

**The Preaching of the Nuns:
The Secret Fruit of Contemplation**

Barbara Estelle Beaumont, OP

St. Dominic in Rome 1205-1215 – Part I

Vivian Boland, OP

**St. Dominic, Wise Innovator:
Unified the Common Life to Serve
Mendicant, Itinerant Preaching**

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**The Mystery of Grace:
In My Weakness is My Strength**

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Beginning

Paul Murray, OP

**The Rosary of the Holy Name:
Biblical Roots and Dominican
Shoots – Part Two**

Conor McDonough, OP

R.N. 46971/88

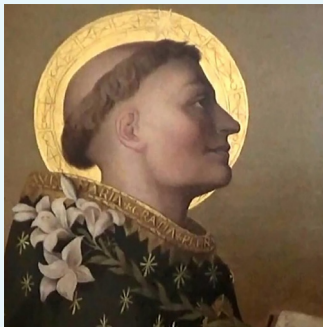
ISSN 0255-3023

Dominican Ashram is a quarterly review devoted to Dominican mission and life, history, spirituality, new ventures and other interesting apostolic endeavours carried out by Dominican men and women in different parts of the world. It appears in March, June, September and December.

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Annual Subscription: India ₹ 400/-

All other countries: US\$ 30.00 (airmail)

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Printed and Published by Ivan Prakash Rodrigues, for Dominican Publications, St. Dominic Ashram, Seminary Hill, Nagpur 440006, INDIA, at National Printing Press, 5 Ratan Apt. 2, S. T. Bus Stand Road, Ganeshpeth, Nagpur 440018, INDIA

Dominican Ashram

Vol. 4

MARCH 2022

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An Opening Word

OUR FIRST ISSUE THIS YEAR, 2022, has a mixed selection of articles for our readers' perusal and reflection. We have a 14th century German prayer-poem *Christus hat keine Hände* (Christ has no Hands) along with a brief reflection on the sculpture and prayer to set before our mind's eye the Christ who died for us and who now needs us to do his work today. New life from Christ will bring a new dawn, a new beginning, into our lives and enable us to rise above and overcome all that hurts us in body, mind and spirit (Paul Murray, OP).

St. Dominic, our father, drank deeply from the wellspring Christ who commissioned him and Bishop Diego to found the Order of Preachers for preaching and the salvation of people. For this purpose he made several visits to Rome where he spent five days, five weeks, five months and more between 1205 and 1221 seeking papal approval for the communities of nuns and friars that he was establishing (Vivian Boland, OP). In founding the Order St. Dominic was an innovator of the highest degree who unified the common life in such a way that it would serve the end-purpose of the Order which is evangelization through preaching for the salvation of people (Peter B. Lobo, OP).

Every Dominican, nun, sister, friar, priest, laity and youth, is called to evangelize through preaching. The nuns do this in their own distinctive way by the witness of their quiet communities through their life of prayer and contemplation and their work (hospitality, art, writing and even some forms of preaching using the spoken word) (Barbara Estelle Beaumont, OP). The mercy of God meets our vulnerability, and transforms us into preachers who evangelize by our lives, our work and the totality of our Dominican existence that serve the most urgent needs of people in our times (Margaret Mayce, OP).

Finally we have the second part of *The Rosary of the Holy Name* (Conor McDonough, OP) which is an excellent prayer and meditative devotion that can lift us up into the heart and mind of Jesus, our Lord and Saviour.

We wish all our readers a very Happy Easter. May the Risen Lord give to each one a deeper share of the new life that he has won for us through his paschal mystery.

Peter B. Lobo, OP
Editor

The Preaching of the Nuns: the Secret Fruit of Contemplation*

Barbara Estelle Beaumont, OP

I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE AS MY EPIGRAPH a quotation from former Master of the Order Bruno Cadoré. In the letter he addressed to all Dominicans in January 2012, fr. Bruno used the term 'evangelization' to express the primary reason for the existence of the Order, for preaching is only the means to the end, the means used to bring about evangelization. He went on to explain: "Evangelization is not first and foremost a question of ministry, but an invitation to a certain way of life." Is it not exactly in this sense that the nuns of the Order play their part in its preaching mission? For the nuns certainly do not have a formal preaching ministry. To be honest, I do not think the majority of nuns wish for one. But it is indeed the option for 'a certain way of life' -- and a radical option at that -- that makes of nuns evangelizers and hence preachers, according to the definition of fr. Bruno. The logic is evident: the purpose of preaching is evangelisation, and the purpose of evangelisation is the salvation of souls. This is the quintessence of the Dominican vocation and of all Dominican life.

Preaching of the Nuns

We can't speak of the "preaching of the nuns" in conventional terms and we shouldn't even try. Why? Because there is first and foremost the relation of nuns to the Mystical Body of Christ [...] the mystical dimension of our way of life which cannot be put into words. *Perfectae caritatis* and *Verbi sponsa* speak eloquently of this as well as other sources.

We must not forget that every baptized person is called to preach, to preach Christ, to live Christ, (though sadly, we are not taught the meaning of this explicitly enough from our early years). Yet, what is it to preach? If we speak in the conventional sense of preaching as the dictionary defines it, i.e. to proclaim or declare in public, then we can easily understand: public preaching of the Word with words as the friars are called to do. But also, wearing the habit, the witness and proclamation of life in common, the witness of a life of poverty, all of these constitute a direct and humble declaration, a sign pointing to God. It was Bishop Diego who enjoined on the

* Talk delivered at virtual colloquium organized by Dominican Preaching Network *Urbi et Orbi*, 12 - 14 October, 2021

papal legates that they must preach by word and example. And in this way St. Dominic began to preach to the Cathars, meeting them where they were at, so to speak. And yes, miracles happened.

Is There a Conflict Between ‘Being a Contemplative’ and ‘Being a Preacheress’?

We come now to the question: is there a conflict between ‘being a contemplative’ and ‘being a preacheress’? As the nuns don’t preach in the conventional sense, how do they live out this dimension of the mission of the Order in the context of contemplative life? First, simply because they have received the mission of prayer in the heart of the Church. *The prayer of praise and intercession in total gift to the Lord*: such is their vocation and hence their mission. In the communion of saints, the Word of God which we welcome and desire to put into practice does not return to the Father without moving hearts towards salvation. The nuns are to be ‘love at the Heart of the Church’: “I will be love at the heart of the Church,” said St Thérèse of Lisieux, Doctor of the Church. Though coming from a Carmelite, this “rule” truly does apply to all who are called to the monastic, contemplative life. From the beginning, for the nun, it is a matter of a covenant of love, a radical consecration of love. And to the very end it is a covenant of love, and in eternity it is only love!

“By their fruit shall you know them” is a well-known biblical adage, and we must apply it to the preaching of Dominican nuns, as indeed to preachers in general. In our Order we speak of the fruits of contemplation and the communication of such fruits to others. We must bear in mind, however, that the transmission of such fruits is not an automatic process. As with the *Parable of the Sower*, certain conditions need to be fulfilled in order for the fruitfulness of the grain to be bountiful. In the case of the nuns, it does not suffice simply to lock oneself up in a cloister and then to go about one’s own business – prioress, bursar, novice mistress, cook, or whatever it may be. There is a community dimension to contemplation as indeed to the transmission of its fruits.

St. Athanasius refers to the ‘*folly of preaching*’ which God ordained as the route to salvation for believers. And yet this is described as folly. As an Order of Preachers I think we understand this very well. We realize that one has to be not a little mad to undertake such a mission; and this is probably even more so in the case of the nuns. For the friars, who go out and preach in various

locations, can often -- but not always -- see the fruits of their labours. They see the reactions on the faces of the congregation; they get feedback in various ways. They can sometimes be aware of having touched peoples’ lives deeply.

On the other hand it is very rare, almost impossible for the nuns to know whether their form of preaching is effective; for theirs is a more discreet and often silent form of witness, bearing a fruit that remains mostly secret, but nonetheless real, for as Blessed Pope Pius XII said: “The life of the nun is totally apostolic.”

Nuns should certainly not be like Victorian children, that is, ‘seen and not heard’, or in some cases not even seen. Preaching is by definition a form of communication. If nuns are to be considered as evangelizers and preachers, there must necessarily be communication in some form or other. A praying presence that is totally unseen and unheard certainly has a value in the purely spiritual or supernatural domain. This might be the case for example with the way of life of Carmelite nuns, but to my mind it does not correspond to the charism of Dominican nuns.

The Holy Spirit ‘loosens our tongue’ when he wishes... and we share the Word, whom we ponder and prayerfully study day after day, with the help of Our Lady, Mother of the Word and the first of the disciples. We may do this in brief reflections offered to our Sisters in community; in writing; through art; in translation; in receiving visitors/pilgrims especially in Fatima or Lourdes, where hospitality for pilgrims from all parts of the world is part of the life of the community.

Interestingly enough, in the early times of the Order, the nuns were referred to as *Sister Preacheresses*, not as Dominican nuns. One can justifiably argue that at that time the term ‘Dominicans’ was not in general use. Yet it is surely significant that at this early stage the identity of the nuns was associated with the preaching mission. Indeed before it became a formal monastery, the community at Prouilhe was known as the ‘*Holy Preaching*’, because this first foundation, besides housing nuns, served as a sort of refuelling station for Diego, Dominic and their group of preachers. And later on, the foundations of Dominican nuns that proliferated all over Europe in the 13th and 14th centuries were referred to in the local languages as ‘*Sister Preacheresses*’. Indeed the ancient university towns of Louvain and Antwerp in Belgium still have their ‘*Predikerinnen straat*’ or ‘*Preacheresses Street*’.

The nuns could easily have been called ‘Daughters of St Dominic’ or something similar, but although their monasteries have long since disappeared through the various vicissitudes of history, the memory of these nuns’ association with the preaching ministry lives on.

The preaching of the nuns should always be collective, not individual; that is to say, it needs to be a function of the whole monastic community, not just of certain individuals. (This is true of the friars also, of course. But this community dimension is much more radical in the case of the nuns, as we shall see shortly when we examine some aspects of their *Constitutions*).

The desire of St. Dominic that preaching should be by both word and example is crucial to the mission of the nuns, for they use words sparingly in a life comprised, in great part, of silence: that silence that provides the necessary nourishment for prayer.

The Exempla of the Nuns: Its Communication, Witness, Preaching and Fruit

In what does the *exempla* of the nuns consist – how does it communicate itself, how does it become witness, and hence how does it qualify as preaching and bear fruit? No one refers to Benedictine nuns or Carmelites as *preacheresses*. So how are our nuns different? Or how *should* they be different? Maybe we aren’t always as different as we should be. Maybe we need to be more aware of what our specific mission is as contemplatives in the contemplative-apostolic Order of Preachers.

This ecclesial mission is lived out in following St Dominic, who attracted women to the Order by a particular grace-filled fragrance, as St Catherine of Siena put it. This grace is that love of Truth which finds expression in the Word made flesh, and hence the importance of the Scriptures in Dominican life. This Word is assiduously heard and studied, prayed and contemplated, releasing another fragrance, that of compassion for all those who thirst for happiness and pass by its source without even recognising it.

Communication

In considering the significance of the term *preacheresses*, it is important to be aware of the dangers of anachronism. In the 20th century, there was a temptation to imagine, given that Dominic founded a community of sisters before the foundation of the Order of Preachers, and that he introduced a certain number

of innovations to the form of Religious Life that he founded, that he had in mind some form of mixed group of men and women, travelling through the countryside on itinerant preaching missions. And that subsequently the villainous friars and/or the villainous Pope quashed this idea. Now, much as this vision of the past might appeal to those who have a certain notion of what liberty is, it is pure fantasy. Not only is there no evidence whatsoever that such was Dominic’s intention, but it is totally anachronistic both in the context of the period and indeed in the context of Dominic’s own life. He was essentially a man of the Church – and of course a man of his time. Innovation is one thing; flouting social convention and ecclesial discipline is something else.

On the other hand, it has been said from the beginnings that the Dominican Sisters support the preaching of the friars through their prayer. This is true, though it must not be interpreted in the sense that the intense prayer life of the nuns dispenses the friars from making much effort in that domain themselves. In addition to this support to the friars, they provide it to a wide spectrum of people by offering, through their chapels and guesthouses, places of prayer and silence to those who visit them and spend time with them. Thus their very communities themselves become a preaching. This is the simple way of looking at it, but the metaphysics run much deeper.

Witness

What we frequently hear these days is that the way of life of the nuns is in itself a form of preaching, and this is what I have been hinting at in this talk. Yes, but there are dangers implicit in this approach. Let’s look a little closer at this problematic. If the monastery is surrounded by high enclosure walls, if the liturgy takes place in an inner *sanctum* invisible to outside worshippers, if the singing is pretty much inaudible, if all external functions – answering the door bell, the telephone, running the guest house or monastery shop are all fulfilled by lay helpers, the nuns can indeed be invisible. All hell might be let loose inside that enclosure, yet all may look serene on the outside. fr. Gerard, Master of the Order, wrote in a Letter offered to our Nuns for reflection in September 2019: “[...] *however, when a nun refuses to speak with another nun, or deliberately ignores her presence, or worse makes life difficult for her [...] she is not promoting that vocation [...]*” Invisibility can cover a multitude of sins – and sins are collective as well as individual.

Indeed the *Constitutions* of the Dominican nuns clearly state: "If the life of the nuns is a sign there must be a possibility of interpreting this sign." That is to say, 'hidden' should not mean 'invisible' and 'silent' should not mean 'mute'. Again the *Constitutions* are quite unambiguous on this point. In paragraph 14 we read:

In the various dealings of the monastery with neighbours, guests and others, the nuns should manifest a charity which, despite their hidden life, will form a bond of unity with them. This applies particularly to the prioress and other nuns whose positions require more frequent contact with persons outside the monastery. But the whole community, united as it is in the love of the Lord, should become a radiant centre of charity to all.

Imagine a call to collective 'radiance' – now that is quite a challenge. It requires an enormous transcendence of self. Obviously it does not mean grinning from ear to ear the whole time, but there can be no question of grimacing at a sister across the choir. No slouching in your stall if you have a backache. A way of life that can appear unnatural to some must necessarily challenge certain preconceptions when apparently 'normal' even 'good looking', young women are attracted to it!

Preaching

And so our mission requires us to be 'signs'. In this also we are commissioned by the Church, for if women who do not speak out in the conventional manner in front of a congregation can yet be called 'preacheresses', it is indeed their choice of a way of life that has something to say, to communicate: a life straining towards God through the hope and desire for eternal happiness in him, and the mysterious fecundity of a life offered with Christ for the transfiguration of humanity. The centrality in the life of Dominican nuns of the Word of God in the Scriptures is a key concept here. The *sacra pagina* is the focus par excellence of our study, our celebration in the liturgy, our meditation and our contemplation. And, as we read in the prophet Isaiah that the Word does not return to the Father before having engendered salvation in the heart, it is in this that the efficacy of the nuns as preachers consists.

Notions of what constitutes preaching have evolved over time: Fra Angelico and other artists are now rightly deemed to have preached through pictorial representation, and this is indeed

a form of communication. Nuns have always been active in this field also -- more in fact than one might think. Monastic art is often associated with a mystical dimension. What do we mean by *mystical* in this sense? A mystic is essentially someone who has a capacity for an experience of God that he or she seeks to communicate to others. Without this element of communication, it is impossible to ascertain who is a mystic and who is not. It is normal that monastic art should seek to communicate something of the experience of God as lived by the artist in the monastery.

So what of art in Dominican monasticism? Remembering that Dominican monasticism is exclusively feminine (there are no Dominican *monks*, only *friars*), from the earliest days of the Order in the 13th century, we find nuns engaged in artistic and creative, intellectual pursuits, that were considered to be an integral part of the preaching mission of the Dominican Order.

If we take for example the Dominican nuns in the German-speaking countries, we find women who were far more active in the artistic and intellectual sphere than the average laywoman of the day. It is well-known that monks and nuns illuminated manuscripts and Dominican nuns certainly did their share of this. At Zürich, a history of the Dominican convent of Oetenbach, written around 1340, reports that the sisters earned 10 DM (Deutsche Marks) a year for their newly founded community by copying and illuminating books. Creating art works was an important spiritual need, as well as a source of income. And there were new forms of it unique to women, Sister Books for example, developed as the number of monasteries of the Order increased exponentially over the course of the 14th and 15th centuries.

Moving on to the Italian Renaissance we meet the amazing figure of Sr. Plautilla Nelli (1524 - 1588), often referred to as the *Painter Prioress of Renaissance Florence*. who was in fact the first woman painter of any category to achieve fame in Florence, and was even featured in the famous work *Lives of the Artists* by Vasari. Her noteworthy talent still has the potential to inspire the modern mind; she was prioress of the Monastery of Santa Caterina da Siena in the Piazza San Marco in Florence, founded in 1500. So she lived right next door to the convent where Fra Angelico had painted a century before. And in her own monastery there were other sisters also noted for the high level of their artistic production.

The story of this painter-prioress has to be situated in the context not only of the art world in 16th century Florence, but also in the wider context of Dominican preaching in that place and at that time. Sr. Plautilla was a true disciple of the famous Dominican preacher Girolamo Savonarola, who sought to launch a widespread moral and political reform of Florentine society, in which art occupied a leading role. Savonarola affirmed the great value of religious art and the centrality of its content, and Sr. Plautilla followed him in this. In a series of incisive declarations, the friar had exhorted artists to eliminate from their works all elements that in his opinion constituted distraction from the sacred themes or dangerous departures from the truth. Sr. Plautilla's most famous work, *the Lamentation of Christ*, which has been recently restored and much acclaimed, clearly illustrates the purity of artistic style and purpose that Savonarola promoted. She depicts the body of Jesus lying on a stone on the ground, with St. John holding the body, Mary Magdalene embracing the feet, and the Virgin Mary kneeling on the ground nearby. There is nothing to distract from the intensity of this moment; the poignancy is palpable. Interestingly enough, Sr. Plautilla Nelli features, along with other nuns of her monastery, in a work published by the Dominican friar Serafino Razzi in 1596 entitled *The History of Famous Men in Preaching and Theology in the Sacred Order of Preachers*. Note: 'Famous Men in Preaching' and it includes nuns! I am not too sure that a Dominican writing a book with that title today would think of including nun artists.

Fruits of Contemplation

On the whole nuns tend to be reticent or over-modest about sharing the fruits of their contemplation. But besides preaching in the form of artistic expression, pictorial or literary, such as we have just been talking about, I firmly believe that there is room in the life of the nuns for some form of verbal preaching. Within the life of the monastery, there is surely some scope for doing this, without breaking the law of enclosure or infringing the discipline of the Church. For example, a sister could very well give a very short preaching at Sunday vespers, whether the faithful are present or not; and similarly at the Office of Readings on the occasion of major feasts, if only for the edification of her own community. And of course these days a lot of monasteries regularly post biblical and

spiritual sharings on the internet and the social media. I believe that it is as yet too soon to evaluate this as a form of preaching, but in theory there could be great potential for nuns here.

I have a vivid memory of my own prioress, a woman who would shun a public preaching ministry and who has the greatest respect for monastic enclosure, 'preaching' from the front doorway of our monastery. On the Feast of the Holy Rosary, she spoke, at their invitation, to a large group of lay Dominicans in Fatima gathered for their world congress. The Master of the Order and many members of the Order's curia were also present and assembled in the front garden of the monastery on that occasion. She spoke to them in a very relevant and gripping manner of St Dominic and the Rosary. She didn't do a power point presentation or screen a video, but simply used as a visual aid the large statue of St Dominic and the Blessed Virgin Mary that stood there in their midst in the monastery garden. No rules were infringed, and this 'preaching' was probably more memorable and more 'salvific' than many a Sunday homily!

Conclusion

In conclusion, then, historically there have been two radically opposing reactions to this subject. Firstly: "*The Preaching of the Nuns?*" Quite simply: "They don't". Secondly: often heard these days: "*The Preaching of the Nuns?*" "They are the preaching". Both of these statements are simplistic, containing part of the truth but not the whole truth. We are all familiar with the situation where a person laments: "I am of no use to anybody". And such persons are frequently comforted by the response, "Ah, it's not what you do, it's what you are." This reply is often proffered to the older relatives in a family. But let's face it: the nuns are the elder sisters of the friars. Having been founded in 1206 at Prouilhe, they were ten years old when the friars were born in 1216. Now that is quite an age gap in any family -- something to be considered as significant! Those who have older sisters may like to ponder on their contribution to the well-being of their younger brothers, independently of any specific actions on their part. This is simply part of the dynamic of family life, but must not be taken for granted. All members of all families have responsibilities towards the other members.

Finally, we can be pretty sure that our Holy Father Dominic was in contact, constant contact, with the first disciple of Christ, namely, his Most Holy Mother, who pondered all the divine mysteries in her Immaculate Heart. We cannot forget that she is the *Queen of Preachers and Star of Evangelization*. So now in the third millennium, we continue to live this same charism to the extent that we imitate Dominic as he imitated Christ.

* * * * *

Beginning

Now after a long night
of stillness and longing
on my brow, in the
tiny furrow of my palm
thin lines of dew
are forming. And what I
had despaired of for so long
is here. The sun,
true to its vow, with
prophecies of light and air
wakes the horizon.
I have come through
after all. I have a new
dawn on my shoulders

Paul Murray, OP

(*Scars: Essays, Poems and Meditations on Affliction*, London: Bloomsburg, 2004, p. 129)

St. Dominic in Rome 1205-1215 - Part I¹

Vivian Boland, OP

IN MARCH 1179 the Third Lateran Council, summoned by Pope Alexander III, expressed dismay at the progress of heresies, in the south of France and elsewhere, and called on ‘princes and on all the faithful to oppose this scourge with all their might and by arms protect the Christian people against them’ (Canon 27). Meanwhile, in the north of Spain, the Holy Spirit was already working in a young boy, preparing an alternative response to the problem of heresy, a response which was to take shape slowly over the next forty years, to emerge finally as a new religious order that was to be called, and would be in fact, an ‘order of preachers.’

As novices we visited Archbishop Finbar Ryan, OP in the Bon Secours Hospital in Cork and he asked us one day ‘who founded the Dominican Order?’ Now we were very green as novices, but not so green that we did not recognise this as a trick-question of some kind. Various suggestions were made apart from the obvious one: Bishop Diego of Osma, Bishop Foulques of Toulouse, Pope Innocent III, Pope Honorius III, Our Lady. (Our Lady actually has some support in various visions recorded about the founding of the Order.) The Archbishop finally barked at us and said, “The Holy Spirit! It was the Holy Spirit who founded the Dominican Order,” Very good. But all the people just mentioned were also involved in transforming an intuition into an institution; all of them seeing the need for preaching and for preachers if the heresies that threatened the Church were to be successfully confronted.

Added to that list of founders, of course, is St. Dominic. The turning point for him was his encounter with an inn-keeper in Toulouse in 1203 or 1204. That encounter at least sowed a seed in Dominic and arguably did much more, changing his life at least as much as it changed the life of the innkeeper. Not long afterwards, probably in 1205, he accompanied his bishop, Diego, on a visit to Pope Innocent III. It was Dominic’s first time in Rome: perhaps he got to visit the basilica of San Clemente to see its new mosaic of the Cross as the Tree of Life.

¹ I make extensive use of Nicole Bériou et Bernard Hodel, *Saint Dominique de l'ordre des frères prêcheurs: témoignages écrits fin XIII – XIVe siècle*, Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 2019, hereafter referred to as ‘B/H’ with the relevant page numbers. References to DS are to Denzinger-Schönmetzer, 45th edition, 2017.

5 Days, 5 Weeks, 5 Months ... and more

As I looked through the early sources in preparing this article, it seemed as if I could speak of Dominic visiting Rome on just four occasions. He was there for about five days in 1205, for about five weeks in 1215, for five months in 1218 and for another five months in 1221. This neat pattern was subverted, however, by the realization that he made other visits to Rome, at least one in late 1216, soon after the election of Pope Honorius III, and another in late 1219 connected with his work with the nuns of San Sisto. There may have been other short visits as well, from his final base in Bologna, but putting them all together we can say that Dominic probably spent between a year and two years of his life in the Eternal City.

In 1205 he was there with Diego to speak with Innocent III about the preaching needs of the Church and about Diego's desire to resign as bishop of Osma and give himself completely to preaching, preferably on the boundaries of Christendom. Dominic's next visit was ten years later, in October-November 1215; and how much had already happened in those ten years. The preaching mission in Languedoc had begun; Dominic had resigned as sub-prior and become 'Brother Dominic'; Prouilhe had been founded; Diego had died; the Albigensian crusade had started after the assassination of the papal legate in 1208; Peter Seilhan had given Dominic a house in Toulouse where the first community of friars was living. On his second visit to Rome, Dominic was again in the company of a bishop; this time Foulques, the bishop of Toulouse, who had formally recognised Dominic's group of preachers in the summer of 1215 and who was in Rome to attend the Fourth Lateran Council. They spoke with Innocent about the preaching needs of the Church and asked him to confirm the diocesan project they had set up in Toulouse as an '*Order of Preachers*.' Innocent was hesitant – more about this later – and told Dominic to return to Toulouse and with his companions to choose a rule for their new community. Did Innocent recognise Dominic as someone he had met ten years earlier with Bishop Diego?

Innocent died the following year and was succeeded by Honorius III who, soon after his election in July 1216, received a visit from Dominic. This was Dominic's third visit to Rome. In 1205 and in 1215, in the company of two bishops he met two Popes. In 1216 he went alone, it seems, to request the support and confirmation of Honorius for his new '*Order of Preachers*'. This visit was followed by a series of bulls from Honorius, culminating

in the confirmation of the new project as not just a monastery in Toulouse but as an Order of Preachers for the universal Church. Dominic returned to Toulouse and in the middle of 1217 scattered the brethren, after which he himself returned once again to Rome.

This fourth visit was longer, probably from late 1217 or early 1218 and he stayed until May of that year, so a visit of five months. If Dominic had requests to make of Honorius, the Pope also had things to ask of him, notably his help in reforming the communities of religious women in Rome. Prouilhe was already in existence by 1207 and Innocent III had taken it under his protection in 1215 (B/H, p.497). Honorius confirmed this apostolic protection of the community in Prouilhe, and in turn asked Dominic for his help in uniting the women's communities in Rome, of which there were about seven. Innocent III had already begun the project of integrating these scattered communities into one reformed community which was to be based at San Sisto. Building work was already underway there (it is still going on as I write this in the autumn of 2021!) and Honorius asked Dominic to concern himself with the human aspects of this project, working with the women to prepare them to move and to begin together a new form of community life.

During these five months in Rome, apart from his work with the women, Dominic was occupied with promoting and building up the friars' communities as well as networking in the city and preaching, his words being confirmed by a series of miracles that are recorded as having taken place while he was in Rome. One of the most important friendships he developed was with Ugolino, Cardinal Bishop of Ostia, who, six years after Dominic's death, was elected Pope as Gregory IX. He was a key figure in promoting Dominic's mission as he promoted also that of the Franciscans. He presided at Dominic's funeral in 1221, initiated the canonization process in 1233, and canonised Dominic in 1234. William of Montferrat, in his testimony to the canonization process, says that he met Dominic at Pope Gregory IX's house when he was bishop of Ostia, Dominic being then 'at the Roman Curia' (B/H, p.709). Dominic therefore, had dealings with three Popes, two conversations about preaching with one of them, an excellent working relationship with the second, and an important friendship with the third.

In the summer of 1218 Dominic left Rome and it was only in January 1221, two-and-a-half years later, that we find him in

Rome again (for anything more than a quick visit) once more for a period of about five months. These five months of Dominic's last visit to Rome were occupied as before with caring for the nuns, consolidating the communities of the friars, networking with ecclesiastical figures and preaching. He left the city for the last time in May 1221, travelling to Bologna for the Second General Chapter of the Order.

Among the people Dominic met in Rome were, as already mentioned, the three Popes, Innocent III, Honorius III and Ugolino who would become Gregory IX. He also met other members of the Roman curia and many of the first friars and sisters of the Order, including Reginald and Cecilia. The places in Rome that have an association with St. Dominic are, therefore, the Lateran and probably also St Peter's where he met the Popes, and San Sisto and, briefly Santa Sabina, where he established communities of the Order. In what follows I will speak particularly about the importance for Dominic of the two Popes, Innocent and Honorius, as well as of the two places, San Sisto and Santa Sabina. I will say something also about the Fourth Lateran Council, a great pastoral council important among other things for the development of preaching in the Church.

Pope Innocent III (1198-1216)

Although in 1205 Innocent III declined Diego's request to resign from his diocese to devote himself fully to preaching, he was very much occupied with the problem of heresies, with the proliferation of new communities in the Church, some of them preaching communities, and with the need for educated preachers to present the Church's teaching effectively. It seems that from 1203 Innocent was preparing a preaching mission for the south of France. In 1206 he appointed a legate to recruit preachers for this mission (B/H, p.100) and in 1204, 1205 and again in 1207 he wrote to the King of France asking him to ensure protection for this preaching mission. In 1208 he wrote to the Archbishop of Tarragona stressing again the need for preaching but saying that it could only be undertaken with the authority and licence of the Pope or a bishop (DS §796). It was to be done, Innocent said, by disputing and exhorting in every possible way in order to confound those who had come to believe the heresies. However, it was in the same year, 1208, that he launched a military crusade against the Albigensians, following the assassination of his legate, Peter of Castelnau. We have seen that the Third Lateran Council

had asked princes to defend 'by arms' the Christian people against the scourge of heresies. Bishop Diego, in the meeting with papal legates at Montpelier in 1206, pointedly says that they ought to fight the heresy 'with their proper arms', by which he meant driving away false holiness by means of true religion (B/H, pp.618-19).

An enduring concern of Pope Innocent's pontificate was the Church's need for preaching and for preachers. How much his meeting with Diego and Dominic contributed to that concern is an interesting question. There are some phrases in his letters, already in 1206 and also later, finding their way even into the acts of the Fourth Lateran Council, that are very much in line with how Diego, Dominic and the early Dominicans speak about preaching (B/H, pp.100f). In spite of his preoccupations, however, when he met Foulques and Dominic in 1215 he was reticent about confirming the preachers in Toulouse (B/H, pp.885f). His hesitation may have been connected with concern about the multiplication of Religious Orders and communities, in the light of which a new monastery under an old rule seemed not so bad. Thus, his decision to send Dominic back to his confrères in Toulouse to choose a Rule can seem a bit like kicking a ball into touch. Others suggest that Innocent was seeing further than Foulques and Dominic, envisaging already the creation of a Religious Order universally dedicated to preaching (B/H, p.166). I will suggest in a moment another possible explanation for his hesitation, connected with resonances that the phrase '*Order of Preachers*' already had in the Church.

Some of the early sources speak of Innocent being assisted at this point by a dream in which he saw the Lateran Basilica falling over and Dominic propping it up with his shoulder. The Franciscans claim a similar moment of divine assistance to Pope Innocent except that in their account it is, of course, Francis of Assisi who is supporting the collapsing Lateran. The Franciscan version is well known from Giotto's painting of it in the basilica at Assisi. It is important to note that the two stories are first recorded in the 1240s, a time of rivalry between the two Orders, and it is not known which of them published it first (B/H, pp.396, 886, 1186-87).

Some sources then link Dominic's vision in St Peter's Basilica with this dream of Innocent. In that vision the apostles Peter and Paul appear to Dominic, give him a staff and a book, and tell him to 'go and preach'. It makes a nice diptych with Innocent's dream, although other sources date it to one of Dominic's later visits to Rome, after the confirmation of the Order (B/H,

pp.396, 889, 967). In any case Innocent's dream, which initially encouraged him to recognize the Toulouse community, was taken by later Dominican writers as encouraging him to consent to the universal Order. John of Spain already speaks in this way at the canonization process, saying that the Order was confirmed by Innocent at the Lateran Council in 1215.

An interesting side question is, where would Dominic have met Pope Innocent in 1205 with bishop Diego, and in 1215 with bishop Foulques? The Lateran Palace seems like the probable place on both occasions although Innocent was beginning to make more use of St. Peter's. Apparently, he liked to stay there in the early summer months, from April to July. In restoring the mosaic in the apse, he had even added an inscription designating St. Peter's as 'mother of churches', a move which did not catch on, obviously, since we continue to give this title to the Lateran Basilica rather than to the Vatican Basilica. We will see that one of the most important bulls to be issued in Dominic's favour by Pope Honorius was issued from St. Peter's.

I said I would say something about another reason why Innocent may have hesitated about confirming an 'Order of Preachers' for the universal Church. In most of the sources a slightly strange expression is used, that the project intended by Foulques and Dominic was the establishment of an Order 'that would be called and would be an **Order of Preachers**.' Why stress this distinction between *being called*, and *being*, an **Order of Preachers**? The phrase – *Order of Preachers* – already had a long history in the Church. My suggestion is that Innocent was aware of that history and its implications, and that this was what made him hesitate to proceed immediately to the confirmation of an '*Order of Preachers*'.

Pope Gregory the Great died in 604 and it is in his writings that we find the first reference to an '*Order of Preachers*.' He used it to refer to the preachers of the Gospel, who follow the prophets and the apostles in proclaiming the Word of God so that the Church will grow to the end of time. The phrase is found again in medieval writers such as Paschasius Radbertus, Anselm of Laon, Anselm of Canterbury and Rupert of Deutz. In the *Te Deum* we honour the glorious band of apostles, the noble company of prophets and the white-robed army who shed their blood for Christ. The '*Order of Preachers*' in the sense in which Gregory used it seems to be another such group. The preachers of the Gospel generally are: apostles, prophets, martyrs, preachers.

A further point is that this '*Order of Preachers*' was associated particularly with the end times; a band of preachers raised up by God to call people to repentance before it is too late. Gregory and others mentioned above found the *Order of Preachers* in two parables of Jesus: that of the workers in the vineyard who come at the eleventh hour (Matt 20:6), and that of the servant sent by his master to bring people in to the banquet which is already fully prepared (Lk 14:17). Through those parables the '*Order of Preachers*' becomes '*the Order of Preachers of the Last Days*.' The turn of the 12th to 13th centuries was a time of more than normal evangelical ferment, with important movements in thought, society and culture accompanied also by what some refer to as an 'explosion of preaching'. There was a growing eschatological, even apocalyptic, sense that the Church was in 'the last times' and that, therefore, an '*Order of Preachers*' would emerge to call people to repentance and conversion.

Bériou and Hodel in their collection of writings and testimonies about the life of Saint Dominic include revelations concerning the appearance of an *Order of Preachers* which are found in Richard of Saint Victor and Joachim of Fiore. Some manuscripts of Gerard Frachet's *Lives of the Brethren* include a prophecy of Hildegard of Bingen which is also taken to refer to the appearance of the Dominicans at the end times. Richard of Saint Victor speaks of the *Order of Preachers* in his commentary on the Book of Revelation, seeing seven *Orders of Preachers* represented by the seven angels of which it speaks. Joachim of Fiore speaks of 'spiritual men' who will appear in the last days and identifies some of the angels of the Apocalypse as 'preachers of the truth'. The two prophets Elijah and Enoch who appear in the Apocalypse are taken to represent two spiritual Orders who will fight against the beast coming out of the abyss. It became common later in the 13th century to see in the Friar Preachers and the Friars Minor the two spiritual Orders that had been prophesied by Joachim. The bull of canonization of St. Dominic is marked by these same eschatological themes, speaking of the 'workers of the last hour'. Gerard Frachet adds that the **Order of Preachers** was established through Mary's intervention (so perhaps my co-novice was on to something after all!). Seeing humanity in danger of destruction she pleaded with her Son and in response he raised up Dominic to establish the **Order of Preachers**. Three different people are credited with this vision of Mary pleading with Jesus. The text from Hildegard of Bingen which is added in some

manuscripts of *Lives of the Brethren*, speaks of the rise of ‘strong men’ who would be holy and studious and who would bear much fruit teaching scripture and saving souls.²

Pope Innocent III was an admirer of Joachim of Fiore even though some of that holy monk’s writings were condemned at the Fourth Lateran Council. We have noted Innocent’s preoccupation with the need for preachers and it may be that he was influenced by the eschatological atmosphere associated with some of the evangelical fervour of the time. The established meaning of the title may have been a reason why he was reluctant to recognise one particular group of men as ‘*the Order of Preachers*’, a phrase that had not only eschatological overtones but which also seemed to belong to the Church as a whole and not just to one group within it. What would we think if Pope Francis were to recognise a small community in Buenos Aires as the ‘Order of Apostles’ or the ‘Order of Prophets?’ It may be that designating a particular religious community with that title would have been just as startling to Innocent as designating a small group with one of these titles would be to us today.

The Fourth Lateran Council (1215)

So Foulques and Dominic were in Rome for the Fourth Lateran Council which took place in November 1215. They had received the Pope’s support for the diocesan project in Toulouse, although it seems they may have been hoping for more. The Council itself recognised the need for preachers and has a number of important things to say about that need. It is generally believed that its canons had been drafted by Pope Innocent himself and that the Council effectively rubber-stamped them. It is interesting, therefore, to think that what it says about preaching might have been influenced by Innocent’s conversations with Diego and Dominic in 1205 and with Foulques and Dominic just a few days earlier.

Canon 1 is famous for using the term ‘transubstantiation’ for the change in the bread and wine of the Eucharist (DS 802) and *Canon 21* for introducing the ‘Easter duty’, namely, the obligation on all Catholics to confess their sins at least once a year to their own priest (that last point was to cause some controversy later when the friars began hearing confessions as well). Relevant to Dominic’s particular concerns are *Canons 3 and 13*. *Canon 3* considered procedures and penalties against heretics but also

² On what is recounted in this paragraph see B/H, pp.40, 267-315.

prohibited anyone from preaching either privately or publicly without the authority of the Apostolic See or of the local Catholic bishop (DS 809). *Canon 13* forbade the establishment of new Religious Orders but allowed new monasteries as long as they accepted a Rule already approved. This is in fact what Innocent had agreed in the case of the preachers of Toulouse. It is *Canon 10*, however, which speaks at length about the Church’s need for preachers (cf. B/H, p.166):

Among other things that pertain to the salvation of the Christian people, the food of the word of God is above all necessary, because as the body is nourished by material food, so is the soul nourished by spiritual food, since “not in bread alone doth man live but in every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God” (Matt 4: 4). It often happens that bishops, on account of their manifold duties or bodily infirmities, or because of hostile invasions or other reasons, to say nothing of lack of learning, which must be absolutely condemned in them and is not to be tolerated in the future, are themselves unable to minister the word of God to the people, especially in large and widespread dioceses. Wherefore **we decree that bishops provide suitable men, powerful in work and word, to exercise with fruitful result the office of preaching; who in place of the bishops**, since these cannot do it, diligently visiting the people committed to them, may instruct them by word and example. And when they are in need, let them be supplied with the necessities, lest for want of these they may be compelled to abandon their work at the very beginning. Wherefore we command that in cathedral churches as well as in conventual churches **suitable men be appointed whom the bishops may use as coadjutors and assistants, not only in the office of preaching but also in hearing confessions**, imposing penances, and in other matters that pertain to the salvation of souls. If anyone neglect to comply with this, he shall be subject to severe punishment.

Innocent thus bequeathed to the Church an important vision of pastoral concern and organisation. Bishop Foulques and Saint Dominic returned to Toulouse where the preachers unanimously agreed to accept the Rule of Saint Augustine, because Augustine was renowned not only as a theologian but also as a preacher. Six months after the Lateran Council Pope Innocent III died suddenly at the age of 56. It fell to his successor, Honorius III, to implement the decisions of the Council and to carry forward Innocent’s plans for a renewal of preaching in the Church.

(To be continued in Dominican Ashram June 2022)

St. Dominic, Wise Innovator: Unified the Common Life To Serve Itinerant, Mendicant Preaching

Peter B. Lobo, OP

WHAT BRINGS UNITY TO A LIFE-PROJECT is the end-purpose which it seeks to achieve. The end-purpose must be clear and free from confusion and it must be relevant to the needs of the times; it must also be reachable and sustainable. If some of these basic characteristics are lacking in the end-purpose, then the life-project it desires to implement will spell disaster: it will be unattainable and before long will most certainly fail.

Setting the end-purpose which a life-project aims to achieve is of vital importance. But also the road map of how this life-project is going to be achieved in the concrete is of equal importance. What elements are to be included in the life-project, how these elements relate to each other to form a synthetic whole, as well as a strategic plan for their implementation so that the end-purpose of the project does not remain elusive and beyond the grasp of those striving for its implementation and achievement are also important for the unification and realization of the project.

St. Dominic's Penetrating Vision of his Mission and its Wise Implementation

St. Dominic was able to see the importance of a clear vision of the end-purpose and wise implementation of the life-project almost instinctively from the very beginning of his call to be an itinerant preacher. He knew where he was going and how he was going to get there. He was keenly aware that his end-purpose, namely, his mission and vision, was to be what Christ had laid down for his Church: "Go into all the world and preach the Gospel to the whole creation" (Mk16:15; cf. also Mt 28:18-20). He knew that this was the sum and substance of the mission of Christ himself who was sent by the Father for the salvation of the world: "I must preach the Good News of the Reign of God. I was sent for this purpose" (Lk 4:43; cf. also Lk 4:18-19; Is 61:1-3), and likewise that it was to be end-purpose of the Order he wished to found. He knew that he and his brothers were being called by God to walk in the footsteps of Christ, the first and greatest evangelizer. This was the most pressing need at that time faced by the Church in

the South of France that was in the grip of the Albigensian heresy, and in fact that that was the most urgent need of the Church for all time, for people would not have the opportunity to hear and believe unless a preacher was sent to them (cf. Rom 10:14-15). He was firmly convinced that the Church from its very inception has always been missionary by her very nature and that evangelization has always been her most intimate nature, her essential mission, her most characteristic function and her special grace and vocation (cf. *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, n. 14).

"The Church exists to preach the Gospel, that is to preach and teach the word of God, so that through her the gift of grace may be given to us, sinners may be reconciled to God and the sacrifice of the Mass [...] may be perpetuated" (*ibid.*). "The harvest is great but the labourers are few" (Mt 9:37) "They were like sheep without a shepherd" (Mk 6:34). "Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel" (1 Cor 9:6). Like St. Paul and all the great missionaries of the Church down the ages, St. Dominic, too, was keenly aware of this truth and he made it the driving force of his ministry among the Albigensians in the South of France. Likewise like Jesus, and like the Apostles who were sent out by him to preach the Good News of the Kingdom to the harassed and dejected crowds, St. Dominic realized that, besides the sword of the word of God, preaching in mendicant poverty was indispensable for effectiveness of the word proclaimed. So he made mendicant poverty for the sake of preaching an integral part of his style of mission. This is the universal mission of salvation that unifies and specifies the common life in all its facets, which he received from Christ through his Church and which he gave to the Order – the universal mission of preaching in mendicant poverty in order to save one's own soul and the souls of others, especially those who had strayed from the truth and had no one to preach it to them.

St. Dominic also realized from the beginning that the commission that the Church gave to the Order to preach to the whole world for the salvation of people had to be made concrete by being embodied in a solid life-project that would support it and bring about its effective realization. And so he needed to put in place the foundation-pillars of this life-project which would serve as the backbone of this mission, pillars that would constitute a unified life-project that would ensure its realization but would not be overly rigid as not to allow any flexibility when the needs of the preaching mission demanded it. How was he to achieve this? What

was he to include in this life-project? How was he to maintain its unity and ensure its evangelical fruitfulness? It was in working out these details that St. Dominic's earlier experience of consecrated life as a Canon at Osma and his study of the history of Religious Life in the Church assisted him. He was not one who would in any way want to reject the wisdom of the past and thereby destroy the healthy traditions of Religious Life established in the Church in earlier times. He was not a destroyer, but a wise innovator. He carefully chose the time-tested, essential elements of Religious Life that were already elaborated earlier and would constitute the pillars on which Dominican life was to be built. But his genius led him to conceive a new way of living them that would enable his brothers to answer more effectively the changed needs of the times. And so to facilitate this he added some new innovative elements blending them into a new synthesis that would serve as the solid bedrock foundation on which Dominican life was to be set and built. This novel synthesis would continue to promote both the closer following of Christ according to the more radical demands of the Gospel and also the universal itinerant mission of preaching the word of truth in mendicant poverty throughout the world.

St. Dominic Learnt to Use Innovatively the Mine of Wisdom of Past Religious Life

Going back to the wisdom of St. Pachomius and the coenobites, and well as the wise Rule of St. Benedict and his monks and St. Augustine's Rule for his canons, St. Dominic chose common life with vows and regular observances as the way of living in community for his brothers. Seeing that the preaching-mission for the salvation of neighbour could not be achieved solely by individual efforts, he realized that the only way to success in this task was for the whole community to be engaged in it. His communities, therefore, were to be a 'Sacred Preaching', whose life was deeply grafted and rooted in Christ, the Word made flesh. The community had to meditatively hear the divine word of truth and life in common and private, ponder over it uninterruptedly in silent study and a life supported by regular observances, celebrate it with living faith in the liturgy, especially the Liturgy of the Hours, the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation, constantly keep the Crucified Christ before their eyes whom they fervently asked in prayer to form them ever more deeply into his image, tenderly invoke Mary, Mother of Jesus and Protectress of the Order, for her unfailing maternal care and intercession, plead

with the saints for their help, and generously live all this in a common way of life. The focal point that unified and galvanized the common life of the brothers and made it effective in serving the preaching-mission of the Order was the radical following of Christ according to the Gospel after the manner of the Apostles.

From the monks and canons St. Dominic inherited the community celebration of the liturgy, especially the Divine Office (Liturgy of Hours) and the Eucharist, and the fervent practice of private prayer. The liturgy was to begin, support and end the brother's day. The Eucharist was to be the high point of the day, the source and summit of the life and preaching-mission of the brothers. The liturgy was a great teacher of the faith to the brothers and a great means of contemplating the mysteries of faith that were celebrated with love and devotion. But St. Dominic wanted the Divine Office to be celebrated briskly (unlike its celebration in the monastic tradition) so that it would not impede study or preaching. Likewise his own example of long hours and even whole nights spent in private prayer before the Blessed Sacrament on the altar where Christ was always available to anyone who wanted to meet and receive him, before the Crucified Christ whose sacrificial love in self-offering redeemed us by the blood of his Cross, and before Mary, the Mother of Christ the Preacher and Teacher, impressed upon his brothers the importance of private prayer before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and on the Cross, and of filial devotion to Mary who was the first to receive the Word of God who became flesh in her womb and the first to give the enfleshed Word of God to the world for our salvation. Contemplating the unbounded, selfless love of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament and on the Cross gave the brothers a participation in that love and spurred their zeal to sacrifice themselves and their time and talents to preach that same love to the world. Devotion to Mary, the Mother of the first and greatest preacher and evangelizer, imbued them with love for her and with a fervent desire to bring her Son to others so that they might be saved by him.

From the mission instructions given by Jesus to his disciples and from the manner in which the Albigensian Catharist *Perfecti* went about preaching in poverty, St. Dominic learnt the necessity of mendicant poverty and sober living for the authentication of his preaching-mission. He was aware that the preaching of the Albigensian heretics was listened to and accepted because they lived a poor life as Jesus had directed in his

missionary discourse in Luke's Gospel chapter 10. Detachment from riches and power made a deep impression on those who listened to the Albigensian preachers. The life of poor preachers from among the Albigensians made them seem 'genuine', even though the message they preached was not true to the teaching of Jesus. St. Dominic adopted mendicant poverty as the way of life for his preachers both because it freed them from worldly cares so that they could follow Christ more closely and participate in his preaching mission more vigorously and also because it lent authenticity to the message they preached. Mendicant poverty was adopted by St. Dominic not only to foster personal detachment from riches so that one could move forward on the road to personal holiness, but also for the sake of its apostolic witness-value and because it added genuineness to the preaching of the brothers for the salvation of others. "Merely to live well is not enough, and so teaching is brought in as well....The teacher of the world [the Lord Jesus] says, 'He who practises and teaches.' Practice is mentioned first, then teaching. 'Jesus began to do and to teach' (Acts 1:1). Mere doing is not much, mere teaching is futile, but doing and teaching together constitute perfection" (Thomas Agni of Lentini, *A Sermon on St. Dominic*, in Simon Tugwell (ed.), *Early Dominicans: Selected Writings*, p. 63). St. Dominic lived by this teaching of the Lord. He was aware, as Paul VI said in *Evangelii Nuntiandi* more recently, that people listen more to those who live by the word of God than to those who merely preach or teach, and that they listen to and accept teachers if they are also witnesses and doers of the word (cf. *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, n. 41; also Paul VI, "Address to members of the *Consilium de Laicis*", 2 October 1974). "Not only did St. Dominic possess the life of the Gospel, as one who did the work of an evangelist, he also possessed the teaching of the apostles, which is commended to us in the Gospel" (Thomas Agni of Lentini, *op. cit.*, in Simon Tugwell (ed.), *Early Dominicans: Selected Writings*, p. 63). Mendicant poverty bridged the gap between life-witness and the witness of the preached-word. It brought fruitfulness to preaching for it made the preacher not only preacher in name but also preacher in truth or fact.

Another thing that St. Dominic saw almost instinctively by means of the gift of spiritual insight and discernment from God was that if the common life of the brethren in the convent was to facilitate the life of itinerant preachers on the road, then the elements that went to make up the common life would not have

to be viewed with too great a rigidity, but would have to allow for a certain flexibility so that they could serve the apostolic needs of contemplative study and the mission of preaching. And so he did not want our laws (except, of course, those that were of divine or natural law) to bind under pain of sin but only to the penalty, and that they could be dispensed when the prior recognized that they impeded the study or the preaching of a brother. This was a new innovation. It went beyond the manner in which the Rule was understood, interpreted and applied in the monastic tradition. Law is never an end in itself; it must serve the genuine needs of the brothers, their study and their preaching apostolate. The community of brothers was to be a 'Sacred Preaching' whether in the convent or on the road, and its entire life was to be marked by this fact. The common life with its observances was to serve the mission of the Order, but at the same time the mission of the Order had to bring new vigour to the common life. This was something novel in religious life; an exceedingly wise innovation of St. Dominic.

St. Dominic's Innovativeness: Continuity with Change to Meet New Situations

Not many would have thought of re-reading and re-conceiving Religious Life in such a way because of the changed situation of the time. Not many would have thought of making innovations such as these in answer to the new needs of greatly changed circumstances. The insight, courage and strength to do this can only come from on high; it can only come from God. It is the special grace of the Holy Spirit given by God in double measure to founders. They are enlightened by the Holy Spirit to see the real needs of the times and read the Gospel anew in the light of these needs so that they can offer new evangelical answers to them without rejecting the perennial wisdom and the time-tested tradition and practice of the faith handed down in the Church from the time of Christ through his Apostles and successive generations of Christian disciples. Continuity and change must go hand in hand; one without the other would spell ruin. There must be continuity through renewal rooted in the wellsprings of discipleship and also change through adaptation to new needs arising from changed circumstances of situation and place.

Whatever be the insights one may have and whatever be the innovations one may introduce into a system, the real test of their wisdom and relevance can only truly be gauged by the lasting

results of renewal and adaptation that they produce. Untimely and badly conceived ‘innovations’ can spell disaster and can even destroy a system for they are not farsighted enough to enable the system to meet the challenges of changing times. To be able to do this the system cannot be too rigid and inflexible in its desire to remain ‘true’ to its beginnings. Nor can it just be backward looking, harping always on its glorious past without being able to adjust to the new, changing situations of place and time. Preserving the original vision and purpose must go hand in hand with reading the signs of new times and making the necessary adjustments and changes to respond effectively to these new situations.

Conclusion

St. Dominic was acutely aware of that he had to establish a relevant Order that was both rooted in the tradition of the Church’s understanding of Religious Life and also able to meet the new situation faced by the Church in a new but Christ-like manner. And so with great wisdom and prudence he took the evangelical risk of introducing new innovations into the mission and way of Religious Life of his Order. These wise innovations have stood the test of time and have produced abundant apostolic fruits over the last eight hundred years since the foundation of the Order in 1216. They have produced these fruits by helping the brothers to constantly renew their Religious Life and wisely adapt it to the needs of new times, peoples and places in their mission of preaching and the salvation of souls. This new way of life of the Order of Preachers has raised up in the Church great mystics and contemplatives, great theologians and philosophers, great preachers and orators, great scholars and teachers, great artists and sculptors, great men of letters and writers, great missionaries and apostles, great saints and martyrs. In a word, the Order has given to the Church and the world outstanding disciples of Jesus who have in many and varied ways, often in very difficult and trying circumstances, served the mission Christ gave to his Church, namely, to establish the Reign of God in the hearts of people throughout the world by preaching to save souls. St. Dominic’s brothers and sisters down the ages are the most eloquent testimony to and proof of his greatness as a wise innovator, for they have dedicated themselves wholeheartedly to Jesus and his mission as his intimate friends and disciples who have spent themselves untiringly in the service of preaching the Good News of salvation throughout the world.

The Mystery of Grace: In My Weakness is My Strength*

Margaret Mayce, OP

CONSIDER IT A PRIVILEGE to share some reflections with you as part of this virtual conference organized by the Dominican Preaching Network *Urbi et Orbi*. However, I must admit that putting my thoughts together has been a bit difficult. The theme of the Conference: *The Challenge of Preaching to the City and to the World in the Time of the Pandemic* could not be more daunting. I simply did not know what to say. I could not find the words to adequately express the message the world needs to hear from us during these extraordinary times. And to compound that reality, I am painfully conscious of my own difficulty speaking. But rather than simply dismiss what I was feeling, I chose to consider *the feeling as a sign* that this was precisely what I was being invited to reflect upon, because I think I can safely say that we will have nothing to offer in this time of pandemic, unless we allow ourselves to tap into our depths, and touch into our vulnerability.

So let me begin by explaining my voice. At the end of January 2019, I had a bad fall and subsequently had surgery to repair damaged discs in my neck. While the surgery was a success, it left me with a paralyzed vocal cord. Then in May of the same year, I was elected Coordinator of Dominican Sisters International. The timing of my surgery and its side effect, and my new position with DSI could not have been worse. Or...maybe this is simply what is meant to be in God’s great design. But I found myself asking myself some significant questions: how can I be a preacher, with only half a voice? How can I assume responsibility for DSI, with only half a voice? Is what I have to offer the position, as I am now, enough? And I suspect that this is a question you might frequently ask of yourselves – is what you have to give, is who you are – enough to provide a word of encouragement and hope to those who are suffering; and a word of challenge to those who turn a blind eye to the human condition?

* Talk delivered at virtual colloquium organized by Dominican Preaching Network *Urbi et Orbi*, 12 - 14 October, 2021

Article Entitled *Speechless* by Tracy Cochran: Three Bits of Wisdom She Offers

In the midst of my musings, I happened upon an article from which I have drawn great encouragement and inspiration. The article is entitled *Speechless*¹, and it was written by a young woman who woke up one morning to discover that she had no voice; just a faint, breathy whisper. As if that wasn't bad enough, she was due to give a lecture to a crowd of several hundred people later that day at the Rubin Museum of Art in Manhattan. After her initial moments of panic and dread, and her worries about what people would think of her, she proceeded with her lecture, and learned several significant lessons in the process; lessons which I feel are very much worthy of our reflection, as we venture into our post-COVID world, preaching [...], probably wondering if what we have to offer is enough.

The author writes: *It is often when the worst happens, when hopes and dreams are dashed, that real life pours in. So it's very important to experience what is really happening, without trying to resist, or run away.*

She goes on: *I noticed that when I thought about myself and what might happen, I suffered. When I stopped and noticed the people around me, I felt energized and alive. The fear was still present, but I remembered that I was also part of a larger life that contained unknown possibilities.*

And she concludes: *In the midst of a dark time, I discovered that a truth was waiting to be found. When we let go and die to the known, we find the unknown. And when we dare to be still and touch the earth of our lives, we can find our true voice.*

So I would like to consider these three bits of wisdom to see how they might apply to us in our preaching to the city and to the world in this time of pandemic.

The First Bit of Wisdom

The author of *Speechless* says: *It is often when the worst happens, when hopes and dreams are dashed, that real life pours in. So it's very important to experience what is really happening, without trying to resist, or run away.*

As you and I take our next steps into our Dominican lives in our post-COVID world, we do so fully aware that we are not

¹ Tracy Cochran, *Speechless* in *Parabola Magazine*, 28 July, 2018

what we were. Well before the arrival of COVID, I suspect that we would wake up each morning, and probably notice that something was different...or changing...or missing: a voice; excellent health and boundless energy; our drive and determination; or even our belief that we really can make a difference. But since COVID, I suspect that what we notice, and the questions we ask are much more fundamental – even existential. Why did this happen? Where is God in it all? What is the meaning of all this suffering and death? What is the meaning of my life...of my Dominican vocation... in a world which has changed so dramatically as a result of the pandemic? Do I really have anything worthwhile to say in the face of this human tragedy? Am I speaking with my *true voice*?

However, if we stop here, and focus only on ourselves, we will miss the glimpses of *unknown possibilities* present in the *larger life* of which we are a part.

The author of *Speechless* discovered an age-old insight; namely, that when we let-go, when we lean into the present moment, just as it is, then we discover our true voice. And I believe that this true voice of ours is best discovered through an acknowledgement of our vulnerability.

If my fall taught me anything, it is that I am incredibly vulnerable. And if COVID-19 has taught us anything, I hope it is that WE are incredibly vulnerable too. We are challenged perhaps as never before to reflect on St. Paul's wisdom, that *in my weakness lies my strength*.

The invitation to this colloquium referred to St. Paul's Letter to Timothy, and the admonition to preach the Word in season or out of season. The challenge of preaching [...] in the time of pandemic could not be more daunting. But as the author of *Speechless* writes: *It is often when the worst happens, when hopes and dreams are dashed, that real life pours in. So it's very important to experience what is really happening, without trying to resist, or run away.*

So how were you during the height of the pandemic? What were your spirits like during the weeks/months of quarantine? Did you just take it in stride, and tough it out, just assuming that it would end at some point? Or, did you find at times that you *were you absolutely overwhelmed*, listless, depressed, not quite believing that this was actually happening? Were you upset, perhaps even angry

that all your fine-tuned plans for travel, for meetings and workshops, for vacation, retreat and recreation were up-ended? Did you have a sense of just not knowing exactly what you should do, or where you should go? Were you affected in some way by the knowledge of so many, many people dying absolutely alone? Were you relieved to learn about the availability of a vaccine – and then appalled at how slow the roll-out has been in the poorest of countries?

I hope that this was true for you – because that’s what it was like for the vast majority of souls who were at their wit’s end, even bordering on despair. I hope that you did not try to resist the chaos and the turmoil – both inside and outside. I hope that you **deeply felt** what was happening to us – to all of us. *Because it is often when the worst happens, that real life pours in. Some might call this real life, grace.*

Author Annie Lamott says: *I do not understand the mystery of grace – only that it meets us where we are, and does not leave us where it found us.* So where did grace meet you in the midst of the pandemic? Could you dare to be still, and touch the earth of your lives? Did your experience of yourself during the pandemic give you a glimmer of your **true voice**? Have you in some way been transformed by grace?

The Second Bit of Wisdom

The author of *Speechless*’ second bit of wisdom: *I noticed that when I thought about myself and what might happen, I suffered. When I stopped and noticed the people around me, I felt energized and alive. The fear was still present, but I remembered that I was also part of a larger life that contained unknown possibilities.*

From the earliest days of this crisis, our Dominican Sisters throughout the world have been living in deep solidarity with those who have suffered the effects of the virus – whether that suffering has been physical, emotional or spiritual. Many Sisters have been involved in direct service to those in need, providing food and medicine, and tending to the sick. Others have kept vigil in prayerful solidarity from their homes.

Believing that this time of pandemic also held out to us a source of unexpected grace, the Coordinating Committee of DSI invited Sisters to write the stories of their experience of living through these extraordinary times. We posted them on the DSI website in the hope that as Sisters read them, they would be

inspired. We felt that this was one way in which we could be in solidarity with one another; and share the Holy Preaching with one another, as we all struggled to discover our **true voices** in the midst of such suffering in a landscape that had so drastically changed.

Experiences of Dominican Sisters World-wide in Response to the Tragic Reality of COVID

What I would like to do now is to share with you just a few of the experiences of our Dominican Sisters world-wide as they responded to this unexpected and tragic reality. They, like so many others, inserted themselves into *the larger life of which they were a part, and that revealed for them unknown possibilities of grace.* I shall share with you some [...] excerpts from some of our Sisters’ reflections. So you will be hearing their experience, in their own words in what they discovered to be their **true voices** – as they preached [...] in this time of pandemic.

Two Cabra Dominican Sisters from Ireland wrote: Where is the Galilee in our world today where we can find Jesus? For many people, Galilee is the crowded wards and Intensive Care Units of our hospitals. God is found in the front-line workers who risk their lives so that others might have the chance to continue living. These essential workers are part of “The huge and rare outflow of love that has encircled vulnerable planet earth.” (*Srs. Maeve McMahon and Brighde Vallely*)

The Dominican Family in Venezuela: From the very early days of this crisis, our Sisters and other members of the Dominican Family have been on the front lines offering assistance and comfort. And our Sisters in many parts of the world have provided financial assistance to help in this outreach to the victims of COVID-19. The situation in Venezuela posed a particular problem. To send money was not a good option due to the extent of corruption in the country. So our Sisters coordinated an effort to purchase food and medical supplies which were then sent directly to the Sisters in Venezuela. Along with other members of the Dominican Family in Venezuela, they distributed the food and medicine to the most needy.

A Sister from Spain described this time of pandemic as a search for God’s Word amidst the voices of the world: This has been a moment to set our sights on the new fractures within the human family and to catch glimpses of how to move forward together. She suggested that this a time to imagine a renewed humanity, and a moment to un-learn, so that we can start to learn new paths together.

From Vietnam, a Sister wrote: The virus changed everything. Not only the way we saw ourselves, but also the way we lived with others. Our Superior asked the Sisters and our benefactors to sacrifice and work together for the benefit of the poor and the needy. Food was what was needed most. Although our Sisters were afraid of getting infected with the virus, they kept going to visit families. Group by group, they went to the canal areas to visit all the families, and show our love for them.

In South Africa: Our Sisters have collaborated with civic groups and neighborhood organizations in outreach to the victims of Corona virus.

From Cambodia a Sister wrote: The Religious Missionaries of St. Dominic distribute food in our mission in Cambodia. It is a poor mission, and has become even more so as a result of the coronavirus. The Sisters are very valiant in their efforts; they know that the Lord is their strength.

Throughout the world, our Sisters have made and distributed Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), face shields and face masks to provide for the needs of the health care professionals in hospitals, as well as for their neighbours.

A Sister from Canada wrote of the pandemic as a moment of grace; the grace of a new Pentecost: The experience of the pandemic has initiated a serious examination of conscience in me. It has had a revealing effect, letting me glimpse that both the best and the worst of what is happening are intertwined in my life! As the days went by, however, a conviction became clear with strength: just as the Spirit hovered over the chaos of the world at the time of creation, so does it hover again on the chaos of my life, my community, the Church and the entire universe. How could I not then ask him, with fervor, to help me to detect the grace at work in the present moment? Because, it seems to me, the present reality disposes us, more than ever, to receive the grace of a new Pentecost. That, at least, is my hope! (*Sr. Nathalie Roberge – Quebec, Canada*)

The Third Bit of Wisdom

Again the author of *Speechless* writes: *In the midst of a dark time, I discovered that a truth was waiting to be found. When we let go and die to the known, we find the unknown. And when we dare to be still and touch the earth of our lives, we can find our true voice.*

These Sisters, along with so many other members of the Dominican Family world-wide, have preached eloquently, in

word and in deed, in the midst of a dark time. Despite fear, *they remembered that they were part of a larger life that contained unknown possibilities.* Despite their fear, they opened themselves to this larger life which touched the earth of their lives...and they were transformed in the process. Dare I suggest, that their *vulnerability* in the face of the crisis, led them to discover their *true voices*.

Many years ago, I read an article entitled *Dominican Women in Today's World*, written by Sr. Mary O'Driscoll, OP, a Cabra Dominican. In it, she refers to a talk given to a gathering of Dominican women by the former Master of the Order, Vincent de Couesnongle, OP. In his address, he commented on the Dominican task to preach a *Gospel of Mercy* to the world. His message speaks to us all; and perhaps *poignantly* so in this time of pandemic. Our Brother Vincent said:

*Is mercy really a living force among us? A deeply felt unrest?
Is it something that springs from human misery and grips us,
knocking us out of our normal habits, our ordinary way of life,
forcing us to change our ways and keeping us awake at night?
Is it a constant throbbing ache in our hearts?*

We are told that St. Dominic was always joyful, his face radiant, except when he encountered any kind of suffering, for then his face would become sad, and tears would flow. Do we have this *deeply felt unrest* within us, as we continue to witness the suffering wrought by COVID-19?

Whether we admit it or not, life has changed irrevocably. Last year, in his message for *World Day for Migrants & Refugees*, Pope Francis chose to focus on internally displaced persons. He spoke about the condition of *displacement* as one of fear, uncertainty and loss. I have often reflected on the fact that in some way each one of us has experienced a sense of being "*displaced*" as a result of COVID and the quarantine. We have felt a sense of disorientation; familiar patterns *have* been disrupted; we still live in fear and concern as cases continue to increase in many parts of the world. But Mary O'Driscoll, OP reminds us that *it is a mark of those who follow Jesus Christ, a mark personified in Dominic's life, that we are willing to be disturbed.*

No one has been spared; we have all been affected in some way. We have been challenged to adapt to a new way of being; and hopefully, we have gained wisdom and insight and humility in the process.

In *Fratelli tutti*, Pope Francis offers a framework for helping us get through the pandemic. He reminds us that all is not lost, if we acknowledge what needs to change and take appropriate steps. In the broadest sense, this means loving our neighbor as we love ourselves. So it seems to me that it is up to us to reflect on what this means, and how it might inform our preaching in this time of pandemic. *What does love of neighbor mean* - in terms of the gross inequities which have been highlighted during this pandemic: the disparities in access to and quality of health care; the disparities in access to life-saving vaccines; the greed and desire for profit on the part of pharmaceutical companies, which often obscure the depth of human suffering that is right on our doorstep.

And what does love of neighbor mean in a world in which everything is connected? The pandemic is not simply a problem in and of itself. It will continue to have a dangerous impact on global poverty levels; on the condition of migrants and refugees world-wide; on the global economy; on the condition of women; on mental health; on domestic violence; on education; on the environment and other areas of life. Pope Francis reminded us that:

A world-wide tragedy like the COVID-19 pandemic momentarily revived the sense that we are a global community, all in the same boat, where one person's problems are the problems of all.

I would suggest that a challenge to our preaching moving forward is how to communicate the message that being part of a global community is in fact who we are; and not simply an idea that needs to be *momentarily revived* during a time of crisis.

Perhaps the silver lining in this crisis is the opportunity to remember that we are better together, than we are alone; to remember that we are brothers and sisters of all. How we respond to this opportunity will prove whether or not the pandemic will be a moment of change for the better or, as Pope Francis wrote, "*just another tragedy of history from which we learned nothing.*"

Our brother, Bruno Cadore, suggests, and I quote: "*Remaining in the Word means to stand closer to the conversation of God with humanity, which Jesus made visible to the eyes of all.*"

And *to stand closer to that conversation*, requires great humility and vulnerability on our part. But maybe this is precisely what we are called to as a Dominican Family at this moment in time.

So what do you hear when you stand closer to God's conversation with humanity during this time of pandemic? How does what you hear inform your preaching today? Given the inequities that COVID-19 has highlighted and the consequent massive human suffering, where do Dominicans need to make their voices heard? How do we do this?

Back to the author of *Speechless*: She noted that when she was explaining about her voice, someone suggested to her that "*Maybe the universe is trying to tell you something...*" She continues: "*Being without a voice in a wordy world is oppressive. But not speaking can also help you listen deeply, and observe.*"

The last thing our pandemic-world needs are voices that simply add to the incessant wordiness that surrounds us. *Maybe God is trying to tell us something.* Maybe God is inviting us to listen deeply to our own experience of the pandemic; to the experiences of people near and far; to the lame excuses of governments world-wide as they withhold available assistance to those who need it the most. And maybe God is inviting us *to observe...to observe* the glimpses of grace and possibility that are all around us; the glimpses of grace/the mystery of grace, that meets us where we are, and does not leave us where it finds us.

Conclusion

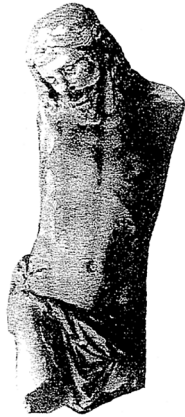
We are all familiar with the expression that a chain is only as strong as its weakest link. Perhaps we, as preachers, can only be as strong, as persuasive, as authentic as our weakest links: our deepest hurt, disappointment, fear, doubts. And it is my hope that this time of pandemic is laying this bare for each one of us with greater clarity, greater sincerity, greater vulnerability. Because perhaps it will only be our willingness to lean into this tragic and grace-filled moment, that will help us to know and to embrace our true voice for the life of the world. And so we pray:

May God the Creator bless us
 May God the Redeemer heal us
 And may God the Holy Spirit, fill us with life.
 And may our preaching continue, in this time of pandemic,
 with our very lives. Amen.

Jacob's Well

Christus hat keine Hände

14th century prayer



Christ has no hands
only our hands
to do his work today.

Christ has no feet
only our feet
to lead people along his (way) path.

Christ has no lips
only our lips
to tell people of him today.

Christ has no means
only our help,
to bring people to his side today.

We are the only Bible people will still read, God's final message
written not only in words but in the works of our lives.

Lord make us instruments of your love and peace.

(Above is the body or corpus of Christ crucified, detached from its background. The Crucified One has lost both arms and legs. This cross has not been restored, but left to speak an eloquent message to all who come to pray before the Crucified One.)

It is recounted that during the Second World War, a church in Strasbourg was destroyed in the terrible bombing of the city. Nothing remained of it except a heap of rubble and broken glass. At least that is what the people thought, till they began clearing away the masonry. Then to their utter amazement they found a statue of Christ on the cross still standing erect in spite of all the bombing. The statue was unharmed except that both hands were missing and the legs broken. When finally the rebuilding of the church began the badly damaged statue on the cross was re-installed for people to come and pray and worship.

One day a sculptor saw the mutilated figure of Christ in the church, and offered to carve new hands for it. The church officials met to consider the sculptor's kind, friendly gesture, but decided not to accept the offer. Why? Because the members of that church council said: "Our broken statue touches the spirits of our people deeply. That Christ has no hands to minister to the needy or feed the hungry or serve the poor, except our hands, moves us powerfully. He inspires us to act. We perform.")

A Brief Meditation on the Sculpture & Prayer

Christ Has No Hands

You are nailed to the cross
Spread your arms
like broken wings
above our fear.

You are nailed to the cross
Tortured to death
you passed out mightily
hanging on the cross
strengthen us in our trials.

You are nailed to the cross
You have no hands
just our hands
to do your work for life, both earthly and eternal.

You are nailed to the cross
You have no feet
just our feet
to lead people on your way
of trust, forgiveness, love and peace.

You are nailed to the cross
 You have no lips
 just our lips
 to save people from death
 by telling them of your unbounded, everlasting love.

You are nailed to the cross,
 You get no help
 just our help,
 to bring people safely to your side

You are nailed to the cross
 Come to us and live in us
 and by the power of your grace
 stretch out and let us
 embrace and enfold you in our arms.

You are nailed to the cross
 Look at us
 love us
 You die for us
 You need us
 to do your saving work today

You are nailed to the cross
 Spread your arms
 Your blessing hands
 like sheltering wings
 under which we can slip
 and under which we can live securely

My God, my God
 Do not leave us
 But stay with us forever.

(Adapted from a Good Friday Meditation (2017) by Pastor Tobias
 Götting, Hamburg, Germany)

The Rosary of the Holy Name: Biblical Roots and Dominican Shoots – Part Two

Conor McDonough, OP

The Rosary of the Most Holy Name of Jesus

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
 Amen.

V. You, O Lord, will open my lips.

R. And my tongue shall announce your praise.

V. Incline unto my aid, O God.

R. O Lord make haste to help me.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As
 it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without
 end. Amen. Alleluia.

The Five Mysteries of the First Part

1. The Incarnation of Our Lord Jesus Christ

Meditation: The Son of God assumes human flesh of the blessed
 Mary, ever Virgin, and is made man in her womb.

Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on us (repeated ten times).

Glory be...

2. The Birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ

Meditation: The Saviour of the world is born for our redemption,
 his Mother remaining a Virgin.

Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on us (repeated ten times).

Glory be...

3. The Circumcision of Our Lord Jesus Christ

Meditation: Our Saviour, eight days old, begins to suffer for
 our sins, and his blood already flows for us. He is circumcised
 according to the Law, as if he had been himself a sinner.

Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on us (repeated ten times).

Glory be...

4. Our Lord Jesus Christ is found in the Temple

Meditation: Our Saviour, twelve years old, shows himself more
 than mortal by his knowledge and wisdom, teaching the teachers
 of the Jews.

Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on us (repeated ten times).

Glory be...

5. *The Baptism of Our Lord Jesus Christ*

Meditation: The Saviour of the World is baptised by St John. The eternal Father declares him to be his Son.

Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on us (repeated ten times).

Glory be...

Let us pray.

O Jesus, whose Name is above all Names, that at the Name of Jesus every knee may bend, in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, who at the time appointed by eternal Wisdom assumed human flesh in the womb of the blessed Mary ever Virgin and thus became the Son of David, whose birth gladdened men and angels, who began so early to suffer for us, and to shed on our account that blood which washes away the sins of the world, whose immortal wisdom appeared at the age of twelve years, to whose baptism all heaven was attentive, grant to us to celebrate those mysteries to your honour and our own salvation, who live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

The Five Mysteries of the Second Part

1. *Our Saviour washes his Disciples' Feet*

Meditation: Our Saviour, to show us an example of humility, and how much we ought to serve each other, descends so low as to wash the feet of his disciples, though he is the God whom heaven and earth adore.

Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews, have mercy on us (repeated ten times).

Glory be...

2. *The Prayer of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Garden*

Meditation: Our Saviour, knowing his Passion to be now at hand, is so affected with the thought of it, and so oppressed by the load of our sins, that he prays to his almighty Father that the bitter cup might pass away from him.

Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews, have mercy on us (repeated ten times).

Glory be...

3. *Our Saviour is arrested*

Meditation: Our Saviour, as if he had been no more than a mortal man, yields to the power of men, and permits himself for our redemption to be arrested, as if he were a criminal.

Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews, have mercy on us (repeated ten times).

Glory be...

4. *Our Saviour carries his Cross*

Meditation: Our Saviour, being torn with scourges and pierced with thorns to expiate our sins, is obliged to carry the Cross on which he is about to die, and moves on, labouring in sorrow towards the place of his execution.

Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews, have mercy on us (repeated ten times).

Glory be...

5. *The Descent of Our Saviour to the Dead*

Meditation: The soul of our Saviour being separated by death from the body, descends to that place where the saints were expecting his redemption.

Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews, have mercy on us (repeated ten times).

Glory be...

Let us pray.

O Jesus, whose Name is above all Names, that at the Name of Jesus every knee may bend, in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, whose mysterious humiliations and sorrows appointed for you, on account of our sins, appeared in your washing of the feet of your servants and creatures, in your distress and prayer and bloody sweat, in your being arrested and brought before courts as a criminal, in your bearing the load of the Cross, and in the separation of your soul from your body, and its descent to the regions below, grant to us to celebrate those mysteries to your honour and our own salvation, who live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Five Mysteries of the Third Part

1. *The Resurrection of Our Lord Jesus Christ*

Meditation: The soul of Our Lord Jesus Christ, which had been separated from the body, is reunited to it by a miracle of the almighty Power, and that body which had been dead rises to die no more.

Jesus, Son of the living God, have mercy on us (repeated ten times).

Glory be...

2. *The Ascension of Our Lord Jesus Christ*

Meditation: The body of Our Lord Jesus Christ ascends into the high heaven, where the Saviour of mankind sits at the right hand of God, the almighty Father.

Jesus, Son of the living God, have mercy on us (repeated ten times).

Glory be...

3. *Our Lord Jesus Christ sends down the Holy Spirit*

Meditation: Our Saviour, now seated at the right hand of God, his almighty Father, sends down the Holy Spirit to inspire and animate his disciples, that they may be strengthened to make known to the human race his Cross and his glory.

Jesus, Son of the living God, have mercy on us (repeated ten times).

Glory be...

4. *Our Lord Jesus Christ crowning the blessed Virgin and Saints*

Meditation: Our Saviour, having by his Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension, opened the way for the children of Adam to the heaven which they had lost by sin, bestows on his Mother and his saints a crown of immortal glory.

Jesus, Son of the living God, have mercy on us (repeated ten times).

Glory be...

5. *Our Lord Jesus Christ coming in Judgment*

Meditation: Our Saviour will come in power and majesty to judge the living and the dead, and to reward everyone according to their works.

Jesus, Son of the living God, have mercy on us (repeated ten times).

Glory be...

Let us pray.

O Jesus, whose Name is above all Names, that at the Name of Jesus every knee may bend, in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, whose body that was murdered by mankind the Almighty raised from death, glorious and immortal, who by your Ascension triumphed over death and held captivity captive, who, according to your promise, sent down the Spirit that proceeds from the Father and the Son, the Comforter and the Enlivener, who, stretching forth the bounty of your almighty hand, shed upon the chosen children of Adam that glory that neither eye has seen nor ear heard, and

who will come forth in power and majesty to judge the living and the dead, before whose throne all mortals will appear, grant to us to celebrate those mysteries to your honour and our own salvation, who live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

Litany of the Most Holy Name of Jesus

Lord, have mercy on us. Christ, have mercy on us.

Jesus, hear us. Jesus, graciously hear us.

God the Father of heaven. Have mercy on us.

God the Son, Redeemer of the world. Have mercy on us.

God the Holy Spirit. Have mercy on us.

Holy Trinity, one God. Have mercy on us.

Jesus, splendour of the Father. Have mercy on us.

Jesus, brightness of the eternal Light. Have mercy on us.

Jesus, king of glory. Have mercy on us.

Jesus, sun of justice. Have mercy on us.

Jesus, Son of the Virgin Mary. Have mercy on us.

Admirable Jesus. Have mercy on us.

Jesus, strong God. Have mercy on us.

Jesus, father of the future age. Have mercy on us.

Jesus, messenger of great counsel. Have mercy on us.

Jesus most powerful. Have mercy on us.

Jesus most obedient. Have mercy on us.

Jesus most patient. Have mercy on us.

Jesus, meek and humble of heart. Have mercy on us.

Jesus, lover of chastity. Have mercy on us.

Jesus, our love. Have mercy on us.

Jesus, pattern of virtues. Have mercy on us.

Jesus, zealous lover of souls. Have mercy on us.

Jesus, our God. Have mercy on us.

Jesus, our refuge. Have mercy on us.

Jesus, father of the poor. Have mercy on us.

Jesus, treasure of the faithful. Have mercy on us.

Jesus, the Good Shepherd. Have mercy on us.

Jesus, the true Light. Have mercy on us.

Jesus, eternal Wisdom. Have mercy on us.

Jesus, infinite goodness. Have mercy on us.

Jesus, our way and life. Have mercy on us.

Jesus, joy of angels. Have mercy on us.

Jesus, master of the apostles. Have mercy on us.

Jesus, teacher of the evangelists. Have mercy on us.
 Jesus, the fortitude of martyrs. Have mercy on us.
 Jesus, the light of confessors. Have mercy on us.
 Jesus, the purity of virgins. Have mercy on us.
 Jesus, the crown of all saints. Have mercy on us.
 Jesus, Son of David. Have mercy on us.
 Jesus of Nazareth, king of the Jews. Have mercy on us.
 Jesus, Son of the living God. Have mercy on us.

Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world: spare us, O Jesus.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world: hear us, O Jesus.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world: have mercy on us, O Jesus.

V. Blessed be the Name of the Lord.

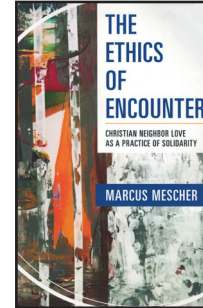
R. From now unto all eternity.

Let us pray.

O God, who have made the most glorious Name of Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, most lovely to your faithful, by its great and affecting sweetness, and at the same time dreadful to malignant spirits, grant graciously that all who venerate this Name on earth may obtain the sweetness of consolation in this present time, and afterwards the joy of happiness without end, through Our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, through all eternity. Amen.

Publisher: Ivan Prakash Rodrigues
Printer: Ivan Prakash Rodrigues
Owner: Dominican Publications
Printing Press: National Printing Press, 5,
 Ratan Apt No. 2, S.T. Bus Stand
 Road, Nagpur 440018, M.S.
Place of Publication: Nagpur, St. Dominic Ashram,
 Seminary Hill, Nagpur 440006, M.S.
Name of Editor: Peter Lobo

Book Reviews



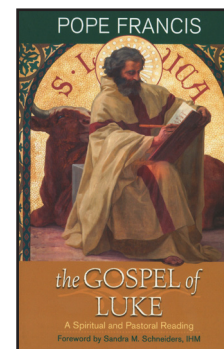
THE ETHICS OF ENCOUNTER: Christian Neighbour Love as a Practice of Solidarity

by Marcus Mescher, NY: Orbis Books, 2020,
 pp. xxiii+197, price: US\$ 40.00 (pbk),
 ISBN 978-1-62698-376-2

This is a well-thought out, well-researched and well-presented description of Christian neighbourly encounter in love as a practice of solidarity. In the five chapters of this book the author gives the reader sufficient material to form a comprehensive understanding of 'living solidarity with neighbour in Christian love.' His three chapters on: *The Theology of Neighbour*, *Discerning the Ethics of Encounter* and *Practicing the Ethics of Encounter*, after the opening chapter that highlights the deeply entrenched divisions that are splitting American society right down the middle (*The Divided State of America*), offer an antidote and corrective to this 'un-Christian and inhuman situation'. Meeting the other on the basis of equality and partnership (encounter) in true Christian love forges solidarity and leads to a common culture of belonging, co-operative partnership and deep human communion which is the Christian ideal for healing divisions caused by excessive individualism, hardened racism, inhuman segregation and other harmful, divisive factors that dismember the social fabric of (American) society. Restoring unity and communion would not be realized and become a true reality apart from encounter with the other in loving solidarity and common belongingness. The author supports and corroborates this Christian vision of his for encounter in solidarity and belonging in communion with apposite teachings from the Scriptures and the catechesis of Pope Francis. What he has to offer is not merely theoretical but extremely practical, and is a good programme for healing divisions and divisiveness in society.

I must acknowledge that I have gained much from reviewing this book and hence would gladly recommend it to our readers.

Peter B. Lobo, OP



THE GOSPEL OF LUKE: A Spiritual and Pastoral Reading

by Pope Francis, NY: Orbis Books, 2021,
 pp. xxii+320, price: US\$ 24.00 (pbk),
 ISBN 978-1-62698-432-5

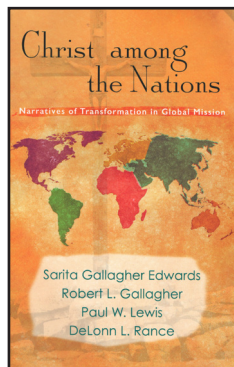
Pope Francis speaks as the chief pastor of the whole Christian community when he expounds the Scriptures in his morning homilies at Holy Mass in Santa Martha and other talks on various different occasions. He teases out the hidden lessons of the Scriptures for daily living with warmth and urgency so that his readers and listeners can be stirred to take

up courageously and live generously the challenges Jesus puts before us. I have always been struck by his down to earth reflections which are very apposite for Christian living – a truly feet-on-the-ground sharing.

This is true of this volume on Luke's Gospel as well. More so because Luke takes up themes that are dear to Pope Francis' heart – love for the poor and those on the peripheries of society, those suffering under the weight of sin, those whose feeble 'cry' for help goes unheard and those troubled and burdened by the cares of life. The Pope clearly and forcefully treats of these important Lucan concerns to call our attention to the infinite mercy and gracious forgiveness of God, his relentless search for those who stray and are in danger of being lost, his unconditional welcome of those who rise and return to him no matter how far they have wandered from his loving care, his *rahamin* and *emet* for all his people for whom his Son has laid down his life and has made an eternal covenant in his blood. God is a God who is faithfulness to his promises and who never abandons or rejects his own, especially the poor, the marginalized and sinners.

While reading Luke's Gospel it would be helpful also to have this book at one's side for it will challenge and help one to feel the real pulse of Luke's words and live their demands in one's life.

Peter B. Lobo, OP



CHRIST AMONG THE NATIONS: Narratives of Transformation in Global Mission

by Sarah Gallagher Edwards, Robert L. Gallagher, et al., NY: Orbis Books, 2021, pp. xxxv+219, price: US\$ 38.00 (pbk), ISBN 978.1.62698.370-0

The book under review, which is volume no. 62 in the American Society of Missiology Series, is co-authored by four Pentecostal mission professors and practitioners who present us with the Full Gospel (formerly known as the Four Square Gospel) understanding of mission. The book comprises four parts, which treat largely in narrative form of teachings, examples and stories taken from the Scriptures, Church history and contemporary, modern day witnesses that serve as testimony to Full Gospel mission. The four parts of the book are entitled: *Christ our Enterprise*, *Christ our Empowerer*, *Christ our Healer*, and *Christ our Hope*. They cover the main moments of the mission vision and preaching of Pentecostal Christianity. There is a strong emphasis placed on the role of Jesus, the Risen Lord, and his life-giving and empowering Holy Spirit in the spread of the faith through mission. As would be expected in a Pentecostal approach, except for baptism the other sacraments do not receive attention. All things considered the authors of this volume offer their readers a fairly comprehensive treatment of mission as understood in the Pentecostal Church(es).

Peter B. Lobo, OP

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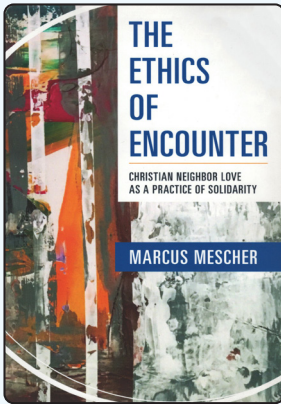
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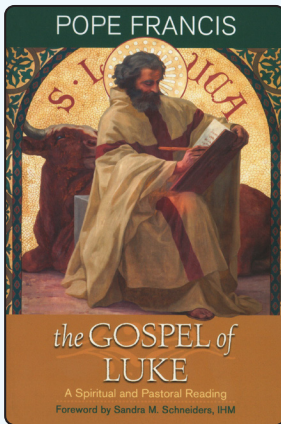
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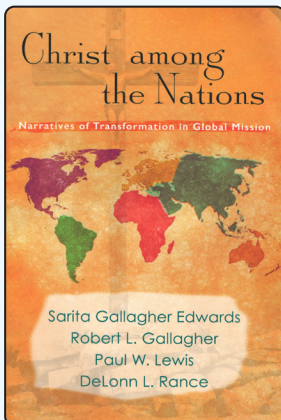
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