



Fratres Ordinis Praedicatorum
CURIA GENERALITIA

LETTER TO THE ORDER

'LET US WALK IN JOY AND THINK OF OUR SAVIOUR'

SOME VIEWS ON DOMINICAN ITINERANCY

My dear brothers and sisters in Saint Dominic:

I write to you in fear and trembling. First of all, in order to pluck up some courage, I want to tell you something in confidence. Lately, I read and meditated on the different messages that the last four Masters of the Order wrote to the Order. I refer to these four, only to cite those Providence has put at the service of the Dominican Family from the days of the Second Vatican Council to 2001. I could only exclaim: How much wealth! How profound is the word they have preached with so much generosity and dedication.¹ With this in mind – and this is what I wanted to tell you fraternally – how difficult it is to write a letter to the Order! It seems that everything has been already said. What can I tell you, brothers and sisters in Saint Dominic, that is new? At the same time I have to admit sadly that in many communities, and I refer more specifically to those of the friars, maybe only the Acts of the last General Chapters are known, these texts being truly programs for us to live the Dominican way of life in our own times. And lastly, I have the feeling, like so many others even outside the Order, that we are facing a certain 'inflation' of documents, texts, messages, letters, about the most different subjects (which are impossible to read profitably before another new text arrives).

DIFFERENT EXPERIENCES IN THESE LAST SIX YEARS

1. Some time ago a friar, a provincial, was talking to me informally about the situation in his province. Thinking aloud he lamented, not without a certain sadness: 'in my province I cannot make any assignation.' These words impressed me very much. I cannot stop thinking about them and their consequences.

It is no news that in these last years I have lived two very different experiences. My work as Procurator General, a 'sedentary' job like no other, however, put me in touch with many delicate situations for the Dominican and religious life of many brothers and sisters. Now, in fulfilling this present ministry, much more 'nomadic,' visiting communities in different countries, I discover the 'polychromatic symphony' of the Order in the Church and in the world from another point of view. However, both points of view brought me to the same intuition. They made me discover that something is really 'blocking,' threatening the roots of our vocation and mission in the Church and in the world: a certain immobility. This inertia provokes a sort of paralysis, a 'settling down,' which ends up mortally wounding the most generous energies of our being and living as daughters and sons of Saint Dominic.

¹ By the way, work is going on to prepare an edition with the most important messages that Bro. Aniceto Fernández, Bro. Vincent De Couesnongle, Bro. Damian Byrne and Bro. Timothy Radcliffe sent to the Order. This will be published shortly in different languages bearing the title '**Laudare-Benedicere-Prædicare – Messages to the Order (1961-2001)**', and we are anxiously waiting for it.

2. One of the characteristics that Dominic of Caleruega incarnated in imitating the apostles, and which was inherited by all of us who are his disciples, is that of evangelical itinerancy. With the grace of God, he broke the boundaries of a 'geographical' scheme in the organization and life of the Church, fundamentally based on the diocesan organization on the one hand and – speaking of religious life – on the structure of monastic life and that of the canons regular on the other. There is no doubt that the history of the missionary Church does not begin with the Order of Preachers. Many missionary monks, for example, evangelized so many regions of Europe, but Dominic wanted to found, *in medio Ecclesiae*, an Order that was called and was made up of Preachers.

'IT HAPPENED AT THAT TIME...' TO SET OUT IS TO CHANGE ONE'S LIFE!

3. When we were young we enjoyed hearing or reading real or imagined stories. Many of these began with the usual 'Once upon a time.' Acknowledging the difference, when the Gospel is announced, following Jesus on his Way, we normally start the reading saying: 'At that time...'

Blessed Jordan, with the freshness of the disciple, as if wanting us to fall in love again with our origins, writes in his Libellus:

At that time, it happened that Alphonse, King of Castile, was making plans for a marriage between his son Ferdinand and a princess of the Marches. He approached the Bishop of Osma and asked that he consent to arrange the matter. The bishop agreed to the king's request and (...) took with him the man of God, Dominic, the sub prior of his church and setting out on his journey, they reached Toulouse.²

4. In his *History of Saint Dominic*, Marie-Humbert Vicaire, by means of different historical arguments, writes that this invitation of Alphonse VIII to the Bishop of Osma was made around mid-May 1203. The renowned French biographer, following Jordan, concludes: *The bishop immediately set out on his journey, taking with him Dominic. It was mid-October 1203.*³ This was 800 years ago.

This is not the place nor the appropriate time to enter into details, nor dwell on a complete historical and chronological analysis. We know, however, that this journey changed forever the life of these two friends. In fact, as soon as they crossed the Pyrenees, these two men of God could see for themselves a fact that, up to that time, they only knew by hearsay: the challenge of the dualism of Manichean origin, profoundly rooted in that region through different groups and sects. As an eloquent example of the impact this new reality made on both travelers, Jordan tells us of the famous episode of the innkeeper:

At the inn where they found shelter in Toulouse, Dominic spent the entire night fervently exhorting and zealously arguing with the heretical innkeeper, who, no longer able to resist the wisdom and the spirit that spoke, returned by God's grace to the true faith.⁴

The 'marriage mission,' we know, would have them make another journey, which turned out to be a failure. A failure? Yes, but full of new life. This is what Jordan of Saxony says:

God had planned to reap other benefits from this journey, since, as events proved, it paved the way for a more excellent marriage, a union between God and the souls for the benefit of

² *Libellus Iordani de Saxoniam* n. 14 – Ed. A. Walz OP in MOPH XVI (Romae 1935) 33-34.

³ **M.-H. Vicaire**, *Histoire de saint Dominique*, Vol. I (Paris 1982) 126.

⁴ Cf. *Libellus* n. 15.

*the whole Church; the nuptials of eternal salvation for the souls recalled from the errors of their sins (2 Cor 11,2).*⁵

5. A diplomatic mission in the King's name – a sudden change of plans in Diego's and Dominic's life – is the occasion that ends up offering a different color to their different histories illumined by the renewing light of grace. A Bishop and the sub prior of a Cathedral Chapter, called to grow and give fruit in the limited garden of Osma, are faced with a totally different ecclesial and historical panorama. Yes they knew the consequences of the heresies beyond the Pyrenees, but only 'by hearsay.' Something similar to what happened to the good Job, who at the end of his difficult life experience, in an open dialogue with God, exclaims: *My ears had heard of you, but now my eyes have seen you.*⁶

In fact, God was calling Diego and Dominic to start in a foreign land a new evangelization that later would acquire universal horizons. The journey away from that which was known opened their hearts' vision. Both of them were never the same again. Both diplomatic journeys (in 1203 and 1205 respectively) had 'vocational' consequences for both, and it was not because they had discovered a diplomatic vocation!

Diego of Osma (in 1206?) would ask Pope Innocent III to kindly accept his resignation as bishop, because it was his project, very dear to him, to dedicate himself with all his energies to the conversion of the Cumans, a pagan people to the east of Hungary. We know that the Pope did not accept this resignation. The Bishop will later take the habit of the Cistercians. He counsels the papal legates on the preaching of the faith against the Albigensians. He commits himself seriously to this itinerant mission for two years and he decides to return to his seat in Osma. A few days later he falls sick and dies around the end of 1207.

We know Dominic's life in more detail. As from these journeys to the Marches and unto his death, his life will be that of an itinerant apostle. From this eighth centenary of Dominic's 'first missionary voyage' onwards, why don't we start celebrating in joy other 'eighth centenaries' of extraordinary beauty and importance for the whole Dominican Family, among them the foundation of Prouilhe, which is always considered to be the first community of the Order.

ITINERANCY IN THE HEART AND MIND OF EVERY DOMINICAN!

6. Bro. Paul of Venice, one of the witnesses in the process of canonization of Saint Dominic, says that 'master Dominic' told him and others that were with him: ***Walk, let us think of our Savior.*** He also testifies that *wherever he was, Dominic always spoke of God or with God*, and confesses that *he never saw him angry, agitated or upset, not because of fatigue from the journey, nor for any other reason. But he was always joyful in tribulation and patient in adversity.*⁷

7. So then? Another letter to the Order about itinerancy? What you have in your hands, what you will read and – I hope – meditate in your hearts, personally or in common, is the fruit of a reflection made during the General Council. When I started to think and reflect on the theme of itinerancy in the Dominican life, we prepared a whole meeting of the General Council. I also invited Bro. Manuel Merten, Promoter General for the nuns. Every brother had enough time to prepare a short exposition about the different aspects of itinerancy in our *sequela Dominici*: itinerancy and spiritual life; itinerancy and the formative and intellectual journey; itinerancy and each one of the religious vows; itinerancy and life in common; itinerancy and contemplative life; itinerancy and Dominican

⁵ *Libellus* n. 16.

⁶ Job 42, 5.

⁷ Cf. *Acta Canonizationis S. Dominici* – Ed. A. Walz OP in MOPH XVI (Romæ 1935) 161.

government; itinerancy and mission; etc. During a three-day meeting outside Rome, each one of the friars presented his theme, and all of us dialogued on these and other aspects of our Dominican itinerancy.

I must confess that the quality of these reflections was such that, at the end, I felt I wasn't able to write a letter on this subject that could embrace all this wealth. So ample is the rainbow of themes to be treated. On the other hand, we couldn't just edit the fifteen 'texts' prepared. We did not want to publish an 'encyclopaedia' or 'dictionary' on the subject, far from it!

During a second stage, we tried to meditate on some of the central themes around which other themes are linked, which we had already studied together. I asked four brothers to present in an elaborated synthesis what we had shared in common. I now present the result of our work. Bro. Roger Hougbedji (Vicariate of West Africa, Province of France, Socius for Africa) writes about 'Itinerancy in the Bible.' Bro. Manuel Merten (Province of Teutonia, Promoter for the Nuns) offers us his reflection on 'Itinerancy and Contemplative Life.' Bro. Wojciech Giertych (Province of Poland, Socius for Intellectual Life) writes about 'Itinerancy in the formative and intellectual journey.' Finally, Bro. Chrys McVey (Vice-Province of Pakistan, Socius for Apostolic Life and Promoter of the Dominican Family) talks to us about 'Itinerancy and mission.'

The word *iter – itineris* (from the Greek *hodós*) means: 'way, journey, walk, a day's journey.' Let us set out and walk together along this Dominican interior landscape!

I - ITINERANCY IN THE BIBLE

8. Itinerancy appears as a dominant topic in the Bible. Indeed, the people of the Bible are defined mainly as a people in pilgrimage. The word 'Hebrew,' by which it is known, comes from *ibri* (derived from *eber* which means 'the other side' of a limit) and evokes the idea of emigration. The Hebrew people is thus basically a people in migration, a nomad people. It is in this perspective that the great believers of the Old Testament (particularly the Patriarchs) regard themselves as 'foreigners' (*xenoi*), from the fact that they could not obtain (but saw only from afar) the object of the promises made to them by Yahweh (cf. Gn 23,4; Ex 2,22; 1 Ch 29,15; Ps 39,13; Lv 25,23). The whole history of the People of Israel will then be understood as a long march towards the fulfillment of the God's promises in his Son Jesus.

The Christian community (the new People of God) will itself be also called 'the Way' (cf. Ac 9,2; 18,25; 19,9,23, 22,4; 24,14,22). This underlines well the idea of walking, or of itinerancy. In this perspective, the author of the letter to the Hebrews will present the Christian community as a community of pilgrims on earth (He 11,13), walking towards the future city, which is solidly built (He 13,14). The Christians then live on earth as if 'uprooted' but as if 'deeply rooted' in the heavenly city: the ultimate goal of their walking. In his epistle St. Peter (1 P 1,17) shows that as Christians belong only to God, they should consider their passage on earth as transitory, without any attachment to this world below. The technical term used by the New Testament in order to express this passing situation of the Christians in this world is *Parepidêmos*, which designates the un-established foreigner, the traveler, as opposed to the permanently resident foreigner.

Thus, it appears that in the biblical mentality, the whole life of the believer, his relationship to God is polarized by the idea of walking, of the way, of itinerancy. The question is to know in what this itinerancy consists, or what characterizes it? An overall picture enables us to identify three great characteristic features of biblical itinerancy.

ITINERANCY AS EXODUS

Spatial Displacement

9. God's way (*hodos*) is defined here as a departure, an exit, an exodus. The believer is called to leave for a determined place, to break away with his attachment to a physical or geographic world and to set out and go somewhere else. Itinerancy is taken here in its geographic and physical meaning. It is in this sense that one can understand the itinerancy of Abraham who had to leave his land in order to venture into a foreign country. (Gn 12, 1-9). God's Word addressed to the patriarch leads him to a total rupture with his country and all human attachments in order to launch himself on a way in which faith is the only determining factor. The patriarch's faith consists precisely in an unconditional response that leads him to engage himself on a road only God knows where it leads to. The same thing happens to the prophet Elijah who will take the road to Horeb where God, through a light breeze, will reveal himself to him (1 K 19, 4-8). Thus, itinerancy here requires one to leap into the unknown, which is where faith lies.

Besides, the elected people as a whole is also marked by the experience of the Exodus from Egypt, an experience that will determine all its life. Guided by God and by Moses, the people is called to engage itself on a long and difficult road in which through a thousand ordeals it will come to know its God and to make its entry into the promised land. Because of its many sins, the people will be exiled again in Babylon where it will undergo the painful experience of its 'pilgrim' condition, regarding itself as a group of refugees or exiles in a foreign territory (cf. Ps 137). On its liberation, it will be called again to launch itself into a new exodus, a sign of the liberation which 'the Servant of Yahweh' will accomplish, and whose mission consists in making it abandon the most profound slavery caused by sin (Is 42, 1-9; 53, 5-12).

In the New Testament Jesus is presented as a great itinerant. In fact, the Gospels present him as a great traveler, always on the road (cf. Lc 9,57; 13,33; Mc 6,6b), going from Samaria into Galilee, or on his way to Jerusalem (Lk 9,51). He presents himself as the Son of Man who has no place where to lay his head (Lk 9, 58). He will also send his disciples on the road (Lk 10, 1-9; Mt 10, 5-15) and will show the disciple's condition as a commitment to follow him (Lk 9, 59-62; Mk 2, 13-14; Jn 1, 43). The whole mission of the apostles after the death of Jesus will be carried out in the perspective of a great itinerancy (cf. Ac 16, 1-10; 2 Co 11, 23-28).

Itinerancy in the Bible is first and foremost geographic/spatial, in the sense of passing from one place to another – the word passage also means Easter, Exodus (Jesus fulfilled his Easter by passing from this world to his Father: Jn 13,1). This spatial displacement is always in view of a mission.

Spatial displacement in view of a mission

10. In the biblical perspective, displacements made within the framework of a command or in obedience are frequently in view of a mission: a message to be delivered, an action to be undertaken. It is the case with Moses, for example, whose encounter with Yahweh (Ex 3, 1-6) will be the beginning of his mission: whereas at first Moses, afraid of the police, had to flee Egypt (2, 15), on God's request (2,15) he returns there to free the people. During this mission he frequently receives requests from Yahweh to meet Pharaoh and lead the people to the desert, in order to receive the Law and give it to the people. The whole book of Exodus presents itself as an itinerancy lived in obedience to God.

The same thing happens to the prophets. The prophet is indeed taken by God from the situation he is in to fulfil a mission. Frequently this mission leads him to confront the king or religious authorities, to risk his own life. The obedience required supposes not only a displacement but also a risk to be taken. The mission is not without danger, as Elijah, the model of a prophet, experienced. He must flee his country to assure the future success of his mission (1 K 17, 3.9). He must return to face Ahab in order to give him the message dictated by God (1 K 18,1; 21,18-19), and also to abandon the place of the encounter with God in order to continue his mission (1 K 19,15-16). We have a sort of summary of this scheme when the prophet asks a simple believer to be his intermediary: the command orders a displacement in view of a message to be delivered, but there is a risk and so reason enough to be afraid (1 K 18, 7-16).

In the New Testament, the command that requires a displacement is always associated with the preaching of the Kingdom, of Jesus' time (cf. Lk 9,2) or to the mission after the resurrection (Mt 28, 19-20). The conditions are specified: it is a question of travelling without cumbersome luggage and without private means. We note that there can be failures to the call by refusing itinerancy (Mt 19, 16-22; Lk 18, 18-23; Mc 10, 17-22).

ITINERANCY AS A CONVERSION

11. Geographical/spatial itinerancy is linked to spiritual itinerancy, which appears as the place for a conversion, understood as *metanoia* (a radical change of spirit, of mentality). Indeed, in the Bible, geographical itinerancy is always accompanied by spiritual itinerancy: to go from one place to another has as its aim a detachment of self in order to belong to nobody else but God. The biblical term used to manifest this link between the two types of itinerancy is *derek* (way), derived from *darak* (to walk), which refers to the spiritual journey to be undertaken in order to correspond to the will of God and his plan. In Israel's mentality, because of his sins and his refusal to carry out God's designs, man must conform his mode of existence, and his doings and actions to God's will (Mic 6,8; Is 30, 21; Os 14,10; Ps 119,1). It is the condition for him to reach true life (Pr 2,19; 5,6; 6,23; Dt 30,15; Jr 21,8). Conversion consists in the whole spiritual process (the spiritual itinerancy) that has to be undertaken in order to correspond to the will of God. It is in this perspective that one can understand all the changes that occur in the life of the prophet who receives a specific mission from God. God's call takes hold of him and profoundly affects his social status and his way of living, at the same time as it is demanded of him to fulfil a mission that involves a displacement, an itinerancy (cf. Ho 1,2; Jon 1,2; 3,2). The displacement here is not only spatial but also symbolic insofar as it affects at the same time both the prophet's life and that of the people, in his relationship with the Law.

This same idea is taken up again in the New Testament through the word *hodos* which refers to the way (Ac 18,26) that the disciples must undertake in order to reach life (Mt 7,13-14). The conditions put down by Jesus for one to enter the Kingdom (Mc 1,15) and those which are required of the disciples who want to engage themselves as his followers (Mc 8, 34-35) are written down in this perspective. To follow Christ here leads the disciple to renounce himself radically and to renounce all his egotistic tendencies in order to make his life dependent on him alone. The following of Christ (the geographic itinerancy) is also conditioned by the radical renunciation, as a place of conversion (spiritual itinerancy). The spiritual itinerancy presents itself here as the place for an identification with Christ.

ITINERANCY AS AN IDENTIFICATION WITH CHRIST

Christ as the way

12. The great innovation of the New Testament is the identification of the way with the Christ: Christ presents himself as the living way which leads to heaven and gives access to the Father (Jn 14,6). This identification of Christ with the way shows that the road to be undertaken (be it physical or spiritual) is not a body of laws or attitudes but the Person of Christ, the only way to which the disciple must identify himself in order to have access to God the Father. The whole journey of the Christian (his itinerancy) will thus consist in identifying oneself to Christ by one's life of faith. To believe in Christ then consists in setting forth and in uniting oneself with him (to engage oneself existentially in relation to him), in such a way that one can receive his gifts and wealth, a condition to reach God.

The identification with Christ (the way that leads to the Father) presents itself here as that which gives the Christian the consistence, the stability which enables him to continue along the road in spite of the difficulties and the ordeals of the journey. To say it in another way, to identify oneself with Christ – the place for a life of faith and of getting rooted in his Person, is what gives the disciple the drive for a true itinerancy. So, there is no true itinerancy without the search for a certain fixity or stability in Christ.

Obedience and itinerancy in the Order

13. The question of identifying oneself with Christ – the place for a conformity to his will and for obedience – has a very strong link with the itinerancy in the Order. Indeed, because of obedience, itinerancy, in the Dominican tradition, is at the origin itself of the Order, or rather of its spectacular development outside the region of Toulouse. St Dominic disperses the brothers two by two (Libellus 47), probably while thinking of an identical action taken by Jesus who sends his disciples two by two. It is an obedience that excludes discussion (cf. Deposition of Bro. Jean of Spain, Bologna deposition, 26) and which is maintained in spite of the opposition offered by the friars and the civil and religious authorities friends of St Dominic. Its fruit will be the magnificent development of the Order. There also the dispersion was made in view of a mission, that of preaching and propagating the apostolic way of life according to the model imagined and wanted by Saint Dominic. The depositions at the process of canonization of Master Dominic show that the friars traveled frequently from one place to another according to what was needed. An example of this mobility is the assignation of Bl Reginald to Paris at the time when he was doing wonders in Bologna (Libellus 61-62).

Religious obedience is not an aim in itself. It is at the service of the mission of the Order, as defined by the General and Provincial Chapters, and it ensures the freedom the Order needs for its actions (Bologna 33). It is a means through which the friars, as a constituted body, can answer the needs of the common good to be reached together because it was discerned together. Obedience thus is not the expression of the superior's whim or that of the Chapter, but the personalized expression of the effort demanded from all in view of the mission and the good of the Order in particular circumstances. As by their nature these circumstances change, it is important that the friars also accept change in order to better serve the mission. The intellectual mobility, that of apostolic offices and places, is then the result of the mission evaluated and wanted in common. Both immobility and the excess of mobility are evasions in relation to the mission. Obedience is a means by which to regulate mobility in view of mission, to provoke itinerancy in order to answer to the needs imposed by the circumstances or wanted by a Chapter. Obviously, in order to go back to what the Bible teaches us, the type of itinerancy desired and accepted in the framework of religious obedience

presupposes that one has faith, on the one hand in the ability of the institution to discern the common good, and on the other hand in God, because it is his Gospel which lies at the beginning of our presence in the Order and the mission entrusted by the Church whom we serve in the best possible way. In this sense, religious obedience and the itinerancy that may result from it, are for us intimately linked to our religious life, for this has as its aim the preaching of the Gospel. It is not in vain that the only vow we pronounce publicly is that of obedience.

II - ITINERANCY - CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE – MATURITY

ITINERANCY VERSUS DWELLING – IS THERE A ‘BETTER PART’?

14. ‘Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying. But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so she came to him and asked, “Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me.” But the Lord answered her, “Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her.”’⁸

Probably it was and still is this part of the Gospel according to Luke which contributed most to a Christian understanding of contemplation: contemplation became the opposite of action and was even better. In this image you will hardly find a hint of itinerancy as a special value for a real disciple of Christ except for the fact that the Lord himself and those who accompanied him ‘went on their way’ *before* they entered the house of Bethany.

Nevertheless, this text might be one which is still misunderstood as condemning action and giving spiritual preference to a ‘hidden life of quiet’ or a ‘retired place for contemplation.’⁹ And in fact, at first glance, ‘itinerancy’ seems to be the exact opposite of how Mary behaves in Luke’s Gospel. She does not move even a tiny bit to give her sister a hand!

As a boy I always felt somewhat uncomfortable with our Lord’s reaction to Martha’s request. On the one hand, to my innocent thinking, Jesus takes advantage of Martha’s diligence and hard work, yet on the other hand and at the same time, he sides with Mary, who is sitting at his feet just listening. I felt sorry for Martha and was annoyed with Mary, whom I considered a bit lazy and someone whom Jesus praised a little unfairly. I used to imagine my sister reading the Bible while I had to do the dishes – I would surely have looked on her as one who had chosen the better part, but in no way as the one who, to top it all, deserved praise for it. But can one contradict Jesus? Nevertheless, I would have liked to question him: ‘And what about the words you said to the woman in the crowd who raised her voice and said to you: Blessed is the womb that bore you and the breasts that nursed you! Didn’t you answer this woman: “Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God **and obey it**?”’¹⁰

Even if my innocent childish thinking had little in common with biblical scholarship today, I’m convinced that I was right in questioning an understanding of ‘contemplation’ as ‘just sitting and

⁸ Luke 10,38 – 42.

⁹ Cf. Humbert of Romans, who complained about those people whose sole passion is for contemplation and refuse to the summons to be useful to others by preaching – source: Talk of Bro. Paul Murray on the Contemplative Dimension of Dominican Life, General Assembly at the General Chapter at Providence 2001.

¹⁰ cf. Luke 11:27-28.

listening.’ According to our Lord’s own teaching one has ‘to obey the word,’ to act ‘according to the will of the father.’¹¹

ITINERANCY AND CONTEMPLATION: THE ART OF INTERPRETING THE PRESENT TIME

15. What is obvious is that ‘contemplation’ is used wrongly if it is used just in contrast to ‘action,’ as an exhortation that it is better to stay at home and do nothing besides sitting around and listening. Not without reason do the Constitutions of the Nuns of our Order speak of contemplation and listening in one breath with working diligently, studying the truth eagerly, praying intently and pursuing the common life.¹²

Thus, at least according to a Dominican understanding, ‘contemplation’ with ‘action’ is what ‘contemplative life’ is all about. So ‘contemplation’ is different from laziness. It does not mean remaining motionlessness or rigid. Even the enclosure of our nuns is related to the understanding of breadth and length, the depth and heights of God’s love, who sent his Son for only one reason: for the salvation of the whole world.¹³

The ‘empty space,’ so important for any ‘contemplation,’ is not the same as idleness. The Gospel according to John provides us with another story of a visit of Jesus to the house of Bethany, which helps us discover more fully the dimensions of a ‘contemplative life’:

‘Six days before the Passover Jesus came to Bethany, the home of Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead. There they gave a dinner for him. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those at the table with him. Mary took a pound of costly perfume made of pure nard, anointed Jesus’ feet, and wiped them with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.’¹⁴

Martha is again serving the Lord, Lazarus is at the table with Jesus, but Mary, who according to Luke’s Gospel had chosen the better part, is not this time sitting at Jesus’ feet, but instead doing something very concrete. But it looks like she had chosen again ‘the better part.’ Jesus again sides with her and she receives his support against Judas Iscariot’s and the disciples’ intervention. That leads to the question: ‘What is the mystery of ‘choosing the better part,’ what is the real key to leading a ‘contemplative life?’

We find an answer to this question in the book of Ecclesiastes, a document of wisdom – surely the result, and fruit, of a contemplative life:

‘For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing.’¹⁵

¹¹ cf. for example: Mathew 12,50; 21,31; Mk 3,35; Luke 12,47; John 7,17; 9,31; Eph 6,6; Hebr 10,36; 13,21; 1 John 2,17.

¹² cf. Fundamental Constitution; LCM V.

¹³ cf. LCM 36.

¹⁴ John 12:1-3.

¹⁵ Eccles. 3:1-5.

To know ‘how to interpret the present time’ is what Jesus expects from his disciples.¹⁶ Mary from Bethany obviously meets fully the Lord’s expectations. She does so while sitting at his feet, listening to his words, as well as by taking a pound of perfume and being lavish with the expression of her love, not worrying about what people might think she is.

How can one behave that way? What precondition is needed to become an interpreter of the present time, a contemplative man or woman? It is this special kind of attentiveness, Mary from Bethany shows for the Lord: she is totally attentive to him as a person, she is totally attentive to his mission and at the same time she remains aware of herself and what is good for herself: she lives out of a permanent relationship with ‘the one whom her soul loves.’¹⁷

Attentiveness in this sense means that there is only one focus for all of your life: to be related to God and his will. Step by step that will form you to the shape of how Jesus led his life: ‘My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work.’¹⁸

There is no doubt about Jesus’ itinerancy, no doubt about him living an active life, but no doubt as well about his praying in solitude and silence – the key to a contemplative life is the ‘interpretation of the present time,’ the attentiveness to the will of the father, the willingness to let your life be determined by nothing else than what God asks from you here and now, ‘to love the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways, to keep his commandments, and to hold fast to him, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul.’¹⁹

ITINERANCY – CONTEMPLATION - MATURITY

16. ‘Restless is our heart until it rests in you’ – this insight of St Augustine links our reflections on Itinerancy and Contemplation to maturity in religious (as well as in Christian) life. There is no maturity imaginable without moving forward, without taking risks, without spiritual itinerancy. But this process of growing is in need of stops, pauses, self-adjustment as well. There is a need for ones own efforts as well as for challenges from outside.

Luke’s Gospel provides us with an excellent story on a process of religious and human maturing.²⁰

‘Now on that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem, and talking with each other about all these things that had happened.’ Itinerancy – even if just to escape from depression – is described as a possible, if not a necessary precondition for inner healing and growth, and so is companionship. There is no maturing process at all which you can undergo on your own. You are in need of the other, of his or her going by your side, of comforting you, of sharing your worries and concerns, of questioning you.

‘While they were talking and discussing, Jesus himself came near and went with them, but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. And he said to them, “What are you discussing with each other while you walk along?” They stood still, looking sad.’ Now the story provides us with an additional insight on the process of becoming mature: Apart from those you are already familiar with you are in need of challenges coming from outside. Mourning together and sharing only among a circle of friends is not sufficient. As long as you remain with what you already know, there

¹⁶ cf. Luke 12:54-56.

¹⁷ cf. Song 3:1-3.

¹⁸ John 4:34.

¹⁹ cf. Joshua 22:5.

²⁰ Luke 24:13 and following verses.

is neither improvement nor progress: You stand still and look sad. Even if you open yourself to an encounter with a stranger for the experience of otherness, your eyes could still fail to recognize.

‘Then one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered him, “Are you the only stranger in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have taken place there in these days?”’ This leads us to another insight regarding preconditions for becoming mature. Cleopas considers the stranger at their side as the only one who does not know. In fact it is only the stranger who knows. The process of becoming mature needs a kind of letting go of security. As long as you are convinced that you are the one who knows and the other, the stranger, the foreigner is the one who does not, your eyes will remain closed and your heart will not burn within you – you can not achieve religious maturity. ‘Then he said to them, “Oh, how foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have declared!”’ That underlines the necessity that I myself must reckon with: the possibility that *I* am foolish, that *my* convictions are foolish, instead of those whom I consider foolish – like the Emmaus disciples who considered the women of their group as the foolish ones.

‘Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them the things about himself in all the scriptures.’ Here we are looking at the connection of contemplation as attentiveness and spiritual growth. It is necessary to listen to God’s Word and to reckon with its strangeness and its newness. That’s what the Emmaus disciples are in fact doing. They listen attentively to one who had called them ‘foolish.’ They go even further by urging him: ‘Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is now nearly over.’ In a way it was curiosity, a longing for a deeper insight, an ardent desire for a better understanding which finally, along with the Lord’s loving revelation, led to recognition and maturity in discipleship. Now their itinerancy changes direction: from escape to encounter, with eyes open for the unexpected.

The last General Chapter put this in concrete terms for contemporary Dominican life, when it dealt with the connection of Contemplation and (Initial) Formation: ‘Considering the world that has formed our brothers thus far, three elements may be critical to their appropriation of a genuinely Dominican contemplative spirit: constancy, depth and openness. Constancy is a remedy for the experience of transience whether intellectual, personal or religious and is, in our life, manifest both in our life-long study and in our external observances of prayer, silence and a common life that should be joyful. Depth stands in contrast to the often superficial pleasures a global economy awards the few and promises the many, and engenders a healing of desire that is both necessary and longed for. This may be most evident in growth in prayer and virtue, love of study, and in compassionate self understanding. Openness is both a legacy of this age and an antidote to reactions against it. As Dominicans, we cannot be truly contemplative preachers unless we are open to people and their experiences, new learning, and the new ways that God may be inviting us to serve. Yet for these elements to be present and effective for our brothers in initial formation we must commit ourselves to a renewal of our life in each of its dimensions (*Mexico* 27.4) and to participation in the common life even at a cost to ourselves (*Ratio Formationis Generalis* 166). In so doing, we provide our brothers in initial formation with a visible manifestation of the Holy Preaching to which they are called and to which we would have them commit their lives.’²¹

I cannot finish this spiritual approach to ‘Itinerancy – Contemplation – Maturity’ without at least mentioning another key text. We find it at the end of John’s Gospel: The moving dialogue between Jesus and Peter. After Peter’s testimony ‘Lord, you know everything, you know that I love you’ and the Lord’s answer ‘Feed my sheep,’ the Lord continues: ‘Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where

²¹ Providence Nr. 355.

you do not wish to go.’²² This is possibly the most important part of our personal itinerancy, the deepest contemplation and highest level of maturity, when we are willing to agree that it is no longer we who decide and determine what to do, where to go, what to leave and what to keep – but stretch out so that someone else can fasten a belt around us and take us where we do not wish to go – and yet we remain full of trust that whatever happens is happening for our best and that we remain able to confess: ‘Lord, you know everything, you know that I love you.’

III - ITINERANCY IN THE FORMATIVE AND INTELLECTUAL JOURNEY

17. Itinerancy denotes movement, the capacity to go forward with passion, in an adventurous spirit. As we reflect on this aspect of our Dominican life, we can try to discern the various ways in which this movement can sometimes be blocked, both in ourselves, in our communities and provinces. The blocking of internal movement is ultimately a form of repression. It can appear on the level of the emotions, which is a form of neurosis; it can appear on the level of the mind, which is an ideological stopping short of the intellectual capacities; and it can appear on the level of the spiritual life, when the response to God is paralyzed by interior brakes. It is this last form of repression which inhibits most the itinerancy which is proper to our Dominican charism.

THE LIBERATION OF EMOTIONAL ITINERANCY

18. In a neurotic repression the dynamism of the emotions is blocked by other emotions, by the emotion of fear, or an emotional feeling of obligation. This leads to self-concentration, to an incapacity for self-criticism and a seriousness that has no room for humor. Emotional repression is a problem of youth, in which the fear of self, of novelty, of one’s sexuality, of what people will do or say, or the emotional sense of duty become an ultimate rule. It incapacitates the conscience to reason for oneself. This can lead some young men and women to search for the security that a sheltered religious life can give. In their emotional fragility, they may look for clear and simple rules of life which dispense from risk and adventure. Instead of being moved by a fascinating preaching mission which reaches out to the Cumans of our times, they will persist in being locked in by their fears, by their instinctic disapproval of everything that involves novelty. A healthy community life will help to liberate them from these fears, to move and be moved by others, to laugh in an interior freedom at one’s own blunders. Blessed are those who know how to laugh at themselves because they will have great fun all their lives!

THE LIBERATION OF INTELLECTUAL ITINERANCY

19. In an intellectual repression the mind is prevented from going towards the truth in all its richness and contextual diversity. A mind that refrains from the effort of searching for truth or prefers half-truths that captivate by their simplicity is stuck in dismal intellectual paralysis or is constantly swayed by external forces such as fashion.

20. Itinerancy should not mean dispersion of the mind. This is an intellectual danger: having a supermarket attitude, trying to know everything, to be interested in everything, accepting all popular trends without ever seeing how they fit together. The first stage of intellectual formation is a moment when the mind has to be furnished. We need the time for study, time for a contemplative putting of everything together. We need to ask deeper questions, to see the *nexus mysteriorum*, the metaphysical rooting of truth.

²² John 21:18.

Jesus said: ‘Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod’ (Mk 8,15). The Pharisees thought that they had all the answers, their mind was blocked from reaching out beyond their rigid convictions. Herod had no answers, no pre-conceptions, no ideologies. He was looking for entertainment, for fun. In the post-modern world, the great ideologies are gone, and the world is set on entertainment, on producing money and spending it, on creating and enjoying superficial needs. The temptation therefore today is to remain on the level of superficiality. A young person entering the Order may be tempted to know everything, to be interesting in everything, to have plenty of information on many diverse issues, coming from TV, from the news, from travel; but what will be lacking is the capacity for a deeper vision. ‘We are faced with the patent inadequacy of perspectives in which the ephemeral is affirmed as a value and the possibility of discovering the real meaning of life is cast in doubt’ (John Paul II, *Fides et ratio*, 6). The first stage of intellectual formation must help youth to acquire convictions, to be free from the slavery of fads. Our Dominican tradition is built on the conviction that reason has an inherent attraction to truth, that it can perceive the true good, and stick to it, not because of external group pressure, but because it is true. The capacity for discernment of truth however, has to be developed.

What sort of philosophy do we give to our young? A knowledge of disparate, conflicting ideas, which helps one to be in line with various contemporary trains of thought? Or a philosophy which integrates the mind, giving it the confidence that it can know truth, enabling it to interpret critically what is observed in contemporary culture? Some people need to be helped to formulate an intellectual synthesis, before they will reach out to new fields of thought. Others will manage while acquiring a disparate knowledge because they already have well-formed interior convictions.

An excessive intellectual itinerancy at the initial stage of intellectual formation may be disastrous. Some people in their intellectual journey move from one extreme to another. They begin as liberals and end up ultra-conservatives. They look for answers to their questions in Buddhism, psychoanalysis, or political sciences – and never take time to immerse themselves in the Word of God and in the Catholic tradition. The initial intellectual formation should lead to the finding of a Master, some author, approved by the Church, who will help the student to formulate a theological synthesis. This may a Father or Doctor of the Church, a renowned theologian, it can very well be St Thomas Aquinas. If the young sister or friar spends many years reading the chosen author, studying his or her theology, building ministry and preaching on the works of the Master, this will give a solid point of reference. The preacher will know what he is talking about. If a synthesis is not built, this may lead to a state of perpetual itinerancy, without any convictions.

21. The necessity for intellectual hygiene however should not lead to a fear of questions. The Thomistic tradition formulates the *videtur quod*. Our intellectual synthesis is built on the conviction that the mind can hook onto the true good. With the conviction that truth is accessible, we can without fear address all types of questions, knowing that every truth, coming from whatever source, ultimately comes from the Holy Spirit. The formed mind, capable of critical discernment does not fear new ideas. It can develop a further curiosity, it can compare its own approach with others, it can acquire new information, expand interests, because it has a base. Itinerancy is possible when you have a home to go back to. It is not an invitation to intellectual nihilism.

A mind formed in the searching of truth, and in the hooking onto it, will be free from intellectual stagnation. The quest for truth should prevent us from being glued to a frame of mind, a vision of the Church, of society, in which there is no critical self-reflection. Do we ask where the Spirit is leading us, and do we allow him to do this? The mind is hungry for truth but it can become enslaved. This is the danger of ideologies. The mind stops short at a half-truth, and does not allow itself to be led to the fullness. There are not only the great ideologies that imposed various forms of

totalitarianism. There are also small ideologies which block communities and provinces. A particular style of life, a set of opinions about the Church, about the needs of a province or religious congregation, can easily become an unmovable tradition. It functions like a contraceptive device which blocks the birth of new concepts; it is not life-giving. The Dominican democratic form of government cherishes the lively novelty of ideas, which should be given a field of expression in chapters, community meetings, formation sessions. Not all proposed solutions will be appropriate, but a healthy community climate will allow them to be voiced and discussed. If discussion is forced into a fearful underground, the little ideologies will lock the community in stagnation.

The search for truth has to be undertaken in community life, in philosophical endeavors, in the study of theology, and in the pilgrimage of faith. One of the dramas of the contemporary intellectual scene is the retreat from the search for truth. 'There is the deep-seated distrust of reason which has surfaced in the most recent development of much of philosophical research, to the point where there is talk at times of the "end of metaphysics"...I cannot but encourage philosophers – be they Christian or not – to trust in the power of human reason and not to set themselves goals that are too modest in their philosophizing' (*Fides et ratio*, 55-58). Faith provokes the philosophical mind to go further. 'The mystery of the Incarnation will always remain the central point of reference for an understanding of the enigma of human existence, the created world and God himself. The challenge of this mystery pushes philosophy to its limits, as reason is summoned to make its own a logic which brings down the walls within which it risks being confined' (*Fides et ratio*, 80).

22. The expanding of the mind which is an intellectual itinerancy will draw it even deeper into the truth. This is the meaning of faith and of dogma. In the classical theological tradition faith is a gift of God which draws the mind out towards God. Dogmatic statements are a gift of the Holy Spirit which give more light, preventing the mind from falling into error and focusing it on the mystery which is salvific. In modern thinking faith and dogma have been interpreted as a limitation of the mind, as a blocking of curiosity imposed by ecclesiastical authority. A spiritual itinerancy will involve the reaching out of the mind towards the revealed truth. 'As a theological virtue, faith liberates reason from presumption, the typical temptation of the philosopher' (*Fides et ratio*, 76).

The adapting of the mind to the divine mystery however is painful for the mind, because the mind by nature wants clarity and faith is an encounter with the mystery. Within faith there is room for searching for understanding (*cogitatio fidei*),²³ but sometimes there is also a *coagitatio fidei*. Due to the mind's inherent need of clarity, as it is adapted to faith, it becomes agitated. In the development of faith the mind encounters the cross. The passing through this cross is always painful but paradoxically life-giving. The great stumbling block for faith is intellectual pride: the incapacity or subconscious unwillingness to accept the mystery. We are not to scan the Word of God with tools coming from human sciences, accepting these sciences (history, archeology, linguistics, psychology, sociology, philosophies) as the ultimate criterion, because this destroys faith. (Aquinas, interpreting St Paul says that even good philosophies can destroy faith, if these philosophies offer the final word!)²⁴ We are called to scan our lives with the ultimate criterion of faith. This is painful for intellectual pride, but only then do we go further. The courageous itinerancy of the mind allows for itinerancy on the spiritual level.

²³ *Fides et ratio*, 48: It is an illusion to think that faith, tied to weak reasoning, might be more penetrating: on the contrary, faith then runs the grave risk of withering into myth or superstition.

²⁴ *Super Epist. ad Col.*, 91-92. Cf. *Fides et ratio*, 37-8: 'See to it that no-one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the universe and not according to Christ (Col, 2, 8)'... Following Saint Paul, other writers of the early centuries, especially Saint Irenaeus and Tertullian, sound the alarm when confronted with a cultural perspective which sought to subordinate the truth of Revelation to the interpretation of the philosopher... But that does not mean that they ignored the task of deepening the understanding of faith and its motivations.

THE LIBERATION OF SPIRITUAL ITINERANCY

23. The mind in its pilgrimage of faith needs to be freed from attachments. When we invent projects, new missions, when we perceive challenges, when we conceive ideas, we easily become attached to them. The attachment to our own concepts for a moment is good, but very easily we attribute to ourselves the merit. When the Holy Spirit conceives life in the Church, he does this without egoism, in a total gift of self. The Holy Spirit's conception is immaculate. The trick is to be selfless in what we do with passion. The motive for our work needs to be purified. Not only bad habits and customs, but also good projects need to be purified, to ensure that they shall be for God. Without this the attachment to our own ideas prevents spiritual growth, leads to the building of private empires. What is essential is a transparency for God working within us. In intellectual as in artistic inspirations there is a temptation of egoism. No soon that an idea comes to mind, immediately there is the joy that it can be used in an article, in an artistic project, in a homily to be preached – for our own glory. The spirit of dependence on God, of itinerancy requires a great spiritual poverty. The good things that will pass through our minds, hands and mouths will be God's not our own, even though we have devoted to them our energy and talents.

The religious profession in which we vow our future to God is a confirmation of the value of itinerancy. The acceptance of the unknown, received in faith, as a permanent rule of life strengthens the attachment to God and to God alone. It is here that the true fruitfulness of life and mission is born. At depth, it is the grace of God which allows goodness to be born through our service.

We will find out what was our true vocation at the moment of death, when looking back at our lives we shall see at which moments we have been most responsive to the calls that have been addressed to us. A true career is made by God as in each step of our life we give ourselves totally to God. Each step however comes as a surprise, not as the realization of a personal project for which we have fought. In the earlier stages of life we have our plans and dreams, but one by one we are asked by God to relinquish them, as God's plans turn out to be totally different. What can we say about the young postulant who in the early part of the 20th century entered a Dominican congregation in Moscow? She had dreamed of travelling far and wide so as to see the world, but at the same time she recognized that God was asking her for something more. She put aside her dreams and entered religious life, giving to God her unfulfilled travel plans. But God's response turned out to be abundant. Before her novitiate ended she was arrested and sent to the gulags of Siberia. She visited during a long novitiate numerous prison camps along the Arctic sea and then along the Chinese frontier. Her initial desire to travel was fulfilled in a demonic, but at the same time divine way. It was only after seven years that she met another sister in a prison camp in whose hands she made her profession. A life maybe wasted, but maybe not. In the heart of godlessness and despair, this Dominican sister brought the message of the Gospel preached through her witness and charity.

24. Why is it that some of us do not want to move, do not want to accept that we can be sent for a mission? In some cases, there may be an excessive individualism, a thinking about personal fulfillment, the search for personal success. Instead of responding to God who sends, there is a search for one's own career, as if we could plan our lives. Sometimes there is an excessive attachment to the first love, to our first assignment. We took up the job that we were asked to do, and we did it with the correct motivation, as our gift to God, but in time we became attached to our work, we treated our achievements as totally ours. We failed to accept that God wanted our services in this particular mission for a few years, and then others were asked to continue, whereas we should have moved on to something else. This is a difficult moment, like that of parents who have to let go of their adult children. The elderly parents who centered their life on their children may fear about their own future. What shall they do in later life without their children? This however is a normal stage, a moment when the time comes to find a new challenge in life.

In religious life, we do not own our apostolates, nor do we own the people whom we serve. We accept that as we leave them in other people's hands, we leave them in the hands of God, and God will take care of them. This requires hope. Hope is the acceptance of the mystery that is unfolding in our lives. A natural hope grants the energy, the boost to undertake difficult challenges. (In Polish the word for hope, *nadzieja*, means 'force for action.')

The theological virtue of hope, being focused on God, allows our will to accept the way that God has planned for us. Both St Augustine and St John of the Cross tie hope with memory, and they write that to grow in hope, the memory has to be purified. It is not that remembering things is bad. A good memory is of course a valuable asset, but we can become attached to our memories, both good and bad, and this attachment has to be purified. The attachment to pleasing memories may block the willingness to go forward, to accept the novelty in life. It is normal that a friar working in a university chaplaincy will experience the joy of serving young people as they mature. But he helps these people so as to let them go, and allow them to move to other cities, to set up their families, to live their own lives. When he is replaced by somebody younger, the memory of joys, the pastoral experience acquired over the years will have to be set aside, so as to accept a new task, a new challenge. Similarly bad memories may prevent itinerancy. Memories of awkward situations, of suffering may paralyze. Somebody who has suffered in a community in which he or she has not been appreciated will not want to return there, nor will there be a willingness to find oneself in a similar job, in a similar setting. Maybe in the meantime the community has changed, its members have matured, they have grown out of their unfraternal behavior. Has the community been allowed the right to make errors and to grow out of them? Painful memories also need to be purified so that hope will grow, so that confidence in the divine mystery unfolding itself in life will be accepted.

The purification of hope helps to center the attention upon God. And when God is truly the prime passion, then we are free to move. Dominican itinerancy needs this freedom. Both the friar who is asked to move to another community and the provincial who is asked to give a friar, can do this, if they accept the mysterious leading of God. If they fail to be open to God's own mystery, they will object when new missions will be proposed. Provincials are sometimes perplexed when they are asked to give a friar who was prepared for the province or when he is earning money for the province. Where is the openness to the mystery in hope?

25. It is not good when too many posts are tied with a salary. Obviously communities prefer to have brothers or sisters who bring in a regular income. Some works however, undertaken by the community as a whole (eg, the running of a shrine) also bring money, without the attachment of an individual to a given salary. A salaried job may block itinerancy. It may lead to a situation where somebody spends many years doing the same job, sometimes living in the same building, in the same room. Provinces that have too many salaried posts end in stagnation. Certain ministries need to be changed quickly, because society is going through profound social changes. The young change every few years, they listen to different music, watch different films, chew a different type of bubble gum. The youth chaplain or formator must constantly adapt, prepare new themes, new conferences, so as not to lose a common language with the young. If there is little movement within a province, a religious congregation, or lay fraternity, stagnation and routine, in time, conveys an out-dated image of the Church.

26. In wondering about the difficulties in itinerancy, we should not place all the blame on those who have a difficulty in letting go of their attachments. An important psychological block against itinerancy may sometimes come from the lack of support on the part of those who send. When a province opens a mission, that province has to be responsible for its friars sent abroad. Normally there is a long period during which a new mission belongs to a province as a provincial vicariate; then with growth in numbers it becomes a regional or general vicariate, then a vice-province and

finally a province. During all these years, the mother-province may have its brethren in the new entity, first in a major position of responsibility, then of cooperation and finally dependence upon local brethren. During all these years, the mother province must exercise its responsibility for the friars who have been sent to the distant mission. They need encouragement, interest, and sometimes financial aid. If their work is viewed not as a mission, but as a place of dismissal, a place where difficult brethren may be sent in the conviction that their problems will resolve themselves, this will as a backlash discourage further brethren to take up the challenge. Those who are sent must know that they are sent and not dismissed. Itinerancy requires responsibility, both on the part of the sent and of the sending.

27. St Dominic as he moved from place to place walking along the roads of Europe used to sing the *Ave Maris Stella*. In this ancient Marian hymn, we have the phrase *Iter para tutum!* St Dominic was praying to Mary, asking her intercession so that his road would be safe, so that it would lead to where he was planning to go, so that God's plans would be present in his initiatives.

IV - ITINERANCY AND MISSION

28. Itinerancy is a necessary partner to mission. This ontological link is rooted in our own history and especially in the life of St Dominic. He discovered his mission 'on the road,' and sent his brothers – even novices – to a life 'on the road.' Recent chapters of the Order have reminded us of this history and have called us 'to take to the road again.' Quezon City, in 1977, was perhaps the first to show an awareness that the priorities had shifted, and saw as the first priority, 'catechesis in diverse cultures and places.' Aware that this new and different situation called for a new approach, the chapter declared, as second priority, 'the training and preparation required for preaching in this new world.'

Subsequent chapters have elaborated on just what these new priorities mean. Walberberg, in 1980, addressed 'the adaptation of our apostolic activities according to the needs of today,' and offered some 'specific notes' Dominican mission and preaching should have: 'prophetic, made credible by poverty, compassionate, and founded on a deep and scientific study of theology.'²⁵ Avila, in 1986, in the country of Dominic himself, that unique 'man of the frontier,' affirmed as the 'specific mission' of the Order, 'evangelization on the frontiers.' And it enumerated those frontiers where we are to be and live out our mission.²⁶ Oakland, in 1989, challenged the Order: 'Do we hear the call coming from the world of today?' Are we not, rather, in need of a profound conversion from 'comfort and security [which] produce a mentality opposed to any change.' We must recapture 'Dominic's spirit of itinerancy and mobility... and rediscover that poverty which frees us for the Spirit and makes us open to the cries of those in misery.'²⁷

Mexico City (1992) lists the actual situations and challenges to the apostolic life in the Order and boldly declares: 'Our willingness [to meet these challenges] is born of a confidence that somewhere in the Dominican heart are the requirements to meet this urgent calling. The seeds of our tradition are ready to burst forth again into flower if only there are courageous and generous hearts to house them.' The chapter also cites some 'strengths from our tradition,' each one involving a certain kind of bodily or mental itinerancy: *mobility*, a readiness to move without excessive material, cultural or intellectual baggage; *respect and concern for others*, a readiness to meet people where they are;

²⁵ Acta 17, A.

²⁶ Acta I, 22, 1-5.

²⁷ Acta 43, I.

openness, a readiness to listen and learn; and *community*, for we never act alone.²⁸ Caleruega (1995) called us to be 'faithful to itinerancy.'²⁹

The last two chapters focus on the nature of itinerancy as a 'going beyond.' The mission of the Order, says Bologna (1998), 'calls the Order to go courageously beyond those frontiers that separate poor from rich, women from men, [and from] diverse Christian faith communities and other religions.' The chapter situates this mission on 'the lines of brokenness' of humanity and sees the Order placing itself 'at the service of the 'Other,' ready to listen and to be transformed.'³⁰

In his *Relatio de Statu Ordinis* at the Providence chapter, the Master of the Order spoke of a 'future that we have chosen... as part of an itinerancy of heart and mind and mission'³¹ and the chapter speaks about the concern of all in the province for the mission of a vicariate: 'The province should foster a spirit of itinerancy to ensure that brethren are easily available for such service.'³²

The following reflection is in aid of fostering just such a spirit of itinerancy 'of heart and mind and mission.'

TAKING TO THE ROAD AGAIN

29. According to the biblical witness, it is always on a journey that surprising things happen. Abraham rushes out of his tent to greet strangers and they promise him a future different from the one he and Sarah had imagined (Gen 18.1-15). Moses, on the run, experiences God in a burning bush and discovers both a people and a task. God says, 'Go, now, I am sending you...' and promises: 'I will be with you' – so long as you continue to journey... (Exod 3.1-21). Jacob, 'on his way,' wrestles with the angel at the ford of the Jabbok, in a story of conversion and vulnerability. Jacob, like many of us, has some very disagreeable traits. He is a 'trickster' and fears those he has harmed. His father-in-law is pursuing him behind and in front, Esau awaits him. And then, the struggle, from which Jacob emerges, forgiven and converted, with a new name, a new mission – and a limp.

It is while 'on the road' that Jesus summons his disciples and it is 'on the road' that he teaches them. (Pasolini's film on the Gospel of St Matthew has an unforgettable image of the Sermon on the Mount: Jesus is running over the hills, the disciples trying to catch up to hear the words of Jesus as he turns his head back to teach them 'on the run.')

The feeding of the four thousand in Mark (8.1-10) was eaten 'on the run' like fast-food. And it is on the road that Jesus learned from those he met, like the pagan women (Mt 15.21-28), whom he praises and even offers to his disciples as a model of faith. Finally, it is on the road to Emmaus that he reveals himself to disheartened disciples (Lk 24.13-35).

The mission he gives his disciples is just that, a sending, a 'taking to the road,' without purse or bag or sandals. He tells them, 'Do not stop at the homes of those you know' (Lk 10.4). There are several interesting things about this: Jesus invites them to a life of itinerancy, to a life of urgency ('keep moving') and to a life of dependency on the goodness of others, strangers, whom they 'do not know.'

²⁸ Acta 51.

²⁹ Acta 20.9.

³⁰ Acta 33.

³¹ Acta, Appendix One, 4.3.2.

³² Acta 461.

TAKING TO ONESELF

30. To be itinerant is to make oneself vulnerable and dependent. But itinerancy is the only proper response for a Dominican in a world that *produces* the homeless, the hurting, and the stranger. To take to the road again – as our general chapters remind us again and again – is to live on those ‘lines of brokenness’ of humanity, to share the fate of those who have been *made* itinerant. It means sharing their fate of being made homeless because of the stands we take against prevailing opinion.

The scripture scholar, Walter Brueggemann, writes of ‘the monopoly of imagination,’ a phrase that suggests that ‘some body or force in society has both the sole voice in determining how things are experienced, and the right and legitimacy to supply the lens through which life is properly viewed or experienced. No one is permitted to have an image outside this approved set of imaginations or images.’³³ To stand against such powerful monopolies is to align ourselves with the Gospel-vision that Dominic made his own. (One writer believed that Dominic sent his brothers to the cities, not only because of the universities but because it was there that the newly disenfranchised victims of an emerging mercantile society were: Dominicans were to be ‘brothers’ (friars) to them.) To take such a stand is to be ourselves made marginal and vulnerable. But it is only there that our preaching is credible.

It is interesting, in our context, to realize that the Greek word used in the New Testament for welcoming (*lambano*: ‘take, receive, possess’) is not about taking aside those whose conduct is not in harmony with ours. The verb indicates that we must ‘take [them] with us’ and ‘introduce [them] warmly into our fellowship.’³⁴ It is a word often used by St Paul in his vision of strangers becoming community, rooted in the experience of what God did in Jesus: ‘In Christ, God was *making friends* with the world... and entrusted to us the task of making friends’ (2 Cor 5.19). This is why he entreats the Romans to ‘practice hospitality’ (12.13). But to make friends or welcome others, those others have to be looked at as ‘like us’ in needs, experiences, and expectations. ‘It was not sufficient,’ writes Christine D Pohl, ‘that strangers be vulnerable, hosts had to *identify* with their experiences of vulnerability and suffering before they welcomed them.’³⁵

Perhaps the ‘being out of place’ that is associated with itinerancy really means being able to be in another’s place. And it could well be that the more foundational text for mission is not one of the traditional ‘Go and baptize’ passages but, rather, a passage like 2 Cor 1.3-7, which defines mission as *paraklesis*, as consoling and comforting. Paul writes, ‘Blessed be... the Father of mercies and the God of all *consolation*, who *consoles* us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to *console* those who are in any affliction with the *consolation* with which we ourselves are *consoled* by God...’ What is interesting about this passage is the appeal to a mutual experience. Even what we suffer is for others’ consolation. Can there be any other motive for mission than in going out, like Jesus, ‘stretching and touching’ (Mk 1.41), seeking out the vulnerable, on the road, in a healing and comforting relationship.

TAKING THE RISK

31. Claude Geffré has written that ‘the challenge of religious pluralism invites us to return to the heart of the Christian paradox as the religion of the Incarnation and the religion of the kenosis of

³³ ‘Welcoming the Stranger,’ *Interpretation and Obedience*, Minneapolis MN: Fortress Press, 1991, pp 290-310.

³⁴ Ceslas Spicq, trans and ed by James D Ernest, *Theological Lexicon of the New Testament*, Vol 3, Peabody MA: Hendrikson Publishers, 1996, pp 195-200.

³⁵ *Making Room, Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition*, Grand Rapids MI & Cambridge UK: William B Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999, p 97.

God.’³⁶ It is for this reason that he can speak of Christianity as ‘a religion of otherness.’ There is something adventurous about a theological journey on the frontiers, which challenges us to become truly Dominican, ‘taking to the road again,’ responding to new realities where they are, on the frontier, being ‘useful’ to those others who define our mission and determine where we are to be.

Early in the Bible, it is written that ‘anyone who wished to consult the Lord would go to the meeting tent, outside the camp’ (Exod 33.7). ‘Outside the camp’ among all those ‘others’ relegated to a place outside the camp, is where we meet God. Itinerancy demands going outside the institution, outside culturally conditioned perceptions and beliefs, because it is ‘outside the camp’ that we meet a God who cannot be controlled. It is ‘outside the camp’ that we meet the Other who is different and discover who we are and what we are to do.

In February 2001, a group of Dominican men and women, almost all of them living in Asia, met in Bangkok, ‘outside the camp,’ and shared their experience of listening and learning. ‘We realized,’ they said, ‘that dialogue with those of other religious traditions is the main challenge at the beginning of this new millenium for our Dominican preaching. It is here in Asia, a privileged place for the encounter with different cultures, different religions and different people that we are challenged to conversion: to a new way of listening, seeing, touching, learning and understanding.

‘Dialogue opens a door on an unfamiliar world, whose exact contours we do not yet know – but the journey there will lead us home because we believe it is where we belong.

‘The Order was called into being by Dominic’s attentiveness to the needs of people in the changing world of the 13th century. We, like Dominic – and like the Buddhist monk and the Hindu sannyasi – are called to take to the road again, to reclaim our mendicant heritage, to realize that we are all beggars before the truth, which only waits to surprise us.

‘We pray to be able to trust in that Spirit who maps our journey for us, for we, as Church and as Order, have ourselves been given to the Spirit. It is the Spirit, present in every culture and every religion – long before Christianity arrived – that makes dialogue both possible and necessary.

‘We pray for the trust of our father, Dominic, who even though he could not foresee the outcome, knew that he was doing what God wanted.’³⁷

How significant it is for us Dominicans, entrusted with a universal mission of preaching, to remember that Jesus began his mission in ‘Galilee of the Nations,’ Galilee of the foreigners, half-Gentile in population, half-pagan in cult, a land populated by people considered suspect by the institution in Jerusalem: ‘Can anything good come from Nazareth?’ (Jn 1.46). Yet after the Resurrection, Jesus tells his disciples, ‘I will go ahead of you to Galilee’ (Mt 26.32). Even more intriguing is Jesus’ message to the women: ‘Go and tell my brothers to set out for Galilee; there they will see me’ (Mt 28.10).

It is outside the camp, in all the Galilees that surround us, that we discover what mission is: to be in mission is to live outside the camp. And to discover, with others, what God is really about. But this knowledge comes at a price. The image of going outside the camp or outside the tent in order to meet God is found again at the end of the Bible, in the Letter to the Hebrews: ‘Jesus suffered outside the gate to sanctify the people with his blood. Let us go to him, then, outside the camp and bear the abuse he suffered’ (13.12-13). We have been blessed by the example of Dominican martyrs

³⁶ ‘The Theological Foundations of Dialogue,’ *Focus*, Vol 22, No 1, 2002, pp 15-16.

³⁷ Statement, *Sound the Gong, Conference on Interfaith Dialogue: 2001*, ed Vicente G Cajilig OP, Manila: University of Santo Tomas, 2002, p 6.

in Algeria, Pakistan and many other places, who put themselves on ‘the lines of brokenness, outside the camp.’ They ‘bore the abuse he suffered’; they ‘sanctify’ us by their blood. We, like them, are called to ‘go to him, outside the camp’ and endure what Jesus endured.

Even his relatives thought Jesus was ‘out of his mind’ (Mk3.21), so far from the norm, so eccentric was his behavior. If we Dominicans are to adopt the *vita apostolica* in today’s world, perhaps we need to be a bit more abnormal, a bit more eccentric, unbalanced and off-center. What are we doing now that can make others believe we are ‘out of our minds’? The Report of the Commission *de Missione Ordinis* asked: ‘Were we living what we preach, were our lives a true service of the Gospel, throwing us onto the roads beyond frontiers, then we might be seen as ‘out of our minds,’ and a touch of Gospel-madness would joyfully dwell in us.’³⁸

V - THE DOMINICAN PROFESSION, PROFESSIO IN MANIBUS

32. A brief historical reference; biblical sources in order to recognize one’s own vocation; echoes of our contemplative origins; study and the formation as a way forward; the call to mission going towards those who hunger and thirst for the Gospel even without knowing it.

We cannot possibly leave out a canonical reference in this reflection done in common and offered as a ‘Letter to the Order.’

At present, surrounded as we are by insecurities, it seems that all of us wish to know ‘what will happen’; ‘what is in wait for us’; ‘how many steps and which ones should we take to reach an objective’; ‘which stages have to be planned in order to get a result’; ‘how many are the stairs for us to reach our complete fulfillment.’ These things are not alien to our Dominican life. We want and demand clarity, security, stability from the others, especially from our superiors.

33. However, we have been called to be preachers, to be prophets. To be a prophet does not mean to know or to foretell the future, having it clear, and offering security. God calls the prophets to read history in the light of his Word; to read the Word feeling the pulse of what is happening. The prophets are not called to read the future in the hands of people as if they were experts in ‘Chiromancy.’

It is true that hands project what inhabits the heart. Every gesture of our hands shows what is present in the innermost part of us. (One needn’t be Italian or Argentine to confirm this!) The tenderness of a caress, the harshness of an aggressive gesture, life in the hands of the one who sows, death in the hands of a killer...

34. At the beginning of our Dominican life, after the novitiate, we all made a gesture with our hands, a very eloquent one: we put our hands in the hands of the one who received our profession.

An article by Antoninus M. Thomas OP which I read when I was still a student in Canon Law, keeps inspiring me when I write these things. This great historiographer of the Order’s Laws teaches us that the Dominicans took this gesture that is central in the ritual of our profession from the one used in the past by the Cistercian ‘conversi.’³⁹

³⁸ 4.3.3., *A Final Word: Madness*.

³⁹ A. Thomas, *La profession religieuse des dominicains*, in *Archivum Fratrum Prædicatorum* 39 (1969) 5-52; especially 5-22.

The lay brothers of Cîteaux used to make their profession in the Chapter room in the hands of the Abbot. The other monks made their profession in the Abbey church by means of a written document deposited on the altar as a sign of offering and of monastic stability. In Saint Dominic's day this was also the ritual for regular canons, among them the Premonstratensians. The monks and the regular canons were, in fact, specially bound to their monastery and to the monastery church.

The Dominican friars made their profession – like the Cistercian lay brothers – in the chapter room, through the offering of their hands. If for the monks and the canons the *oblatio super altare* symbolized their bond to the abbey and to the canonical church, the *professio in manibus* as a central element of the Dominican profession opens the preachers' way for their apostolate.

35. All of us have made our profession through the offering of our hands and, at the same time, through the offering of the hands of the one who, holding our hands, received our profession. It is a mutual exchange of wills. The hands open to the grace of God, open to the mercy of the brothers and sisters with whom we commit our future even without knowing what it will be!

This is a true sign of mutual trust. Our future is in the hands of our brothers, of our sisters. The future of our brothers and sisters is in our hands. Here is all of our Dominican stability! Sustained by the stability of our profession of obedience!

In our profession we do not commit our lives to a future bound to a specific 'Abbey' or 'Canonical Church.' It sometimes seems, however, as if we have made profession of stability to a certain convent or house; to some specific office or responsibility or to not having any responsibility at all; to a village or a region we come from or where we were born; to certain places in which we 'feel' at ease, in good company, friends ...

36. I am not unaware that Dominican itinerancy takes on different shadings and characteristics in some branches of the Order (I think mostly of the contemplative nuns and lay persons). For this reason we do not want to limit the meaning of itinerancy to packing one's bags and going somewhere else! Though in truth, beautiful to note, even our contemplative nuns and laypersons teach us what Dominican itinerancy is.

Many nuns, with great generosity, wanted 'to set out' in order to create new foundations; others have done so in order to help other monasteries in need. Some contemplative communities – acknowledging their poverty of means, the reduced number of sisters and the lack of vocations – have decided to join another monastery in order to live the vocation to which the Lord has called them 'to live together harmoniously in the house, in oneness of mind and heart,' far from the one concrete monastery in which they had once entered.

Many, too, are the laypersons who offer themselves as volunteers to announce the Gospel in remote regions, collaborating in the apostolic mission of Dominican communities.

37. Unfortunately – when faced with an assignation or a change of office or responsibility in a community – we object to the motives of the one who invites us 'to set out' because we only understand them from two reductive categories: 'that of a promotion after a *cursus honorum* imagined or merited,' or 'that of a chastisement – punishment.' Maybe these categories suit other worlds well, those we have renounced, such as the world of management, of competitiveness, of the political or academic career! In Dominican life, however, these destroy trust, destroy docility, wound itinerancy, and kill infinite possibilities.

On many occasions when we are faced with a change, an assignation, when we are asked to accept or to leave an office or a responsibility, phrases like this, ‘in conscience I cannot accept,’ come to our minds – as if in a ‘reflex action.’ Too easily we forget the famous distinction between a ‘psychological conscience’ and a ‘moral conscience’! We mistake our own emotions, sentiments, even our conscience, with the judgment of our practical reason, which our profession in the hands has elevated to the supernatural level of an act of faith in God and in the brothers.

38. From this gesture, old and eloquent, of our Dominican profession,⁴⁰ we have started to experience in our life the mystery of Easter, the *ars moriendi et nascendi*, to die in order to live. It is for this reason that we have put our life and future in the hands of others.

In the Basilica of Santa Sabina, our conventual church in Rome, there is a burial monument that carries a very suggestive inscription that seeks to synthesize the life of the person in question⁴¹:

UT MORIENS VIVERET – VIXIT UT MORITURUS
(In order to live after death – he lived as one destined to die)

Jesus said: *Unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds* (Jn 12,24)

After the resurrection, when Thomas wanted *to see in order to believe*, using his hands and fingers *to measure and check* what his brothers had told him, Jesus himself invited him: *see my hands...* After the Resurrection, the wounded hands of Jesus continue to be the sign of a future full of hope and life.

VI - AS A CONCLUSION

39. On the morning of 21 May, 1992, Bro. Damian Byrne asked me to accompany him to the *Palazzo San Callisto* in the Roman Trastevere. Some days before leaving Santa Sabina on his way to the Mexico General Chapter, this great Dominican missionary, poor and itinerant, wanted to say good-bye to Cardinal Eduardo Pironio.⁴² Going on foot for the appointment, Bro. Damian made this comment: *I have never heard so many beautiful things about Saint Dominic and the Order as those the Cardinal pronounced during the General Chapter of 1983.*⁴³

I always wanted to know these words, so very Dominican, addressed to the Chapter of Rome. In the General Archives there was no written document, only a cassette with the recording. I confess that I felt a great emotion when I heard both their voices: Bro. Damian Byrne and Cardinal Pironio!⁴⁴

⁴⁰ This gesture goes back even to the feudal *homagium* of the vassal to his lord, to certain old roman contracts and even to some biblical gestures.

⁴¹ I am referring to the burial monument of Cardinal d’Auxia († 1484); the translation is free.

⁴² Eduardo Francisco Pironio, made his profession in Buenos Aires (1947) as a member of the Priestly Fraternity of the then Third Order, in the hands of Bro. Manuel Suárez, who was then Master of the Order. A few years later he completed his theological studies in the “Angelicum” in Rome (1952-1954). He was Prefect of the Congregation for the Religious and Secular Institutes (1975-1983) and President of the Pontifical Council for the Laity (1983-1996). He died on February 5, 1998.

⁴³ Still the Prefect for the “Congregation for the Religious and Secular Institutes”, he visited the Chapter that was meeting in the *Angelicum* on September 21, 1983.

⁴⁴ It is not a written text prepared for the occasion. At the request of the Master of the Order he said a few words to those present. In the General Archives of the Order a cassette with a recording of the meeting is kept. (cf *AGOP III* 1983/17 Roma – *Cassette degli interventi*).

We are mendicants and also beg from others their ideas, like the dispatch rider who receives the document from another's hands and then runs to hand it to someone else. Timidly paraphrasing the words of those who preceded us in the journey of faith, to announce them to others, I offer these thoughts of Cardinal Pironio.

40. When the Lord entrusts one with a mission he always repeats invariably these three phrases:

Behold, I send you ... This is the sending off, the mission, which comes from God. This will is expressed through the will of the brothers or sisters, but the mission comes from God: *Behold, I send you...* This gives us courage and at the same time serenity.

The second phrase is ***Do not be afraid...*** This is very important for a preacher. May he be truly poor; for we feel insecure in ourselves, but trust in God and in the brothers. From this poverty the preacher acquires a special strength that makes him precisely a prophet of hope. The preacher is someone who, because he is poor and relies only on God, is not afraid and does not allow others to be afraid, because we are witnesses of the Resurrection!

The third phrase is ***I am with you...*** The Lord will always accompany us, *I am with you. I will walk the way with you.* He animates us and encourages us to commit ourselves deeply in the mission he has given us as preachers of the Gospel in this providential moment for the Church and history.

The world in particular is waiting for the Word of God to be announced. Saint Catherine, speaking about Saint Dominic, used to say that 'he received the office of the Word.'⁴⁵ Every Dominican, man and woman, is called by profession to this mission. For this he/she has to let himself/herself be completely possessed by the word of God in order to announce this word made flesh, made history, made concrete. We have been called to announce the Good News to all nations joining truth to love, being faithful to truth and to love. To truth, because it is specific to the Dominicans; to love, because we love this truth as one loves a person. Our Dominican life, which drinks from the springs of the Rule of Saint Augustine, is founded on this love. In it Saint Dominic of Guzman found his inspiration because he wanted to send, beyond the limits of the known, contemplative apostles, as Jesus sent the Apostles, and consequently in line with what is strongly evangelical.

41. Jesus invited Peter to put out into deep water and let down the nets. Simon, skilled on seas, boats, nets and fishing, answered that he had worked hard all night without catching anything. But sustained by the word of Jesus, he let down the nets and the catch was very big. (cf Lk 5, 4-6).

I simply want to repeat the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the invitation Pope John Paul II made us at the end of the Jubilee of 2000:

*Duc in altum! Let us go forward in hope! ... At the beginning of this new century, our steps must quicken as we travel the highways of the world...*⁴⁶

On 15 August, 1217, the 'Dominican Pentecost,' invoking the Holy Spirit and with the friars gathered around him, brother Dominic told them that he had decided in the depths of his heart to send them all to the world, even if they were but a few. Some objected to his decision, but he answered without hesitation: 'Do not oppose me, I know very well what I am doing.'⁴⁷ In this way

⁴⁵ *Dialogo* n. 158.

⁴⁶ *Novo Millennio Ineunte* (6.01.2001) n., 58.

⁴⁷ *Testimonium fratris Iohannis Hispani in Acta Canonizationis S. Dominici* – A. Walz OP in *MOPH XVI (Romae 1935)* 144.

he dissipated all their fears. The friars, comforted by his words, easily agreed, trusting in that everything will lead to a good end.⁴⁸

These pages – perhaps too many – are the fruit of reflection done in common. I invite all of you to meditate on them, individually and in community, and to pray with me:

God of love and fidelity, who sent us your Word in order to be our way; grant us that following in the footsteps of Saint Dominic “we may walk in joy and think of our Savior. Amen.”⁴⁹

Santa Sabina, 24 May 2003, Memorial of the Translation of our Father Saint Dominic.

Bro. Carlos Alfonso Azpiroz Costa OP
Master of the Order

Prot.: 50/03/661

⁴⁸ Cf. *Libellus* n. 47.

⁴⁹ *Liturgia de las Horas O.P.* – Edición típica en lengua española (Roma 1988) 1811 n.6.