second spring', while the Prospect/North Adelaide Chapter is about to be renewed and re-invigorated.

All Chapters have their Reception and Profession days each year when new members come forward to take the place of those who have died.

Reference is often made locally and throughout the Order to the fact that the age of the members of the various Chapters is in the 'senior citizen' bracket. I have always rejoiced at this, for it shows how faithful our Tertiaries are to their profession in the Order.

It needs to be remembered that 20 years ago or 40 years ago they were, we all were, young and enthusiastic members of the Order. I like to think that today we are all simply older, but much more enthusiastic!

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Tertiary Chapters tended to be groups of young people gathering together by the Sisters and the Fathers wherever we had a foundation. They entered together and grew together and, thank God, got old together.

Instead of bemoaning the advanced age of our Tertiaries we all, Sisters, Friars and the Dominican Laity themselves, should be seeking to found new groups while still, as an Order, caring for the established groups. The challenge, as I see it, is for our younger men and women to do this. As it is, the initiative is still being left to our senior members.

The most significant development over the past 21 years has been the holding of our triennial National Conventions of the Dominican Laity. In fact, right from the first these Conventions have been international gatherings, for New Zealand has always sent representatives. Also, they have been representative gatherings of the whole Dominican Family in our Province, for, together with the Laity, there has always been a good representation from the Sisters and the Friars.

These Conventions, the 7th of which we are now celebrating, have done much to nourish the sense of our oneness as Dominicans. They have re-vitalised Tertiary Chapters and made both the Friars and the Sisters more aware of the Tertiaries in their midst. They hold out a promise of even closer collaboration in the future between all members of the great Dominican Family.

A feature of the 7th Convention, so far, has been that they have been organised with great competence and a meticulous attention to detail by the Dominican Laity themselves. They have been ably and loyally assisted by the Sisters and the Fathers, but the organisation and administration required in preparation and in the conduct of the Conventions have been the work of the Laity themselves - which is exactly as the Order, through its General and Provincial Chapters, wants it to be.

The Dominican Laity is an integral part of the whole Order (the 'Tertius Ordo' committed to the care of the Order) in its own right. The members must run their own affairs and implement their own rule and constitutions under the headship of our Major Superiors and General and Provincial Chapters, with assistance from the Sisters and Friars. The very titles 'Religious Assistant', 'Priest Assistant', indicate the sort of relationship which the Order desires to see exist between the Dominican Laity and the Sisters and Friars. The term 'Spiritual Director' is no longer in use, nor does our Laity have to wait upon the Sisters and Priests in the exercise of their own initiatives and in the day to day running of their Chapters.

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The assuming of responsibility for their own affairs by our Chapters of the Dominican Laity has been the best result so far of our Conventions over the years; that and the fact that we all know each other so much better today than we did in the past.

I have been ably assisted by many Sisters and Fathers over the whole period of my Promotership. I should like to record my thanks to each of them.

It has been my experience that the groups which have been centred on Dominican Sisters' Convents and which have had the advantage of having a Sister Assistant as well as a Priest Assistant have been the Chapters with the best chance of survival and development.

There is a very large, and largely unknown, group of 'private' Tertiaries in Australia and New Zealand. Some Chapters, notably Santa Sabina, Sydney, have made great efforts at trying to obtain up-to-date lists of these Dominicans. But much more needs to be done in this regard.

Our Provincial magazine 'Communication', made available to Tertiaries as well as to the Sisters and Friars by the wise direction of Father Peter Galvin during his provincialate, might well be a means of keeping such 'Tertiaries-at-large' in contact with the Order.

Speaking of 'Communication', I should like to see each Tertiary being a regular subscriber. Many already are, and each Chapter is sent a copy, but for a copy to be obtained only by a Chapter is hardly sufficient to enable each Tertiary to be kept up-to-date with Dominican affairs.

Since the last Convention there are several things to note:

1. The present National Executive, under the Presidency of Noni Glover, with Bernadette Smith as Secretary and Janet Batcheldor as Treasurer, has worked hard and well in the preparation for this present Convention. Their administrative expertise has been of a very high order and their communication with all Chapters has left nothing to be desired. Their fundraising efforts have been immense.
2. Several Chapters have experienced a satisfying renewal and development, eg Wahroonga (NSW), Carina (Qld) and Canberra (ACT). Prospect/North Adelaide is on the verge of a renewal with a new influx of members of some new apostolic directions.
3. The Chapter in Invercargill, New Zealand, has come of age with its first Professions. This Chapter has been most fortunate in having for its Priest Assistant, Most Rev. Leonard Boyle, recently become Bishop of Otago.

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4. The Perth 'Juniors' are no longer juniors and are seeking ways of continuing as a Chapter in the face of the dispersal of many of its members from Perth. The initiative which gave rise to this Chapter still seems to me one of the most encouraging and instructive developments we have seen in this Province. We should study that initiative and seek to learn from it.
5. We were fortunate in having Dr. Sue Wick (ACT) to represent us at the meeting of the Dominican Family in Bologna and in having Sue and Father Greg Davies OP (Assistant Provincial Promoter) represent us at the first International Convention of the Third Order in Montreal earlier this year. This representation at international gatherings continues that begun by Marjorie Turnovy whom we sent to the General Chapter of Quezon City some years ago.
6. Marjorie Turnovy has published a pamphlet for the Bulletin of Christian Affairs on Lay Spirituality with special reference to Third Orders. It is available for purchase at this Convention.

For the future may I express some of my hopes and offer a few suggestions:

1. I should like to see the office of General Promoter of the Third Order exercise a more effective and visible role in the Provinces of the Order. A start could be made by improving communication between 'Head Office' and the 'Branches'. Then, perhaps, the General Promoter might come on visitation sometimes. The recent international Convention in Montreal was a step in the right direction. Please God, it will prove to be more than a 'once only' happening and that its effects will flow to the Provinces and their Chapters. The presence of representative Tertiaries at General Chapters of the Friars should be made more regular and more effective.
2. I should like to see a ferment of new ideas effervesce into new forms of life and apostolate for all Chapters. New forms of apostolic co-operation between the Dominican Laity and the Sisters and Friars require urgent exploration and implementation.
3. The possibilities offered to the Dominican Laity by the Order for experimentation should be made intelligent and zealous use of.
4. The time has come for the formation of new Chapters of young people, of people of any age of like interests. The Dominican spirit needs to be more widely diffused among our Laity.
5. I am firmly of the opinion that the time has come for the setting up in New Zealand of structures which would make possible the holding of some kind of national convention at regular intervals.

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6. Steps should be taken to set up Chapters of the Dominican Laity in the Solomon Islands and in Papua New Guinea. The setting up of such Chapters has been traditional in every mission undertaken by the Order for many centuries.
7. We need to make a more determined effort at compiling a list, as complete as may be possible, of our 'Private' Tertiaries, and the means secured of keeping in touch with each of them.
8. Some years ago a conference was held at Siena Convent of those involved in the formation of Tertiaries. I think the time has come to resurrect that good idea and to establish regular training programs for formation personnel.

Having now told you to do all things I didn't do, it remains only for me to express my prayerful wish that the new Provincial Promoter, Father Peter Murnane, and his Assistant, Father Greg Davies, may have as happy a time with you, our grand Dominican Laity, as I have had for the past 21 years.

Ad altiora!

Thomas P. Fitzgerald, OP
Seventh National Convention of the Dominican Laity
September, 1985

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APOSTOLIC WORKS

One of our premises is that if we have been strengthened personally and as a Chapter by our current emphasis on praying together, we will be more effective in whatever apostolate we take on. Many of our members carry out a very active apostolate through St. Vincent de Paul and various catechesis programmes. For about 6 months, several of the Laity were very heavily involved in the campaign against pornography spearheaded by Father Murnane. Some of the Sisters joined in our efforts, making it a true family apostolate with the appropriately Dominican goal of taking the truth to the people.

Discussion of several of the points raised at the Bologna Symposium has meant a period of real soul-searching and of tackling some controversial issues regarding our apostolate. What are we, as Lay Dominicans, meant to be doing in light of the directives given us in the documents of Vatican II, the document on the Dominican Family and in our Rule? Do we need to reassess the direction we have taken in the past? Do we have the courage to change if necessary? What was our motivation for joining the Dominicans? What are our expectations, and are they being realized? What is our commitment to youth and to issues of peace and social justice? How can we best use the diversity of talents found in our Chapter to collaborate with other branches of the Order? Is there work that we could be doing as a Chapter or should we continue to be involved primarily as individuals? For some, this process of questioning has been somewhat unsettling and confusing.

*Extract from
Chapter of our Lady of the Holy Rosary and St. Catherine of Siena, Canberra, ACT
Report to the Dominican Laity National Convention, September 1985*

XTH. DOMINICAN LAITY CONVENTION
ADELAIDE, 1994

TOWARDS 2000
Marjorie Ternovy OPL

Many of us have travelled long distances to gather here to pray together, socialise, and reflect upon being a part of the Dominican Order and Family. As a group within the Church a National Conference is also a time to face our challenges. This morning I will speak of many things pertaining to our Dominican commitment I will speak to the theme of this Conference, about change, the history of our rule, what the Mexico Chapter said that the Order expects of us, and the problems associated with the acceptance of Lay leadership. While I may wander around, I trust that I will provide you with some food for thought, which could lead to animated dialogue formally and informally during the weekend.

The theme of this Convention is "Challenging Voices, Preachers All." As we heard last night, under most circumstances, the Priests only have the mandate from the Church to preach, to expound - i.e. set out in detail, explain and interpret the teachings of the Church.

As Laity the majority of us have our own, different manner of preaching. The scope of that preaching is the magic of our Lay vocation.

Firstly, we can share with others our faith journey in discussion and in everyday conversation.

Secondly, we preach by our good example. The ways in which we do this are set out in our World Rule (numbers 1-10). The things spoken of fall into two categories - one set concerning our personal spiritual and intellectual lives and the other set denotes the fruits of our contemplation and the areas in which we get our hands dirty in service to our God, our Church, our families and communities.

Ourselves

We are to radiate the presence of Christ. We are Eucharistic people. The Beatitudes are our guidelines in our community life. We have experienced a conversion of heart. We are participating members of the present-day Church. Prayer is important to us, as is study and constant reflection upon sacred scriptures, revealed truth and the problems of the times in which we live.

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Our Service

We bear witness to our faith.

We are sensitive to the needs of others.

We serve the truth.

We feel compassion for every form of distress.

We defend freedom and promote justice and peace.

Change

The Oxford Concise's first meaning for CHANGE is "*Making or becoming different*"

Change is a life principle. Change leads to growth and growth means life.

We have changed physically. Once I was young. Now I am old, and I carry a Senior's Card to remind me of the fact. Our life styles have changed.

Our Church has changed. Patrick O'Farrell in The Catholic Church and Community in Australia, Nelson, 1977 put it this way:

"Catholics have come to accept that their Church is no rigid monolith, but a diverse and changing institution, for all its unchanging core."

Yes. The core, the essence, the heart is still with us, but we do some things differently, and the emphasis or focus has moved from some things which were once considered tremendously important to things that were mentioned infrequently. We live in a Church of transition. Hence, within any Church community, even within families, there are differences of opinion about these changes. That is the nature of change.

O'Farrell maintains that in the Australian Church conservatism and radicalism coexist with little open conflict. One theory he puts forward for the lack of open conflict is the strong continuance of respect for the Priesthood.

Our stance today as lay people is different to what it was 20/30 years ago. Laity today is more vocal, more educated and desirous of greater participation, and this is seen by some as upsetting the status quo.

While many of us are different, that does not diminish our love and respect for the Priesthood. It would be the wish of this assembly of Dominican Laity that the Priests present, take home with them, our affirmation of their sacramental role.

The model of Church out of which we live has changed. The majority of us were born into a model of the Church as Sanctuary there was certainty,

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"religious practices", uniformity. We are moving towards the Model of the Church as Sign - we have to be responsible for our mission as followers of Jesus, accept diversity, live with ambiguity and give witness to the Gospels in daily living.

The Dominican Order does not exist in isolation to the Church for which it was founded to serve. The Church has changed, and Dominicans, true to one of their basic tenets - reading the signs of the times - have changed.

By our profession to the Master of the Order of Preachers, we are a part of the Dominican Order. Hence as Dominican Laity we cannot exist in isolation. If the Church and the Order have changed, so must we.

Change is not always easy. It is disruptive, and can cause pain and hurts, but despite all our protestations, our manipulations and/or subversive behaviour, all well-known manifestations of the human condition, change does occur. Change is a lot like ageing - it comes irrespective of our wishes. To grow old gracefully is said to be an art. Acceptance of change could be put in the category of an art. Non-acceptance of change by individuals does not hold back the tide of change. We have seen that in the Church and in the Order. Organisations which cannot respond to change are no longer effective. Many organisations connected with the Church have disappeared because they have fulfilled the goal or need for which they were established. I'm not suggesting that this is the case of the Dominican Laity. On the contrary, if we allow it to be, St Dominic's charism could be as great a gift to the Church in Australia in the future as it was to the Church in France in 12th Century.

It is accepted that the older the organisation the more resistant it is to change, and we are an old organisation.

We have a new handbook. In it is the background to the Rule of the Dominican Laity. This shows how the Rule has changed to meet changes which had occurred within the Church and society.

In the beginning there was no Rule. Mrs Eleanore Perkins, an American, was asked to address those assembled at the International Congress of the Dominican Laity, Montreal 1985. She explained the having of no Rule thus:

"In the Middle Ages, the primary model of holiness was the monastic one. People believed that if a person really wanted to be committed to Christ, he or she entered a monastery. If circumstances prevented one from 'becoming a monk or a nun, then being close to the monastic life was the next best thing. People lived close to the monastery, and identified with it by adopting some of the elements of the monks - penances, forms of prayer, part of the habit and lived a modified Rule."

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The First Rule was given to cover what already existed. That first Rule survived for almost six and a half centuries.

The Second Rule was a response to the 1917 new Code of Canon Law. Rule was approved in 1932. This second - The Order was investigating an update of the 1932 Rule, possibly in the late 1950's. No doubt, as a response to world changes following; World War II. I say this because.

The Third Rule was approved in 1964.

But four years later at the General Chapter of River Forest, 1968 a Fourth Rule was prepared. This was a very quick response, to a dramatic change within the Church. Vatican II. This was promulgated by the Master in 1969 and approved on an experimental basis in 1972 under the title, "Rule of the Lay Fraternities of St Dominic". With this title, reference to "Third Order" had disappeared, to be confirmed by legislation of the General Chapter abolishing such terms as 1st, 2nd. and 3rd Orders. As has been noted since, there are no first, second and third class citizens in the Order.

Our red-covered Handbook for Members was published in 1979. It is logical to assume that in content it falls somewhere between the third and fourth Rules, as it was written in a time of transition and the fourth Rule was accepted only on an experimental basis. It can be noted that that Handbook used all three terms to describe us: Third Order, Tertiaries and Dominican Laity. In conversation, we ourselves slip from one term to the other even today.

The Fifth Rule, our present Rule, is published in our new handbook. The translation is by Fr Columba Ryan OP. Our copy of the Rule, as we first received it is printed in the front of Margaret Thomson's book, Formation for Dominican Laity and that was adopted by us at Carina 9/88. Throughout the translation published in the Handbook, there are word changes, and I can live with that, but there are a couple of omissions and changes which worry me.

This is not the appropriate time to analyse the differences between the two translations. Enough to trot out the old adage that something can be lost in translation. No doubt this will come up in our business session.

In all that has been said at the General Chapters and by Fr Damian Byrne OP about new structures and forms, whatever is done has to be based on the Montreal Document.

The Fifth Rule was prompted or born out of a number of events. In 1983, the Church was given a new Code of Canon Law. That same year, Dr Sue Wick was our representative at a meeting of Fathers, Sisters and Dominican Laity, who deliberated upon what was meant to be Dominican Family in the Light

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of Vatican 21I, and in the latter part of 20th Century. The Bologna Document, also published in our handbook, was the outcome of this meeting. Two years later, in 1985, Sue was again our representative in Montreal, at a Congress of the Dominican Laity, out of which came the new Fifth Rule.

Dr. Sue Wick, an American, was a research fellow at the National University in Canberra. Soon after the Hunters Hill Conference in 1985 she returned to live and work in the USA. Sue would have been a worthy representative, however, it was unfortunate for us as a group, that we lost the impact that participation in both those bench-mark events could have had upon our implementation of both outcomes - in the Bologna Document on the Dominican Family and our Fifth Rule, "The Statutes of Fraternities of Lay Dominicans."

I'll enter a danger zone and make a prediction, that Rule No 5 could soon come under review. I say this because the pattern in modern times has been for the Order to respond more rapidly to changes within the Church.

Our Fifth Rule opens with a quotation from AA, a 1965 Decree on the 'Apostolate of the Laity', paragraph 3:

'Among the disciples of Christ, those men and women who live in the world are, by their baptism and confirmation, made sharers in the prophetic, priestly and royal offices of Our Lord Jesus Christ; They have as their vocation to radiate the presence of Christ in the midst of the peoples so that 'the divine message. of salvation be known and accepted everywhere by the whole of mankind'."

Since then in 1988, Pope John Paul II has expanded upon this statement from AA in *Christifideles Laici*. CFL empowers us as laity. It is all right to be a layperson. By our Baptism we have our place, and while that place is different to other Branches of the Order, it is not inferior.

After reading our World Rule and then the Directory for the Members of the Dominican Laity in the Province of the Assumption, (also published in the Handbook), I considered the language of both documents.

The bottom line is that younger people no doubt find the language off-putting because we still adhere to that which smacks of the religious life rather than laity of nearly 21st Century. We have a Rule, we belong to a Chapter, there are the words Formation and Profession. It is pretty much a Catch 22 situation - how to be lay and part of a religious order.

As a group within the Order on the verge of the 21st Century we are a worry to' ourselves and to the Order. As a lay group we have a Rule which is canonically established. We belong to a religious Order yet we are lay. That

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is an ambiguity with which we have chosen to live. Granted this is an atypical time in that we have a New Rule and a New Provincial Directory, and we are naturally focusing upon both, weighing each word. Under normal circumstances we extract the essence.

In Vowed to Mission, the present Master, speaking of the value of vows (which could be stretched to equate with a Rule or Directory) cited St Thomas:

"that all the vows have as their goal caritas, the love that is the very life of God. They serve their purpose only if they help us to grow in love, so that we may speak with authority of the God of Love" ...

The new handbook includes a section on Dominican Documents, reflecting upon Dominican life and spirituality. This is very important, as in the past these documents were not readily accessible to the Dominican Laity. It is recommended that Chapters use these as a basis for discussion, and as well keep abreast of current publications.

I would like to focus on one of these documents to highlight what the Order expects of us from the General Chapter, Mexico City, 1992, a recent event.

Number 128 - and I quote:

We expect our Dominican Laity:

- a. *To deepen their specific lay vocation to be Church in the world as well as being presence of the world in the Church.*
- b. *To be aware of their real membership in the Dominican Family in moral equality with the other members.*
- c. That the lay fraternities accept new groups of Dominican laity that have arisen in accord with the direction of the Avila General Chapter 1986, (Number 85) which said "As the Master of the Order has said, the matter of the Dominican Laity should be regarded as one of the most important to be dealt with by the Chapter. Two questions in particular come to mind:
 - i. What message should we address to the fraternities (Chapters) of lay Dominicans, who have a history of more than seven centuries.
 - ii. *How are we to respond to the stirrings among lay people, so characteristic of the present day, which among other manifestations prompt them to form new groups as associations faithful to the spirit*

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of St Dominic?"

d. To promote new forms of Dominican Laity.

My perception is that as a group, in principle, new forms of being lay Dominican threaten us. We have a structure. Why don't they join us? This is a problem more in Dominican Parishes where many lay people who are not Dominican Laity (as we know it) play a very important role in the mission of the Order. Fr Punch OP had something "brewing" at Wahroonga before he went off to be Provincial. June Ross in WA worked hard towards establishing lay associates in the Doubleview Parish. The Dominican Sisters have commenced Lay Associates attracted to their Order. Avila has exhorted us to accept these movements.

e. Says -

To establish channels of communication among the various groups of Dominican Laity.

This we have had through our National Promoters. It should have been enhanced by the role of the National Council, but unfortunately this has generally not happened in an expansive, meaningful way, given that communication is an up and down and sideways exercise. Admittedly, it is the most difficult area with which any organisation contends.

f. To commit themselves to their own formation, together with the other members of the Dominican Family, as preparation for their specific mission within the Order.

It calls for on-going faith formation to the grave, with focus on Papal and Dominican Documents. Overall, we have not given our own formation enough time and energy. That is a down right value judgement on my part. But on-going formation is the lifeblood of any Chapter, nurturing our commitment. It is responsible for vitality and animation and we can never rest on our laurels.

g. Joining mission teams of the Order, especially the promotion of justice and peace.

Generally, we cannot do this. However, Canberra, because of the personnel and the nature of the city has, on a number of occasions, done this successfully. In fairness it must be said that this has been a time of transition for the Order as well as the Church. The Friars are not numerous in Australia and they and the Sisters have been busy responding and coping with changes within their own circumstances. While as laity within the Order, we have devoted much time and energy in resisting change, new apostolates and flexibility. This also could be read as a value judgement. But

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how flexible are we? How have we changed? What are our new apostolates?

At Avila (Number 85 A) and in Montreal, concern was expressed at the notable absence of younger persons and hence a lack of vitality in Dominican Laity Chapters. On both occasions the problem was analysed as being the result of unawareness of the teaching of the Church since Vatican II Fr Damian Byrne OP has stated

"We have to rethink and re orientate the Dominican Laity in relationship to the new ecclesial practices and new theological keys in reference to place and mission of Laity in the world and in the Church."

This statement by the immediate past Master of the Order is food for thought.

In the old model of the Church ecclesial practices and theology were very much a clerical domain;

Returning now briefly to the Directory, Number 20 (C), A Provincial Lay Council.

We have had three elected such bodies, although each was termed a National Council. The motive behind such a body was to provide lay leadership. Servant leadership was the underlying rationale for its establishment. Further, we are a Branch of the Dominican Family and as such should have our own leadership. What has happened is that the existence of such a body has become a contentious issue. Unfortunately, in my opinion, the new Directory does not address the problem of Lay leadership. Number 30 speaks of the Provincial Council. I quote:

"It should exercise effective leadership over the Laity."

Having said that it states:

"its functions, shall also include"

and it lists functions a to f. The items listed are the functions of facilitation. No functions of effective leadership are stated. Until they are, the Provincial Council is not a Council, but a body of facilitators, a paper tiger. People can lead only if they are accepted as leaders. Allowing Lay leadership calls for trust.

The Master in Vowed to Mission quoted my friend, Fr Malachy O'Dwyer OP:

"Why did Dominic place so much trust and confidence in his companions? The answer is a simple one. He was profoundly a man of God, convinced that the hand of God lay upon everything and everyone"

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Our World Rule speaks of us undergoing a conversion of heart and by the nature of our humanity this is an on-going process.

Ten years ago, the Dominican Sisters brought Rosemary Haughton author and theologian to Australia. Rosemary gave two public lectures at Santa Sabina. She spoke of many groups within the Church having found comfortable cushions on which to sit they meet, they pray, enjoy the experience but nothing happens. She urges us to be like the members of the early Church and come together in small communities to pray, meditate, and ponder the Gospels and let the power of God break in. Within these groups - and small is beautiful - we can break down the barriers which imprison us all in some no matter who we are, we all carry with us the "baggage" and hurts from the past. Rosemary maintained that changes do occur when people come together with open hearts and in faith. The people change each other and then they can move out to bring the Good News to a world which could do with some good news. Our warmth, our caring, our sharing, our reaching out can help the people in our lives. We can forget the negative sides of our natures. We don't have to be angry, nurse our hurts, be lazy and make excuses.

In Vowed to Mission the Master called upon the Order to have "mobility of mind and heart and body", and for us not to be "prisoners of our past". We are to have "necessary flexibility", because "inevitably there are apostolates that we will have to give up. Otherwise we shall never do anything new".

He also noted that to meet the challenges of our time in history we have to have the courage to stop doing what we are doing and "*dare to experiment/and risk failure*". But to do this we have to "*offer each other confidence and courage*". We can project negativity or we can project a "network of hope".

I feel strongly, that if we could get our act together, put our house in order, that Dominican Spirituality could be a gift to a wider section of the Australian Church. It is a wonderful spirituality. Why aren't we communicating this to others? We have to look at ourselves to find why others are not wanting to join us. There is nothing wrong with the spirituality.

This weekend, let us ask the hard questions and perhaps more importantly listen.

Between sessions, try to have some time alone, to ponder upon what is happening and to discern God's will. We are proud of our heritage and our traditions which we will carry with us, but life demands that we go forward and break new ground.

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DOMINICAN LAITY CONVENTION
TAMWORTH, 9-11 MAY, 1997

**LIVING THE TRUTH.
IS THERE A SPECIFICALLY DOMINICAN MORALITY?**

Fr. Anthony Fisher OP

This morning we celebrated the feast of the great Dominican moral theologian, St Antoninus of Florence, and so in exploring the second half of your Convention theme - *Living the Truth* - I hope to honour him. Antoninus was for forty years a member of various Dominican communities in Italy, often as prior and twice as Provincial. He founded the San Marco community in Florence, where with the sponsorship of the Dominican tertiary, Cosimo de Medici, he directed Fra Angelico's preaching of the greatest series of painted homilies in Christian history. At the request of Pope Eugene he attended the great reunion Council of Florence as a canonist and theologian, and so impressed the pope that to his dismay was soon after appointed Archbishop of that city. He discharged the rôle with extraordinary justice and charity but, above all, he is remembered as a moral theologian, the Order's greatest after St Thomas Aquinas.¹

Lest you fear that I will draw only on the olde and the mouldy, I should note that I will lean most heavily today on the writings of two of the leading moral thinkers of our age, both of whom are lay people, married, with children, and with Dominican connections. Alasdair MacIntyre, arguably the most important moral *philosopher* of our day, was 'converted' to the Catholic faith by the great English Dominican theologian, Herbert McCabe, and has made a long journey from Marxism through relativism to Thomism. MacIntyre's² work has been a watershed in contemporary moral and political philosophy. Germain Grisez, arguably the most important moral *theologian* of our day, was educated by Dominicans and has worked to combine the insights of contemporary philosophy with St Thomas' moral theology in his extraordinary four-volume *summa* of morality, *The Way of the Lord Jesus*;³ he and his wife Jeanette are both Dominican tertiaries.

My question today is this: is there a specifically Dominican morality, a specifically Dominican way of being and doing? On the face of it you might think the answer to my question is obvious. No one joins an organisation unless it is with a view to participating in some way; most often this will include certain behaviour peculiar to the group. The Dominican laity, for instance, undertake to engage in certain forms of prayer and contemplation, and to share in the life and work of the Dominican family in certain ways.

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While there is considerable overlap, they are different to Benedictine, Carmelite or Franciscan laity at these very points. Just as St Paul observed with respect to Christians putting on Christ (Rom 13:14), so, in a much less fundamental way, putting on the white wool of Dominic makes us a new man or woman, gives us a new identity and destiny.

When I asked my community whether they thought there was a specifically Dominican morality they unanimously responded that they thought that there was a specifically Dominican *immorality*. Particular vices have long been associated with particular orders: it is said that a Dominican who can preach is as rare as a Franciscan who is poor or a Jesuit who will do what he's told. Jokes aside, my community identified cynicism, over-intellectualisation, insufficient non-liturgical prayer, indecision, and neglect of common property, as particular Dominican vices. Interestingly all these vices are distortions of the Dominican genius: its passion for truth, its liturgical prayer, its communitarian government, its common life and its preaching work. As every ancient Greek tragedy writer knew, in the genius there is often found the fatal flaw.

Prima facie, then, there is bound to be a particular way of doing things, whether well or badly, which distinguishes Dominicans from others. Yet there has in fact been very considerable discussion in recent years about whether confessing a particular religion and belonging to a particular church, let alone a particular order in a church, has any implications for the content of morality.⁴ Ever since St Paul's Letter to the Romans, Catholics have recognised that even the pagans have the law of God written on their hearts. The natural law tradition has been richly developed since then, especially by our brother Thomas and his devoted followers. According to this school of thought the moral law is accessible to all people of good will and right reason, believers or not; by applying reason to reality anyone can discern their true good and know how to live well with others. Without universally accessible, 'natural' morality we would have no basis for criticizing private moral tastes, current fashions and prevailing ideologies; without such an 'objective' standard, practical reasoning would be hostage to personal convenience and tribalism, and likely merely to confirm and systematize bigotry and custom. Christians and Jews would be forbidden to kill but others might not be; what is right for Catholics might not be for Protestants and Jesuits! And if the natural law applies universally it applies even to Dominicans: how, then, could there possibly be a specifically Dominican morality?

Part of the answer to this question is to seek a deeper appreciation of Aquinas' moral theology: it is not simply a theory of practical reason, of moral norms discernible by right reason; it is also a psychology of virtue, a theology of revealed moral truth, and a spirituality of grace. Despite his optimism about human nature, Thomas was realistic about our 'fallenness'

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and 'brokenness': moral understanding requires a great deal of hard thinking and is commonly mistaken or confused; even when we know what we should do, doing it can require a great deal of effort and we commonly fail. We need three things. First, teachers of the Word of God, mediating not only human wisdom but also divine revelation: "When the Spirit of Truth comes, he will guide you into all truth," said Jesus (Jn 16:13). Secondly, we need opportunities to cultivate virtue, through domestication in the family, civilisation in the wider community, immersion in a morally upright culture, the imitation of good models. Thirdly, we need divine grace not only guiding but also empowering and strengthening, given above all through the sacraments.

Applied to our present question, this suggests that membership of the Dominican family offers more than simply occasions for fun and boredom. It is a school for educating conscience, cultivating character and empowering the person. Within the Order we are formed and reformed by engaging in certain specifically Dominican practices of liturgy and prayer, imitation of great family members (the saints), and exploration of Gospel truth in particular ways. In so doing we become heirs to, and take part in, a continuous and evolving 'argument' (to use MacIntyre's phrase) over what a good Christian is, a good religious or lay person, good forms of prayer and of contemplation, good preaching apostolates, and so on. Such participation requires certain shared outlook(s), motivations, relationships and commitments which call us not so much to a unique set of ethical obligations, but to a unique way of discerning, supporting and enacting those obligations.

Furthermore, as St Thomas observed and St Antoninus amplified, even universal moral norms, such as 'live simply' and 'say your prayers', and particular virtues, such as 'obedience' and 'truthfulness', require concrete specifications, and these will vary with group, time and place. No end of creative accounting and spiritual detachment will make the lifestyles of the Skases of this world poor and simple, or make their stockmarket deals into acts of worship; no end of creative redefinition will make wilful individualism into obedience and perjury into truthfulness. Nonetheless, for a Dominican the demands of evangelical poverty will differ from its demands upon a Franciscan and the call to prayer will be rather different from that for a Muslim or a Mercy sister. So too, obedience may involve rather more questioning and discussion than it means in the army and the more military religious orders, but rather less choice than it might mean for a lay person; for a Dominican the virtue of truthfulness may express itself in a devotion to study rarely found among diocesan clergy or in a candour rarely found among Jesuits!

The motto of our Order is, of course, *Veritas*. We Dominicans are especially called to incarnate in our lives particular aspects of the God revealed in Jesus Christ: that ours is a faithful God without deceit, who detests the lying

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tongue;⁵ that his Christ, full of grace and truth, is the way, the truth and the life;⁶ that his Spirit is the Spirit of truth, inspiring his people with the word of truth;⁷ and that his Church is the pillar and bulwark of truth.⁸ No doubt it was Truth in this rich sense that you had in mind when you called your conference “Living the truth”. It echoes, of course, Paul’s wonderful description to the Ephesians of the Christian life as speaking or living the truth in love:

Speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ... You must no longer live as the Gentiles live, in the futility of their minds. They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of their ignorance and hardness of heart. They have lost all sensitivity and have abandoned themselves to licentiousness... That is not the way you learned Christ! For surely you have heard about him and were taught in him, as truth is in Jesus. You were taught to put away your former way of life, your old self, corrupt and deluded by its lusts, to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to clothe yourselves with the new self, created according to the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness. So then, putting away falsehood, let all of us speak the truth to our neighbours, for we are members of one another... Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only what is useful for building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear... Put away from you all bitterness and wrath, anger, wrangling, slander and malice, and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you. (Eph 4:15-32).

On being immersed in a culture dedicated to truth

One of the most significant developments in contemporary political philosophy has been the ‘communitarian’ critique of me-generation individualism and political liberalism, led by MacIntyre and others.⁹ These writers accuse liberalism of ignoring the extent to which community shapes people’s values and their very identity. Even if liberals pay lip-service to the importance of friendship, mutuality, shared purposes and the common good, liberalism’s fundamental assertion remains that people’s highest order interest is in their ‘autonomy’, i.e. their capacity to frame, revise and pursue their own preferences, whatever these might be. Put simply: what matters is getting your own way. A certain amount of that has undoubtedly contaminated all of us: we Dominicans can be very self-willed, individualistic, careerist and self-protective.

Community, according to the liberal account, is at best a loose conglomeration of individuals each pursuing private interests through arrangements of mutual advantage - a sort of ‘you scratch my back, I’ll scratch yours’ club - or worse, the enemy of individual self-fulfilment. Such a conception is very common in contemporary Australia and revealed in all sorts of ways: the decline of membership of most civic organisations (churches, scouts, political parties, libraries, service clubs,

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charitable organisations); the systematic dismantling of welfare programmes and other government involvement in the promotion of the common good; the growth of an 'underclass' of long-term unemployed, victims of commercial disasters, homelessness, substance abuse, gambling etc.; the abandonment of the mentally ill and frail elderly; the politics of hate currently being elevated to the status of a political party which conceives of all people outside our borders and some people within as rivals for what's ours; the conception of indigenous and settlers' interests as opposed; the growing sense of alienation and powerlessness among many of the young, old and otherwise disadvantaged; the constant talk of rights with little corresponding interest in duties to the common good - all this, and much else besides, is evidence of the ascendancy of an atomistic individualism in our culture.

Nonetheless, many people today are dissatisfied with this anti-social worldview, have a renewed appreciation of interconnectedness, and crave for intimacy amongst the anonymity of mass societies and the ruthlessness of competitive markets. The evangelical counsels of obedience, poverty and chastity which religious profess in a radical form and other Christians live as appropriate to their station in life, can be powerful countersigns and antidotes, an invitation to come, follow and be remade, renouncing self-will while remaining responsible, abandoning the mechanisms of domination and self-protection, finding genuine fulfilment not in getting one's own way but pursuing the good with and for others. Our 'alternative life-style' marked by things like formation, chapters, religious profession, common life, received liturgical forms, theological traditions, strange habits (in both senses), and so on, are actions which speak louder than words and an invitation to others to immerse themselves in a spiritual and theological tradition which is bigger and has a longer past and future than any of us.

Proposing religious life as a model for the recovery of community and communal virtue in our atomistic modern world, MacIntyre points out that not only are relationships and co-operation essential to self-realization: they are largely constitutive of the very selves which are realised. Human beings also *social* animals: our sense of identity, hierarchies of values and ultimate destinies are to a large extent determined by the communities to which we belong. If someone asks who I am I will likely respond not with a list of private tastes and plans but with details such as my surname (which tells of my genealogy), my first name (which tells of my parents' choices), my title (which tells of my marital status, profession etc.), my work (which tells of who I labour with and for), my address(es), family members, church etc.; I might even own up to being a member of the Order of Preachers! With this range of attachments which largely constitutes and identifies who I am, comes a variety of debts, inheritances, expectations and obligations

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which constitute the moral starting point of my life, and give it much of its moral particularity.

What is more, we humans are by nature highly interdependent and complementary. No-one can discover much in the way of truth on their own; our worship is always impoverished when it is singular; and no-one can be a neighbour by themselves. Thus far from being merely an optional extra community (broadly understood) it is an end of many human choices, the essential means to many others, and absolutely essential to human flourishing. Membership of the Dominican family fits in here: it is a way to knowledge of the truth, religious devotion, friendship, all goods which we have in common. No-one simply decides 'out of the blue' to become a Dominican: we do so because we see and are attracted by this style of life in action and perhaps by certain 'icons' of it - some person we have known who exemplifies it - and by being received into the community of which this life-style and these icons are parts, and submitting to the mores of those who have joined before us. Like other communities, the Dominican family is heir to stories of its heroes and the bearer of a larger story in which the Dominican saints and beati, sung and unsung, weave the subplots of their lives with ours and with those of every member of our Dominican family across nation, region, world, and time.

None of this talk of the moral importance and implications of community membership is to deny that the principal responsibility for the pursuit of goods such as truth, religion and friendship lies with the individual adult. But it does radically challenge the idea that we can reasonably aspire to and attain these things by ourselves. We need communities like the Dominican laity as the means, motive and opportunity to participate in these goods ourselves and to contribute to such participation by others. This in turn is one of the ways in which the larger community of the Church serves us and gives us the opportunity to serve others. The Holy Spirit and long experience have taught the Church that, without romanticizing their potential or their actual contribution, fraternities can be an effective way of supporting Christian life, and that the spiritual gifts which membership of such groups provide for the members are gifts shared in by the whole Church and beyond.

That said, Dominicans and their fraternities cannot be all things to all persons. In any life choices have to be made. Like individuals, communities such as lay fraternities must exclude unreasonable options and choose between reasonable ones. The fundamental commitment of all religious orders and fraternities in the Church is undoubtedly the worship of God and the building up of his kingdom. Yet there are basic human goods in addition to that of religion which are also served by

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the styles of life and works of different religious institutes: some, for instance, make restoring people's health their goal, others, the education of children; some spend their days adoring the Blessed Sacrament, while others milk cows or establish missionary outposts. In addition to religion and friendship, basic human goods such as life, health, knowledge and work are the foci of particular religious groups. For the Dominicans, *veritas*, is such a focus. "Father, consecrate them in the truth," prays Jesus for his disciples (Jn 17:17) and so prays the Church for her Dominican children. We are consecrated, set apart, professed to and for the truth; engagement with truth is the focus not just of our activities and energies but of our very hearts. It is a radical, evangelical commitment, not unlike the radical obedience, poverty and chastity professed by all religious orders. It is particular to Dominicans in the way that romantic love of 'Lady Poverty' is particular to Franciscans. Truth is, as Catherine puts it, our lady, our spouse.¹⁰ "If God were able to backslide from truth," said Meister Eckhart, "I would fain cling to truth and let God go."

If commitment to truth is constitutive for Dominicans, it follows that in their choices amongst any range of morally reasonable projects they should, all things being equal, choose the one which best promotes the discernment and communication of the truth. Participation in truth becomes, as it were, a preferential option, much like Christian mercy toward the poor counsels our generally preferring and opting for ways which will yield the greatest advantage to the least advantaged. Thus within that "very spacious, gladsome, fragrant, delightful garden" which Catherine called the Order, each chapter must decide its own projects conscious of its evangelical commitment or preferential option for the truth, the talents and energies of its particular members, and the needs of the broader church and society. A chapter of Dominican laity will have certain logical priorities which a yacht club will not. Some of this is formalized in our rules and statements, the endless reams of words that Dominicans like to produce. Some is expressed less formally in the mores and 'dramas' of our fraternity meetings and other activities!

St Antoninus was known as 'the friend of the poor' for his almsgiving from the coffers of his archbishopric, his establishment of institutions for their assistance, and for his active ministry to the poor, the sick and the dying. Yet as Gilbert Márkus has observed, Antoninus "was far more than an almsgiver and charitable fund-raiser. He was also a canon-lawyer, a bishop and a scholar. It was not just his money that he put at the service of the poor, but his pen, his voice, his extraordinary memory..."¹¹ Antoninus served the poor most fully when he exercised his specifically Dominican charism of studious engagement with and articulation of reality. In his great work of moral theology, the *Summa Moralis*, Antoninus analysed the problems faced by the oppressed poor

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in the economy of his day, considered at length the implications of the rise of modern banking and commercial monopolies, elaborated the first textbook in business ethics, and taught that the state had a duty to intervene in mercantile affairs for the common good and to assist the disadvantaged. Like all of us he had to choose what to do; no-one can do everything. He chose to devote much of his considerable energy to the specifically Dominican work of studiously focusing the light of the Gospel on the challenges and opportunities of his day.

On soaking up the truth

So far, then, I have offered several reasons to think that in Dominicans do in fact embrace a particular form of life, with its own appropriate norms and virtues, or specifications of norms and virtues. We enter into particular relationships, which bring with them a variety of opportunities and expectations. We are inserted into a particular community, culture and tradition with its own outlook(s), motivations, goals and practices; in this enculturation process we are to a significant extent remade by that community and hopefully grow along the way in virtue and understanding. We also engage in joint projects which are mutually enriching and which we could not hope to engage in without the co-operation of others. Definitive for Dominicans is their immersion in a culture dedicated to the pursuit of truth.

It is said that the year before he joined the Order St Antoninus approached the prior of the new Observant Dominican community in Fiesole in the hills above Florence. So young, small and frail was he - hence 'Antonino', little Anthony - that John Dominici sought to fob him off by asking what interested him, and Antoninus replied precociously, 'canon law'. 'Go, then, and learn by heart the whole of the *Decretals* of Gratian,' the Prior told him referring to the greatest canon law book of the Middle Ages, 'and then come back to us.' A year later the fifteen-year-old Antoninus returned to John Dominici who questioned him on page after page of the text and was astonished not just by the boy's memory but by his understanding. So impressed was he by Antoninus' gifts for and devotion to study that he clothed him in the habit on the spot.

This romantic passion for truth can seem strange in our tolerant, relativist, nihilist world, and evoke in our imaginations fear of the inquisition and missionaries separating people from their culture or their families. We have rightly learnt a certain caution and coyness, indeed a proper uncertainty, since the days of Torquemada. Yet Dominican epistemology remains a radically realist one, fundamentally opposed to subjectivism, relativism and cynicism even while allowing for the importance of perspective, context and a critical mind. In the

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project of being a truth-seeker we enact a claim about the accessibility, universality, and relevance of truth that would discomfort many in an age of deconstructionist philosophy, punk art, and privatized morality, perhaps the first age to embrace Pilate's anti-motto '*Veritas? Quis est?* - Truth? What is that?' (Jn 18:38). Our age lacks confidence in its ability to discover and articulate the truth and the passion even to try.

Part of the reason for this may be that truth, even when it can be found, all too often threatens us, interrogates us, cuts us to the quick. It unmaskes our false and unjust social structures, institutions, policies; it reveals our own long-ingrained and firmly-held misinformation, prejudices, ideologies; it criticizes our inhumane behaviour, our bad ways of relating, our self-centredness; it demands a rethink, an intellectual, moral and personal conversion. The truth is subversive, seditious, profoundly disturbing: and so we are resistant to too much truth, too candidly told. As I caught myself asking a brother once: "Do you want the truth, or something more comfortable?"

Yet the Dominican tradition is convinced that the truth is ultimately 'good news', 'saving truth'. Our century, perhaps better than any other, has seen how falsehoods hurt people: the big social, economic and political untruths like war with our enemies, totalitarian government, human rights abuse, the dispossession of peoples, the abandonment of the unemployed, sick or elderly, the insatiable exploitation of the environment and accumulation of consumer items, and so on; or the smaller, more private untruths, like false advertising, and tax-evasion, bragging and gossiping, infidelity in relationships, aborting our babies. "You will know the truth," said Jesus, "and the truth will make you free" (Jn 8:32). The truth liberates us from lies, from falsehood, superstition and fear; from the mirages created by interests such as government, commerce, and fashion; from the comfortable illusions we create for ourselves whether they are about us or about our world; from the selfishness which Catherine said seduces us away from the truth into living a lie.¹² Truth disillusiones, without making us cynical; it heals inauthenticity, that division of heart which is so corrupting; it allows us to mature uncramped by ignorance and falsehood. "Stand up, therefore," says Paul, "and fasten the belt of truth around your waist" (Eph 6:14).

In my years as an academic it has struck me how often people who are the leaders of their particular art, science or profession remain five-year-olds when it comes to their faith and morals. They allow their ethical and religious development to remain stunted at about the level of belief in Santa Claus and the tooth fairy, and do nothing to enrich their understanding in areas beyond those driven by career or temperament. Unable to reconcile such different levels of knowledge

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and sophistication they remain schizophrenic in this respect, or else feel very sophisticated, very grown up, when they leave behind their five-year-old gods and call themselves agnostic or atheist. The void left behind is soon filled with all manner of nonsense, from materialism to crystal power, from a life altruistically devoted to the rights of hydrangeas to a life focussed on cholesterol, sexual performance or other vain attempts at self-perfection. But all these fail to satisfy: ultimately only reality, often hard reality, transcendent reality, will satisfy something as noble as the human spirit. As a great psychologist of the soul once recommended to the Philippians, 'whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, good - fill your minds with these things' (Phil 4:8), for only these things will satisfy the insatiable mind, the restless heart.

All that said, no one should pretend that the truth is easily come by: she is a hard lover to woo and even harder to keep. "Seven years of silent inquiry are needful for someone to learn the truth," said Plato, "but fourteen are needed in order to learn how to make the truth known to one's fellows." The *Dialogue* of St Catherine opens programmatically: "A soul rises up, restless with tremendous desire for God's honour and the salvation of souls. She has for some time exercised herself in virtue and *has become accustomed to dwelling in the cell of self-knowledge* in order to know better God's goodness towards her, since *upon knowledge follows love*. And loving, she seeks to pursue truth and clothe herself in it." Catherine's passion for self-knowledge - what Raymond of Capua called "the fundamental maxim" of her spiritual life - and for knowledge of God and the things of God, fuelled her passion for God himself and for more of his truth. Indeed, nothing short of a life-long interest in and application to contemplation of God and his word, the teachings of the Church, and human experience of the world around us will suffice. The goals of *receiving, discerning* and further *exploring the truth*, alone or with others, with a strong faith, a warm and expansive humanism, and a dedication to the hard slog, are absolutely fundamental to the Dominican project. The flipside is an abhorrence of wilful ignorance, closedmindedness, laziness of mind, prejudice, unbelief, self-deception, rationalization, ideology, heresy, and so on. "Never speak against the truth," said Ben Sirach, "rather, be ashamed of your ignorance" (Sir 4:25). Avoidable ignorance should be a special shame for Dominicans; they should especially be marked by *docility, honesty, modesty* and *good judgment* in seeking the truth, *intelligent, studious* and *imaginative* engagement with it once discerned, *courage* and further *perseverance* in holding to an unpopular truth and working through its implications.

Since knowledge, as St Thomas asserts,¹³ is intrinsically good, its pursuit is, as Grisez so well argues, self-evidently reasonable; indeed

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Thomas the Dominican insists that *studiositas* is a *moral* virtue. But this does not mean that all ways of pursuing the truth, all times and means and contexts, are reasonable overall. Truth can be sought for wrong purposes (e.g. so as to control and exploit others), or wrong motives (e.g. out of vanity; cf. 1 Cor 8:1), or inordinately. Here we may gain a rare glimpse of a Thomas' own character, for he talks, as if from the inside, of the risks of *curiositas*, a temptation which works on the soul much as the desire for food and sex works on the body, and which can become a vice which kills cats and distracts Dominicans. He gives some examples of *inordinate* study. First, when one could be engaged in more appropriate study but is distracted by less worthwhile study - like the priests of Jerome's day who were more interested in reading stage-plays than the Scriptures.¹⁴ A more modern example might be the person whose time is gobbled up by trashy novels, television programmes or surfing the net; we thereby indulge our curiosity in ways that cost us time and opportunity better devoted to some other truth-seeking activity. So too we can be curious about the wrong things. Thomas suggests two examples: a superstitious or morbid curiosity about the occult - alive and well in the 'New Age' movement - or an obsession with the natural sciences to the exclusion of the higher things - a temptation rife in our reductionist, materialist, technology and profit-driven world. Without much imagination we can identify other inappropriate ways of pursuing knowledge: pornography, scandal-mongering, intrusions into people's privacy and confidential communications, and so on. A more subtle form of inordinate study which Thomas remarks upon is the vain attempt to learn things beyond one's reach, a temptation doomed to error or despair (cf. Sir 3:22-26). If the greatest Dominican theologian could call all his work 'straw' we lesser mortals should learn to temper our truth-seeking with humility.

Knowledge of truth, pursued in reasonable ways, is thus essential to Dominican life and identity. But knowledge of what truth? The anti-dualist in Dominic and the Aristotelian in Thomas meant both gave the Dominican mind in an empirical bent: Dominicans begin with what they can see and know experientially, they find God in and through his word, his world and his people. "Every truth, without exception, and whosoever utters it, is from the Holy Ghost," said Thomas. That includes the most mundane of truths. This realist epistemology can be a scandal not only to post-modernists but also to the *Imitation of Christ* types who expect holiness to be marked by other-worldliness. Not that Dominicans are uninterested in 'the higher things': but *sacra doctrina*, our knowledge of God and the things of God, is found through and articulated to the world of the here and now. That is why Fra Angelico painted heavenly scenes with and among the colours and beauties of our created order, each familiar flower, body, drapery or building becoming for him an icon of and window into the world beyond.

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Yet ours is a 'now and not yet' understanding of truth. Here and now we can and do grasp some of the truth: yet we know that much is seen as yet only through a glass dimly. The Dominican passion for truth should propel us not only to learn more in this life but toward a goal beyond this world: to be one with the Dominican saints painted so enthusiastically by Angelico, all enjoying the 'beatific vision' of God and all that is good. That too has implications for our lives in the here and now: for it reminds us of the importance of a religious sense, of that awe we once dared call 'fear of the Lord', of a liturgical, worshipping sensibility. We must be ready to 'waste time with God', to be interrupted by a regular cycle of prayer, to render to God his due not just by lives and works of truth, goodness and beauty, but also by a prayerful and contemplative openness to his gifts of wisdom, understanding and knowledge. "Clothe me with yourself, Eternal Truth," prays Catherine at the end of her *Dialogue*. Commonly in the Christian devotional tradition all the Marys in the Gospels apart from Our Lady have been elided with Mary of Magdala, the Order's first patron. However the Scripture scholars might balk at this, it is instructive: for it suggests that the very woman who first heralded the risen Lord, was also the one first wasted her tears and expensive ointment on the washing and anointing of his feet, and who later sat at those feet hanging on his every word - to her sister's understandable annoyance. If we are to preach the truth we must learn from the Magdalen how also to worship and to listen, to be still and to contemplate.

On overflowing with truth

So being a Dominican immerses us in a community, culture and tradition of truth-seeking and consecrates us fervently to soaking up that truth. It requires a life embodying certain norms and virtues of receiving and discerning the truth, and a prayerful and contemplative posture which is open to truth beyond the immediately accessible. The next move in Dominican morality is to propose that the fruits of this 'contemplative' life be allowed to overflow, as it were, and so be shared with others. We are to bubble over with the truth, be driven by a passion not only to know but to communicate the Good News to others. To be preachers. "Now I know that you are a man of God," said the woman to Elijah, "because the word in your mouth is truth" (1 Kings 17:24).

Perhaps the most fully elaborated Christian ethic of communication is that of Grisez. He begins with the premise that genuine communication is not merely a matter of respect for truth but a requirement of community life. Because those who hear what we say must know the truth if they are to flourish, they reasonably expect to receive from us

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an honest account of what we know. We also fulfil ourselves in the process through the articulation (and possible refinement) of what we know in conversation, through the friendship, trust and sharing which this involves, and through the personal authenticity thereby enacted. We also thereby build up the kingdom of God. Grisez articulates a series of precepts with respect to telling the truth. Put negatively: one should not indiscriminately communicate everything to everyone, should never communicate anything maliciously to anyone, should not lie, deceive, or bear false witness. More positively, we should when communicating always seek to be constructive and to manifest love, respect and honour; we should tell the truth and only the truth; we should aim to be accurate, clear, and reasonable; we should seek to make good use of the media and contribute thereby to the formation of sound public opinion (e.g. on matters of social justice).

Candour, taste, rhetoric, humour, relevance, accuracy, accessibility and courtesy in presentation, appropriate *respect for confidences* and *for reputation, perseverance* in articulating the truth even in the face of opposition - all these are virtues of communication. Excluded are boasting and false modesty, hypocrisy, flattery and ingratiating, gossip and defamation, insult and ridicule, misleading advertising, exploitative and corrupting communications (such as pornography and propaganda), misuse of information power, inappropriate silence about matters which should be publicized, as well as speaking when silence would be in order. So many of our great saints might be counted as models of heroic articulation of the truth, each in their own way: Dominic himself of course is known in our Order as the *Doctor Veritatis*; St Peter of Verona, our first martyr, died writing the Creed in his own blood; Aquinas and Catherine are both doctors of the Church, but very different kinds of preachers; Sts Hyacinth and Vincent Ferrer converted whole nations; Francesco Vittoria and Bartolomeo de las Casas both defenders of aborigines and enslaved people, one in the academy, the other in the field and court. Our saint of the day, Antoninus, came from an extraordinary community of preachers: from John Dominici, the 'snatcher of souls', through Bld Anthony Neyrot the apostate - become martyr and Bld Fra Angelico, to the as yet unsainted Savonarola, all these men preached in the same community but very differently indeed.

Following closely St Thomas' doctrine¹⁵ but in tension with some other parts of the tradition, Grisez has argued at length (and in my view very persuasively) that "lying and other deceptions in communication are always wrong". While Grisez proposes this as a rule of life for all, it might be thought that his Dominican slip (or scapular) is showing here: there are signs in his writing of the radical, evangelical commitment, the preferential option for the truth, which I spoke of earlier. On his

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account intentional untruthfulness always violates both integrity and solidarity: it expresses outwardly something at odds with one's inner self (which is unauthentic and disintegrative) and it attempts to lead others to accept falsehood (an attack both on truth and on community). While he recognizes that some lies are more serious than others, he claims that even 'little' lies are intrinsically evil and have adverse cumulative consequences both for the liar herself and for those with whom she breaks trust. Grisez re-echoes the 'deepening' of the commandment against false witness¹⁶ in Jesus' bald directive "Let your 'Yes' be yes and your 'No' be no; anything more than this comes from the evil one" (Mt 5.37), "the father of lies" (Jn 8:44).

The only bishop to be martyred for the faith in the English Reformation was St John Fisher, the friend of Thomas More. To our shame the best of the friars had fled the country with the nuns; the worst apostacized not just out of fear and confusion but in pursuit of power and privilege. The beheaded Fisher was replaced as Bishop of Rochester by the former Prior of Blackfriars London and he tried to draw others with him. One was Adrian Fortescue, a married man with a family, a knight of the realm, and leading Dominican layman. Fortescue's well-publicized refusal to sign on with Henry's cause was an embarrassment to the generally compliant Dominican family. Despite the best efforts of the wavering friars and others, Adrian refused to come to the party. He could not in words or actions make of his life a lie. In 1539 he was charged with heresy and treason, supposedly because he had struck out of his missal the instruction to pray for the King as Supreme Head of the Church. He was put in the tower of London, attainted without evidence or trial, and, by order of Parliament, summarily beheaded. This great member of the Dominican laity, since beatified, died a martyr for truth.

Commenting on the 'laxist' traditions that one may lie or engage in deliberately deceptive mental reservations to protect the innocent from harm, a modern Dominican layman, Germain Grisez, insists that a person must not lie even to enemies, for enemies too are neighbours whom we must love. Sometimes silence in the face of enemy interrogation may be appropriate; sometimes it might be more heroic to say: "I will not answer your question and help you do wrong; instead, for your soul's sake, I ask you to repent of your wicked intent." Thus rather than engaging in supposedly white lies or studied ambiguities with intent to deceive we should find other ways to protect secrets. Even in the face of Nazi threats, "the appropriate Christian response would have been to refuse submitting insofar as it involved even the smallest sin, to resist injustice by every morally acceptable means, and to be prepared to die if necessary - preferably in place of those to be sent to the death camp, but even with them - in witness to the falsity of that ideology and to the truth of the gospel, which the ideology's

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proponents sought to supplant.” According to one famous story St Athanasius, fleeing his pursuers was stopped and asked if he had seen Athanasius. He is said to have replied: “He is not far off!” and the enemy went speeding on their way. Rather than admiring the smartness of this studied ambiguity, Grisez points out that saints can be mistaken both about what constitutes a lie and about whether lying is ever permitted; but in any case even saints sometimes sin! If lying is sinful even in life-threatening situations and even for saints, it is unsurprising that Grisez counsels wariness even of jocose lies and deceptions. Telling children Santa Claus is coming to town is apparently out - at least for Dominicans.

Conclusion

Our Pauline theme of ‘living the truth’ is commonly translated ‘speaking the truth’, the two ideas being used interchangeably; for there are many ways of ‘speaking’ without words. Christians have always known that a life well-lived is the best form of preaching. The stories we each tell with our lives are parables of our values, what the philosophers call performative utterances. So our lives should aim to embody the truth by their authenticity and integrity, eschewing all double-speak, hypocrisy, feigned loyalty, and so on; and they should aim to communicate the truth through the transparency and attractiveness of the Gospel values which they exemplify. St Antoninus did not just write and preach vigorously about our duties towards the disadvantaged: he gave of himself to them. At the time of the plague, when the rich and powerful fled disease-infested Florence, Antoninus stayed behind, co-ordinating and financing relief efforts in the city and even leading his old, thin mule through the narrow alleys of Florence’s slums, carrying panniers of food and drink to the needy. He established orphanages and hospitals; he turned the bishops’ palace gardens over to the poor as allotments for them to grow food on; he gave until he had nothing left to give. Antoninus’ life was a living homily; his actions matched his words.

So impressed were his brothers in the Order by his efforts that they too stayed behind in Florence despite plague and pestilence. In years to come they were to carry out this work so faithfully that in one outbreak of plague every member of the Priory community in Florence died and with them many of the Dominican laity. Antoninus demonstrates that each of us preaches a homily, tells a story, with our life. But each life-story is also a sub-plot within the larger story of our Dominican family. That family offers its members more than just opportunities to die early and well: it immerses us in a culture which generates identity through formation of character and belief, through shared conceptions of vocation and the good life, through joint projects in the pursuit of truth, and through a radical even romantic commitment to *Veritas*, to being

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truth-seekers and truth-preachers in a world that desperately needs the truth. With all this comes a specifically Dominican moral vision. “To this end was I born,” said Jesus, as if writing the epitaph of the faithful Dominican, “and for this came I into the world: that I should bear witness to the truth” (Jn 18:37).

- ¹ On St Antoninus see Gilbert Márkus OP, “Antonino of Florence,” *The Radical Tradition: Saints in the Struggle for Justice and Peace* (London: DLT, 1992), 56-64.
- ² *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (2nd ed., London: Duckworth, 1984); *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (London: Duckworth, 1988); *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry: encyclopedia, genealogy and tradition* (London: Duckworth, 1990).
- ³ *The Way of the Lord Jesus*. Vol. 1: *Christian Moral Principles* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1983); Vol. 2: *Living a Christian Life* (Quincy IL: Franciscan Press, 1993); Vol. 3: *Difficult Moral Questions* (Quincy IL: Franciscan Press, 1997); Vol. 4: *Special Responsibilities of Clerics and Religious* (Projected for 2004).
- ⁴ See for example: John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor: Encyclical on Certain Fundamental Questions of the Church's Moral Teaching* (Sydney: St Paul's, 1993); Charles Curran & Richard McCormick (eds), *The Distinctiveness of Christian Ethics* (NY: Paulist, 1980); Ralph McInerney, *The Question of Christian Ethics* (Washington DC: Catholic UP, 1993); Bert Musschenga (ed), *Does Religion Matter Morally? A Critical Reappraisal of the Thesis of Morality's Independence from Religion* (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1996); Lucien Richard, *Is There a Christian Ethics?* (Mahwah NJ: Paulist, 1988); Heinz Schürmann, Joseph Ratzinger & Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Principles of Christian Morality* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1986).
- ⁵ Dt 32:4; Isa 45:19; Prov 6:17-19; Jn 17:17; Tit 1:2 etc.
- ⁶ cf. Mk 12:14; Jn 14:6; 1 Jn 14,17; Pet 2:22.
- ⁷ 1 Kings 17:24; Ps 43:3; 51:6; 86:11; Jn 14:17; 15:26; 16:7,13; Rom 9:1; 1 Jn 5:6 etc.
- ⁸ 1 Tim 3:15; cf. Jn 16:13; Col 3:9 etc.
- ⁹ e.g. Michael Sandel, *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice* (Cambridge: CUP, 1982); Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity* (Cambridge: CUP, 1989).
- ¹⁰ Mary Ann Fatula O.P., *Catherine of Siena's Way* (London: DLT, 1987), pp. 70-71.
- ¹¹ Márkus, “Antonino,” p. 60.
- ¹² Fatula, *Catherine's Way*, p. 64.
- ¹³ *Summa theologiae* IIa IIæ 166-167.
- ¹⁴ *Epist. xxi ad Damas.*
- ¹⁵ *Summa theologiae* IIa IIæ 110, a3.
- ¹⁶ Ex 20:16; Dt 5:20; Ps 5:9; Jer 7:28; 9:3-5; 2 Tim 3:8; Jas 3:14.

DOMINICAN LAITY CONVENTION,
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THE DOMINICAN LAITY - PAST PRESENT AND FUTURE

Fr. Mark O'Brien OP

In preparation for this address, I consulted some members of the Dominican Laity about an appropriate topic. It was suggested I speak about the aging and declining membership of the Dominican Laity and to offer some thoughts on what we might do about it. I accepted the suggestion and hope that my remarks are of some use to you.

The Present Situation

Your situation is similar to that of the Dominican Friars of which I have more direct experience. We too have an aging Province and one that is declining in numbers due to fewer entering, some leaving, and some dying. As a Friar once remarked; "the death rate for the Dominican Order is 100 percent". During my first term we looked carefully at the situation and, after some trepidation, agreed to call it a crisis. We did this because it was pointed out to us that a crisis should not be a word that causes panic. It is a term used to mark a turning point; where one can go backwards or forwards. A crisis is a difficult time, but it is also a challenging time and can be a time of opportunity.

Our experience is not unique in the modern western world. It might be more accurate to say that it is the norm - certainly for organisations, churches, etc. Before I came this morning, I read a report in the papers of the first major interdenominational survey of church attendance in Australia. The headline summed it up as "alarm at aging and wavering congregations". One of our Friars who meets regularly with professional people from various walks of life hears a similar story. Organisations such as the Lions Club, Rotary, political parties, trade unions, etc., are all experiencing a severe downturn in numbers and fewer recruits. Our society has changed. Life is more hectic, people are busier with more pressure to deliver in their jobs, both partners now often work, families are much smaller. For these and a variety of other reasons, people are now more reluctant to commit themselves to something for the long term. Just look at the number of marriage breakdowns and those who leave religious orders and priesthood a few years after completing their formation or ordination. Rather than join an organisation that requires long term commitment and regular attendance at meetings and so on people often prefer these days to help out on particular projects or contribute to particular issues. Thus, there is a lot of enthusiasm for such things as 'clean up Australia day' and 'Greenpeace'. One can give a day or some money to

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these and then get on with one's hectic life. I draw attention to this because I think we need to be cautious about blaming ourselves for our decline. I do not want to avoid blame where it is due but, all too quickly, we can blame ourselves for things that are in many ways beyond our control.

Our decline in the west is put in sharper focus when we compare ourselves to the situation in Vietnam. Here, the Dominican Laity number an astonishing 50,000 and are a real force in the Church. They undertake major apostolic initiatives such as care for lepers and homeless, they plan and celebrate major liturgies and maintain a lively and community-oriented prayer life. When I asked the Vietnamese Dominican Provincial why the Laity are so numerous, he told me that it was one of the few organisations that the communists allowed to continue when they took over. They thought it was just a prayer group and would die out. Famous last words! Note however, that it was something quite beyond the control of the Laity that influenced their development. They did not create the situation, the communists did, but the Laity took great advantage of it.

If we are agreed that our situation is one of crisis, then what can we do about it? What challenges does it provide and how can we turn it into an opportunity? Before attempting to provide some answers, it is good to have a look at what we have got. What are our resources and what might be our limitations and weaknesses?

Our Resources

Looking at the ledger, there are quite a number of things in our favour. We still have a significant number of members, all of them committed to the Dominican Vision. Among them we have the deep collective wisdom of our older members that has been tested by years of experience and work. We have a small but interested and enthusiastic group of younger members. We have the special strength and wisdom provided by women, because the Dominican Laity is at present made up predominantly of women. We have a Dominican spirituality that has been nurtured by the members for many years. Notice that I say 'a' rather than 'the' Dominican spirituality. I don't think anyone would claim to have the Dominican spirituality. Every generation and every Province develops an interpretation of Dominican spirituality that is thought most suitable for a particular time and place. The Dominican spirituality that has nurtured the Laity over many years in Australia is probably significantly different to Vietnam, or to the Dominican spirituality that operated hundreds of years ago. There is continuity but also difference. Finally, we have a steadiness and calmness that comes with age and maturity. We are not easily spooked, like kangaroos in a headlight. I well remember the Master of the Order, Timothy Radcliffe, on visitation here three years ago. We were discussing the decline in numbers in our Province and the dearth of vocations and wringing our hands. Timothy asked me "are Australians easily spooked Mark?" When I asked what he meant, he said

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that we were panicking unnecessarily. He did not deny we had problems, but the English Province got down to two or three on more than one occasion. Now it is 100 plus and doing well with vocations.

Our Limitations

Assessing our limitations and coming to grips with them is difficult, but it has the advantage of injecting a healthy dose of realism into the discussion. I think we would all agree that we need to examine ways of changing and developing aspects of the Dominican Laity. But, it tends to be more difficult to change as one becomes older and settled. We all find change difficult at times. Modern society boasts of its readiness to change and adapt. I think this is a myth. We are happy to change when we perceive advantage in it for ourselves. We are reluctant to change when it challenges (that word again!) our hard won and settled ways. Look at the difficulty we have in Australia trying to change our wasteful and indulgent use of energy and resources. We all want the environment to look clean and nice, but we also want our cars, central heating, green lawns in the middle of our hot dry summers, and so on.

Another limitation or weakness in the Dominican Laity at present is that we are not attracting young people. This may be due to the reasons I outlined above for the decline in organisations, churches and societies. Nevertheless, there are some Christian and Catholic movements that are enjoying success among young people. Names that come to mind are 'basic Christian communities', 'Neo-catechumenate', 'Ecclesia Dei', 'Missionaries of God's Love'. These tend to be conservative movements and they attract conservative Christians. I welcome conservatives as long as they are willing to take part in the debate and accept that they do not have all the answers. But, are the more progressive among us prepared to accept that we have something to learn from them, that perhaps, in the wake of Vatican II renewal, we have lost something that these movements are in touch with, or at least searching for? I remember an English Dominican saying that what he found difficult was that many of the things for which he and others fought hard during and after Vatican II are of little concern to young people. Vatican II was over 30 years ago. For many young people, it is ancient history. Time passes and a new generation has a new agenda. They may not be interested in what drives me or you. This does not in itself make them any less Christian or less suitable as candidates for the Dominican Laity.

All of us in the Dominican family believe, I hope, that it has something special to offer - that Dominican charism. Otherwise, why stay in it? We talk a lot about it, but do we know what it is and are we able to communicate it to others? Among the Friars, we often feel that the Dominican charism is real but elusive. We do not have a text like the Jesuits with Ignatius's Spiritual Exercises or the Camielites with the writings of Teresa of Avila and John of the Cross. Dominic left some Constitutions and a couple of brief letters. Not

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much to go on in terms of sources. But, perhaps we worry too much about being able to define our charism and pin it down. Perhaps it is meant to be elusive and somewhat mysterious, like life itself. Perhaps Dominic deliberately refrained from putting anything between us and the Gospels. That portrait of Fra Angelico's comes to mind, with Dominic sitting quietly reading the Scriptures. Perhaps the model Dominic had in mind is John the Baptist who said of Jesus: "he must increase, I must decrease" (John 3:30). Here, I must confess to an aversion to mission statements. I admire the effort put into them but generally find them so vague as to offer nothing specific or engaging about an Order or society's charism. The ones that I have read could be applied to any number of Orders and Christian societies.

Finally, we have a real problem with men! They are in the minority in the Dominican Laity and becoming fewer. This may be a male problem but it may also say something about the way we are conducting the life of the Dominican Laity. For a movement that calls itself the Dominican Family, it would be a pity if something were not done about this. Ironically, while we and the church at large are having difficulty getting men interested and active, society at large is becoming interested in men's problems and spirituality. There is a surge of publications on the matter, of which I have read none so far. Surely Dominicans have something to offer that will help men discover whatever Christian masculinity may mean.

Some Cautionary Words

As a preface to these proposals about what we might do, may I offer a couple of caveats. One is that we need to beware of playing the numbers game. An increase in numbers does not in itself spell success. Not everyone is suited to the Dominican Laity or Dominican spirituality. Ours is but one of many spiritualities in the Church and some people may not find it helpful. We need to exercise discernment in approaching new members and listen carefully to their needs and hopes rather than let our need for an increase in membership dominate the agenda.

Another caveat is be alert to the difference between being incarnational and being faddish. Fads pass, the incarnation - of which we are an integral part - lasts. To give you an example: a husband and wife need to incarnate their love for their children every day, in the ups and downs of life. On the way they may read the latest stuff on child care, family planning, diet and exercise. These things can help but they cannot constitute the basic ingredient that will make a family.

Some Proposals

I think we need to explore different ways of being Dominican Laity and to develop the flexibility that is allowed for, and even encouraged, in the Handbook. I would draw your attention to the section on New Associations on p50 of the Handbook. The Dominican Sisters for example have a group called Dominican Associates. Apropos of this proposal, we could learn from the Asian tradition of people joining a monastery for a couple of years as part of their formation/education in society. This was regarded as standard practice for most young people and a small percentage of them ended up joining the monastery on a permanent basis. I am not advocating that you all become nuns and monks, but perhaps we could look at the possibility of people joining chapters for a time to learn something of the Order. A small percentage of them might elect to continue.

I would like to think that the Dominican Laity could assist the Friars and Sisters in sharing the Dominican charism/ethos with those who work for us or work with us, in parishes, schools, university colleges, publishing, etc. Here may I comment on the Jesuits and some of the Sisters' congregations who run workshops, seminars, and field trips to inform those who work for them about the ethos of their orders and to foster a closer collaboration. We should not expect that all these will join the Laity, although a few may choose to do so.

We should explore the feasibility of joint projects (which, as I pointed out earlier, tend to attract people's interest these days). This may provide an opportunity to invite young people to learn something about the Dominican Family. One example that comes to mind is the proposed Justice and Peace Conference of the Asia-Pacific region of the Dominican Family in 1998. It is proposed that it will take place in Sydney in late September, in conjunction with the meeting of the Asia-Pacific Region of Dominican Provincials. The Conference will be organised and co-ordinated by the Promoters for Justice and Peace in our region; Sister Reetha OP and Father Prakash OP, both from India. Another form of collaboration could be to develop prayer groups and types of prayer that are not necessarily part of a local chapter and do not necessarily follow the traditional form of chapter prayer. This would require flexibility and a desire to work collaboratively with others.

The Dominican Laity could also act as contributors to the production of good theological and spiritual material and distributors of such material. This is another way of implementing the Dominican vocation to preach.

Here, may I offer a comment on the magazine "Communication" which has operated for many years. Because of increasing production

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and postage costs, and a decrease in subscriptions, the recent Provincial Chapter of the Friars decided to reassess its future and to see whether it should continue or whether the Dominican Family might be able to develop a more suitable publication. It may still be called "Communication". Some of you who have sent cheques for subscriptions have had your cheques returned with a covering letter to explain the situation. We will keep you informed of developments.

A final proposal that I would like to mention is "Dominican Youth International". This is a movement that, I believe, started in Ireland. It has grown considerably and has held international conventions. It may be something to investigate as part of our desire to reach young people.

Concluding Remarks

Our membership may not, at least in the foreseeable future, be large and its impact on Church and Society may not be great. Nevertheless, the Dominican Laity has shown in the past, and can show again, that is able to be a relatively small but very effective force for good in our world, composed of people who lead a Christian life in a way that is truly Dominican and Lay, and seeks to help others to do the same.

We Friars have found that, as we decline in numbers, there is a danger of becoming too absorbed in our own problems and worries. It is a great tonic to have the Dominican Laity around. It helps us break out of this trap. Our work with the Dominican Laity is thus a two-way affair. We minister to you and are ministered to by you. This points to the importance of teamwork in preparing and planning for the future. I will recommend this to the Provincial Promoter and the other chaplains.

Lastly, may I emphasise that my remarks are for your consideration and assessment. I do not want you to rush off and implement any of the above without first making it your proposal.

Friars' New House at 100 William Street, Granville

I was also asked to make a few comments about the Friars' move to a non-parish house at Granville, in the western suburbs of Sydney and in the Parramatta diocese. This move arose out of our commitment at the 1993 Provincial Chapter to restructure the Province. We are experiencing the common phenomenon among religious of an aging and declining population. It is difficult to find suitable Friars to staff our parishes, university colleges, chaplaincies and school. In addition, there is our commitment to the Vicariate of the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea. After reviewing all our parishes, it was agreed that we should hand the Wahroonga parish to the Diocese. It is a very good parish, well-to-do and in good order. Any parish priest would be happy to have it. The people are

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supportive and committed. We deeply regret leaving the people, but there is no point remaining there if we do not have suitable men for the job. This would only be counter-productive. The Order is also calling us to recapture something of the itinerant nature of Dominican work. In a Province that has had many and major institutional commitments, this presents quite a challenge.

The move to Granville is in response to these factors. We will rent the former Patricial Brothers' residence for four years. This will give us time to see how things develop and take us past the olympic games and the next Provincial Chapter. After that, we would hope to make a more permanent foundation. We will of course continue to help the Dominican Laity in the Wahroonga area as best we can. With thanks for your patience and for the invitation to attend your National Convention.

**DOMINICAN FAMILY SPIRITUALITY CONFERENCE
CANBERRA 1999**

PRAYING THE PSALMS

Introductory Remarks

The 150 Psalms are in the third part of the Canon, called 'The Writings'. The other two parts are 'The Torah' and 'The Prophets'. We may relate these three parts of the canon very briefly as follows -

The Torah records God's teaching to Israel on the nature of the divinity, Israel's vocation, and the covenant relationship between God and Israel to be lived out in the land. The Prophets are the faithful preachers of Torah, who guided Israel during its life in the land according to Torah, challenged Israel when it failed to keep the covenant, and gave it hope when the land was lost.

The Psalms offer a different perspective; they are Israel's response to God's revelation, in the Psalms Israel as community and individual is generally the speaker.

Numbering the Psalms

<u>Hebrew</u>	<u>Greek/Latin</u>
1 - 8	1 - 8
9 - 10	9
11 - 113	10 - 112
114 - 115	113
116	114 - 115
117 - 146	116 - 145
147	146 - 147
148 - 150	148 - 150

The numbering of the Psalms differs in the ancient Hebrew and Greek manuscripts, and it is difficult to tell which is the more original. The Greek translation ultimately goes back of course to a Hebrew original. The Latin translation adopted the Greek numbering, and this is the one that became standard in the Catholic Church. The Protestant Reformation preferred the Hebrew numbering, and this has tended to become standard in most modern Bibles. The Breviary follows the Greek/Latin tradition, with the Hebrew numbering supplied in brackets. The variation arose because some Psalms can be divided in different ways. A glance at the sheet will show this. At the very beginning of our study of the Psalms therefore we find a charming, if at times irritating, example of how religious traditions agree to differ. It is a

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timely reminder that the Bible does not lose its human dimension in becoming the Word of God.

The Major Collections of Psalms (Hebrew numbering)

1. David Collection ('to David'): 3-42; 51,72; 101; 103; 109-110; 136-145
2. Korah Collection: 42-49
3. Asaph Collection: 50; 73-83
4. Hallelujah Collection: 113-118; 135-136; 146-150
5. Songs of Ascents: 120-134

The Psalms seem to have grown in a variety of collections, which can be identified in the Bible from the superscriptions above many of the Psalms. Many are 'to David', a phrase which could mean a number of things: 'composed by David' or 'dedicated to David', or 'the reigning Davidic king' or 'belonging to the royal repertoire of Psalms'. Some seem to have been collections belonging to temple singers (the Korah and Asaph Psalms), while others are identified as Hallelujah Psalms (Psalms of Praise), or Songs of Ascents for the use of pilgrims. A number of Psalms are attributed to individuals, while others have no superscription and do not belong to any collection. In time these collections and miscellaneous Psalms were organised into 5 'books', perhaps to parallel the 5 books of The Torah or Pentateuch. The 5 books of Psalms are Book 1, Psalm 1-41; Book 2, Psalms 42-72; Book 3, Psalm 73-89; Book 4, Psalm 90-106; Book 5, Psalm 107-150. The ancient manuscripts did not indicate the division into five books in the same way as in modern Bibles. Rather, each book ended with what is called a little doxology or acclamation of praise. These are found at the end of Psalms 41; 72; 89; 106; with the whole of Psalm 150 serving as a final, great, doxology.

The variety of collections of Psalms indicates a long and rich history of Psalmody in Israel. But if we wish to gain some insight into the nature and meaning of Israelite Psalms then we need to look a bit closer than the books and the collections. Here we can thankfully rely, at least to a certain extent, on the findings of scholars who have put in a lot of the hard work. Their work has led to two important results. The first is that Israel developed different types of Psalms; the most favoured ones are Psalms of praise, of thanksgiving, of lament, of petition, of repentance, etc. The second is that Israelite Psalms share the common feature of Hebrew poetry, called parallelism. Parallelism translates remarkably well into other languages. This is fortunate because poetry is notoriously difficult to translate into another language.

Different Kind or Types of Psalms (Hebrew numbering)

1. Hymns of Song of Praise

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8; 19; 29; 33; 65; 100; 103; 104; 111-114; 135-136; 145-150

2. Psalms of Thanksgiving

a) Communion Psalms

66:1-2; 67; 68; 75; 78; 105; 108; 115; 117; 124; 126; 129

b) Psalms of the Individual

9; 22:22-31; 30; 34; 40; 41; 63; 66:13-20; 92; 116; 118; 138-139

3. Psalms celebrating God as King

47; 82; 93; 96-99

4. Royal Psalms (Israel's king)

2; 18; 20-21; 45; 72; 89; 101; 110; 132; 144

5. Pilgrim Psalms

15; 24; 50; 81; 91; 95; 100; 107; 121; 133; 134

Pilgrim Psalms that focus on Zion

46; 48; 76; 84; 87; 122

6. Psalms of Trust (confidence)

4; 11; 16; 23; 25; 27; 52; 54; 56; 62-63; 71; 125; 131

7. Wisdom Psalms

1; 14; 36-37; 49; 53; 73; 94; 119; 127-128

8. Penitential Psalms

6; 32; 38; 51; 102; 106; 130; 143

9. Lament Psalms

a) Community lament Psalms

44; 60; 74; 79-80; 83; 85; 90; 123; 137

b) Lament Psalms of the individual

3; 5; 7; 10; 12-13; 17; 22:1-21; 26; 28; 31; 35; 39; 42-43; 55; 57; 59; 61;
64; 69-70; 77; 86; 88; 120; 140; 141-143

10. Cursing Psalms

58; 109

The above classification, like any such classification, is an interpretation and a pretty limited one at that. It also runs the risk of forcing some Psalms into a frame they are not meant to fit. But, having said that, such classification can be a useful aid to getting to know the Psalms better. As pointed out earlier, we get to know something complex by dividing it into manageable parts and, after analysing these parts, by putting them together again to see whether we have any better grasp of the whole.

Poetic Parallelism in the Psalms

Parallelism is a phenomenon in ANE poetry in which the second statement parallels or reflects the first in some way. The parallels can be similar but it is rare to find repetition. Israelite poetry develops themes by gradually unfolding their meaning in a series of parallel statements. It looks simple enough but it is quite an elastic technique that allows for considerable variation and complexity. For example, there can be contrasting parallelism, as in the latter part of Psalm 1. Sometimes parallelism is used to explore the meaning of a term like love or justice (cf. Ps 9:8-9). Parallelism can even occur between strophes in a Psalm. That is, a subsequent section of the Psalm will form a parallel to the preceding section.

It is worth drawing attention to the 'singability' of poems that are composed in this way. The celebration of the Psalms in Israel's worship has long been recognised, and a number of the Psalms carry instructions for singing. What is particularly interesting is how the poetic parallelism of the Psalms lends itself to rhythmic chant. The development of the tradition of chanting the Psalms in the church probably owes a lot to this structure of Hebrew poetry and the subtle influence it exercised on the choice of appropriate music.

To illustrate poetic parallelism, I have chosen two Psalms, 1 and 8; they are well known and relatively short. The translation is the Grail, the same one as in the Breviary. Although it does not use inclusive language, it is valuable for staying relatively close to the Hebrew original and capturing its use of poetic parallelism. The two Psalms have been set out in schematic form below with the parallel elements grouped together. From these groupings we can hopefully get an idea of what we mean by poetic parallelism.

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Schematic Presentation of Parallelism in Psalms 1 and 8

PSALM 1	Parallelism	PSALM 8	Parallelism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Happy indeed is the man 	<p>Basic statement to be explored in rest of Psalm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · How great is your name, O Lord our God through all the earth · Your majesty is praised above the heavens 	<p>Parallel expression of God's greatness the first makes the claim, the second the argument; God's greatness is all pervasive because all creation celebrates it</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · who follows not the counsel of the wicked · nor lingers in the way of sinners · nor sits in the company of scoffers 	<p>Basic statement spelt out in three part parallelism; note the movement in imagery from <u>follow</u> to <u>linger</u> to <u>sit</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · On the lips of children and of babes you have found praise to foil your enemy · to silence the foe and the rebel 	<p>The preceding parallels the appeal to transcendence. Here, the same point is made by parallel appeals to immanence; the sound of little children</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · but whose delight is the law of the Lord · and who ponders his law day and night 	<p>A two part parallelism where the second part develops the meaning of the first</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · When I see the heavens the work of your hands · the moon and the stars which you arranged 	<p>The second part of the parallel develops the first by providing more detail. Note metaphor of artist for the creator</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · He is like a tree that is planted beside the flowing waters · that yields its fruit in due season · and whose leaves shall never fade · and all that he does shall prosper 	<p>A simile, developed in a three part parallelism using the image of a tree for the person, and flowing water for the law. The last line moves out of the simile to make a statement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · What is man that you should keep him in mind · mortal man that you are care for him? 	<p>Poetic parallelism in the form of a question. The second part adds emphasis with the word 'mortal'. The parallel lines move from thinking to acting (care). This is the psalmist's view of humanity.</p>

PSALM 1	Parallelism	PSALM 8	Parallelism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Not so are the wicked not so! · For they are like winnowed chaff · shall be driven away, by the wind 	<p>Statement about the wicked developed in two part parallelism, with simile of useless chaff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Yet you have made him little less than a god · with glory and honour you crowned him · gave him power over the works of your hand · put all things under his feet 	<p>This is a more extensive four part parallelism which spells out what it means to be 'little less than a god'. This is according to the psalm, God's view of humanity</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · When the wicked are judged they shall not stand · nor find room among those who are just 	<p>A two part parallelism on the wicked. Note how it recalls the beginning of the Psalm</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · All of them, sheep and cattle, · yes, even savage beasts, · birds of the air and fish · that make their way through the waters 	<p>This parallelism continues the preceding one and provides details. Note movement from domestic to wild animals of earth, to birds of air, and fish of sea – through the waters birds of air, and fish of sea – a 'complete' list</p>
<p>—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · For the Lord guards the way of the just · but the way of the wicked leads to doom 	<p>A contrasting parallelism, the second reinforces the first by way of contrast</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · How great is your name O Lord our God, through all the earth 	<p>Concluding acclamation that repeats beginning, but is now filled with content of intervening verses</p>

Praying the Psalms
Dominican Spirituality Conference, Canberra
 1999
Father Mark O'Brien

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Poetic Imagery in the Psalms

Like most poetry, the Psalms made use of literary imagery in a variety of ways: metaphors, similes, symbols, etc. Images may be developed over a series of parallels, or different images may be used in parallel. Because the imagery of the Psalms is so integrally related to parallelism an appreciation of it is valuable for our understanding, even if some of it may seem strange or naive on an initial reading. However, with a little sensitivity and reflection we can gain quite an appreciation of how poetic imagery works in the Psalms.

Psalms 23 (22) and 42 (41) are popular because few have difficulty with the image in the former of a shepherd, or with the image in the latter of a thirsty deer longing for flowing streams. But, when we come to the exuberant description of God's theophany or manifestation in Ps 18:7-15 the rapport may not be so immediate. This Psalm contains a veritable kaleidoscope of images: an earthquake (v.8), a smoking dragon (v. 9), a warrior mounted on a fiery sky chariot firing arrows of lightning (vv. 11-15), and cherubs (v. 11).

Is this the concept of God that Israel had? Perhaps this question is the wrong one to ask. It misses the point of how poetry works in the Psalms. It probably would not have occurred to an Israelite to try and distil an idea or concept of God from these images. Rather, the meaning of the poetic image lies in the image itself and the way it is used in parallel with other images. We are meant to let the imagery of the divine theophany evoke the sense of tremendous power when solid foundations shake; the potential threat that is a fire and the marvellous relief felt when instead it destroys what is threatening us (Note that the enemy in the Psalm is quite unspecified - a literary image); the sense of absolute freedom of movement that flying evokes (a cherub was an artistic representation of a cloud in the ANE, often in the form of a bull or lion, with wings and a human face); the awareness of an all pervading presence that reaches immediately (at the blast of nostrils) to the 'foundations of the world' (v. 16). We can paraphrase this imagery by saying that 'it means God is immediately present': a concise and accurate enough paraphrase perhaps, but pretty dull fare for a poem!

As well as these images that evoke a God who is all active, whose presence is all pervading, the Psalm uses the image of thunder clouds to symbolise another important element of OT theology; that the God who is active and present to everyone, is at the same time hidden and mysterious. In short these images are employed as metaphors to symbolise or capture something about the divinity that is beyond expression in literal terms. If we take these images in a literal sense then, we are doing the Psalm an injustice. But we should take their literary sense quite seriously: that is, poetic images which function as similes, metaphors, or symbols.

Important Themes in the Psalms

The poetic parallelism, the imagery expressed through this parallelism, and various other poetic devices, combine in the Psalms to produce a rich variety of themes. We can legitimately speak of these themes as Theology or God Talk because almost always the central issue in the Psalms is God or the human being's relationship to God. We cannot hope to cover all the themes in this seminar, but I would like to reflect briefly on some of the major ones.

1. God

The Psalms are replete with statements, metaphors and similes, which give us important insights into the OT notion of God. We should remember when reflecting on the theology of the OT or NT that what we have are inspired theologians and communities presenting their notions of God in human words. There is considerable variety. Each theologian gives us some insight into the mystery of God, but each is limited. While we believe the human words become in a mysterious way the Word of God, they do not cease thereby to be human words, originally in Hebrew, spoken or written by some individual or group at a certain stage in history.

What is striking about the Psalms is the way they use images within the poetic technique of parallelism to try and capture the dynamic and creative power of God. For example, the transforming power of divine kingship is nicely captured in Psalm 48 (47) in which the presence of God as king in the holy city transforms Zion from a lowly hill into the most beautiful mountain in the earth. The transforming power of divine kingship is captured in another way in Psalm 113 (112) which affirms how God, enthroned above the heavens, can reach and touch the most neglected and insignificant members of society, and transform their lives. Here the sense of unbridgeable distance is heightened precisely to show that God is not bound by our categories of space and time.

God's love for humanity is a major theme in the Psalms, and it is proclaimed with conviction despite the depths of misery and suffering expressed in many of the Psalms. It is a great testament of faith. Rather than any particular image, perhaps a phrase from Psalm 63:3 catches best of all Israel's faith in the love of God: '*Your love is better than life*'. It is for this reason the Psalmist resolves to praise God, no matter what.

Another important image of God in the Psalms is that of judge. While it may not strike us as a particularly comforting image of God, this is probably due to attitudes to the law ingrained in our society. For the OT person the judge was a key member of society, and the way the law courts at the city gate functioned was a barometer of the well being of society. Hence there was no hesitation in describing God as the great

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judge, whose judgements are always true and reliable, who always seeks to deliver the oppressed and to bring the evil to book. The transforming power of God as judge is beautifully expressed in Ps 96: 11-13 (5:11-13), where even the trees of the wood shout for joy at the coming of God, the just judge. The images here evoke the sense of a new order - of peace and harmony - in creation with the proclamation of God's judgement.

2. Humanity

The Psalms tend not to focus on humanity as such; their interest lies more in the relationship between the community and God, between individuals and God. Nevertheless there are some Psalms which reflect on the significance of the human being as God's creature. None is better than Psalm 8, which we considered briefly earlier. This Psalm offers two perspectives on humanity. From a human perspective we are insignificant, a mere speck in the majesty of creation. This awareness leads the Psalmist to ask why God bothers at all with humanity (v.5). The answer comes in the second part of the Psalm, which boldly offers the divine perspective on humanity. From God's perspective we are divine, little less than a god, and the guardians of creation. It is worth reflecting on the transforming effect this perspective can have on our self awareness. Psalm 8 is a superb Psalm because, in a few verses, it sums up what the Bible itself is really all about. It claims to provide us with God's perspective on ourselves and on our destiny. This claim cannot of course be proved; it is something which invites a response in faith.

3. Relationship with God (The Covenant)

Because they are poems which express Israel's response to the God of revelation, it is quite understandable that the Psalms were principally concerned with various aspects of the relationship between God and Israel, and on the larger plane, between God and all humanity. The favoured term which developed in ancient Israel to describe this relationship, promised to the ancestors and realised at Mt. Sinai, was the covenant.

We can gain some idea of the areas of interest and concern in this relationship by looking at the different types of Psalms which we identified earlier. It is noteworthy that the greatest number of Psalms fall into the categories of praise and thanksgiving on the one hand, and lament on the other hand. In effect these two areas form the framework of the relationship between God and Israel. Israel praises God who is great and good, who is king and judge, who is Lord of the universe, who revealed himself to Israel. Israel also gives thanks of God because of the great saving deeds that were wrought on Israel's behalf; principally the exodus from slavery in Egypt and the gift of the land promised to Israel's

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ancestors. These Psalms celebrate and interpret what Israel believes to be God's saving presence.

At the other end of the spectrum are the lament Psalms. These lament the absence of God's help in situations of affliction, or God's seeming delay in coming to the rescue of the community or individual who has been rendered powerless by some affliction. The number of lament Psalms might give the impression that Israel had a rather gloomy outlook on life. However, the number and variety of Psalms of praise and thanksgiving suggests otherwise. I think the lament Psalms were treasured because they were a witness to Israel's enduring faith in all sorts of troubling situations. The people believed they could speak to God out of the deepest suffering, anger or hurt and not be rejected. In this the lament Psalms are also a witness to hope. Thus they have a transforming power. They cling to belief in God in the face of contradictory experience, and in doing so transcend the accepted or expected categories of religious experience. The Psalms can help one journey through the darkness of experience to a new awareness and acceptance of God's presence. This function of the lament Psalms shows that they are similar in a way to the book of Job.

The other types of Psalms fall between these two poles of the experience of God, and their theological function can be seen reasonably clearly. The one that I would like to comment on briefly is the penitential Psalms. While these contain elements of the lament Psalms there is a significant difference. In the penitential Psalms there is an explanation for the trouble the Psalmist experiences, namely, sin. The difference with the lament Psalm is that one does not know what is wrong. The situation is inexplicable.

The Psalms and Prayer

Scholars have argued that not all the Psalms were composed as prayers, and that most of them were for public and communal celebration rather than for private reading. That the Psalms were not all composed as prayers is probably true, but we should remember that the notion of what constitutes prayer can vary from generation to generation, community to community, individual to individual. I do not think we can determine what is and what is not prayer for someone, except within fairly broad lines. Speaking in the broad sense then, the Jewish-Christian tradition has long regarded the Psalms as providing a rich array of prayers for the faithful. But, whether one finds a particular Psalm prayerful at this or that particular time is however something that cannot be assured in advance. Nor should we worry if a Psalm does not attract us at a certain time: they provide a varied context in which we can enter and move freely; they are not something that we have to "take over"

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The Psalms and the NT - The Lord's Prayer

We know that Jesus grew up in, and was imbued with, the Jewish tradition of prayer. We can confidently expect then, that the most treasured of Christian prayers which Jesus gave to his disciples - the Lord's Prayer - should have some relationship to the Psalms. The two passages in the NT which record the Lord's Prayer are Matt 6:7-14 and Lk 11:1-4. The context of each occurrence is instructive. In Matt 6:9 Jesus instructs his disciples to 'pray then like this ...' The implication is that he is giving them a 'way' of praying rather than a prayer as such. This way of praying is given as a corrective to the empty formalism of Gentile prayer. We could paraphrase Jesus' instruction as: 'this is the true model or framework which should guide your prayer; pray thus and you will pray as I do'. This model or framework is then given in what we have come to call the Lord's Prayer. It is remarkable how the parts of the Lord's Prayer reflect the principal types of Psalms"

Our Father who art in Heaven	God is the subject of prayer
Hallowed by thy name	the Psalms of <u>praise</u>
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven	praise is due to God because of his saving plan (the theme of <u>thanksgiving</u> Psalms)
Give us this day our daily bread	the Psalms of <u>petition</u>
And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors	the <u>penitential</u> Psalms
Lead us not into temptation	the arena of <u>lament</u> Psalms
But deliver us from evil	

From this schema we can see how the arrangement of the Lord's Prayer reflects that of the Psalms. Jesus was presenting to his disciples in a concise and most perfect way the Jewish tradition of prayer. There is no break with the tradition, but it is brought to a new level of perfection. God is addressed as 'father' by all disciples, in an intimacy which shares in that between God and his Son (the Word of God). Furthermore, Jesus calls all disciples to a more generous attitude of forgiveness than some of the Psalms display. There is no trace in Jesus' teaching of the call for vengeance that we meet in some Psalms. The Lord's Prayer also reveals that eschatological thrust which the finality of the Christ event evokes. The Psalms looked with hope to this future definitive irruption of God in history.

To peak of the Lord's Prayer as a 'way' of praying does not in any way lessen its value as a prayer as such. Jesus' instruction about the way a Christian should pray is so apt that it becomes a prayer in itself. To put it another way; Jesus teaches about prayer by offering a model or example of prayer, just as

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he taught about life by offering examples from life in the parables. Thus the framework of prayer and the model prayer meet in Jesus' words. This can be seen if we compare the Matthean passage with the account given in Lk 11:1-4. Jesus here teaches his disciples a prayer in response to their request that he teach them 'to pray'. In Matthew's account, as we have seen, Jesus teaches the way of prayer.

The 'unacceptable' side of the Psalms?

What are Psalms with expressions of hatred and vengeance doing in a book that claims to be the Word of God? What about the two Psalms that I have identified as cursing Psalms, 58(57) and 109(108)? You will not find these in the Breviary, nor will you find the last three verses of Psalms 137(136). We can say that the curse had a place in Israelite society as a ritual appeal to God that justice be done, whether against an enemy or an individual. This was probably the function of the cursing Psalms and of curses such as the one in Psalm 137:7-9. Nevertheless, this still leaves unanswered the question whether these Psalms have any relevance today.

Even though the church may judge that such Psalms are not suitable for public recitation, they still have relevance for us because they reveal something about God's attitude to prayer and to those who pray. We may be quite right in judging that the cursing Psalms and similar sentiments in other Psalms reflect an unfortunate theology. They have a place within the broad spectrum of human words that we identify as God's Word. We need to be careful about how we interpret this reality. One possible interpretation I would suggest is that these Psalms testify that God understands and listens to prayer spoken even out of the depths of human vindictiveness and hatred. It is not a good or desirable situation to be in, but God does not reject such a prayer, or the one who prays it. It is accepted because God accepts us whoever and wherever we are, and in that acceptance lies the hope of our transformation.

To put it another way, in breaking open the Word of God by reflecting on texts such as the Psalms, we discover that we ourselves have been broken open by God, so that we can look into ourselves and see ourselves from God's point of view. We learn that in spite of all our hatred, anger and fear, we are welcome in God's sight; God's one desire is to transform what we are into a perfect image of the divinity.

Suggested Reading

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