



newsletter

Dominican Sisters International



General Assembly 2013



*The New Evangelization and our
Dominican Mission Today*

 OCTOBER 2013

www.dsiop.org



contents

DOMINICAN SISTERS INTERNATIONAL NEWSLETTER • OCTOBER 2013

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Special Edition

DSJ General Assembly 2013

Interviews: DSJ New Coordinating Council

- | | | | | | |
|----|--|----|---|----|---|
| 04 | Sr. Marie Therese Clement OP
DSI International Coordinator. | 11 | Sr. Else-Britt Nilsen OP
Continental Coordinator for
Europe. | 15 | Sr. Marie Constance Tran Thi
Sam OP Continental
Coordinator for Asia- Pacific |
| 09 | Sr. Faustina Jimoh OP
Continental Coordinator for Africa. | 13 | Sr. Viviana Sisack OP
Continental Coordinator for Latin
America and The Caribbean | 17 | Sr. Rose Marie Riley OP
Continental Coordinator for
North America. |

Interview:

- 19 Sr. Celestina Veloso OP New International Promoter of Justice and Peace for DSI.

DSJ General Assebley: Coordinating Reports and Presentations

- | | | | | | |
|----|--|----|---|--|---|
| 23 | Reports: Sr. Fabiola Velásquez OP International Coordinator of DSI | 36 | Presentation: Bro. Eric Salobir OP "Social Communication and DSI" | 49 | Report: Sr. Rose Marie Riley OP, Continental Coordinator for North America. |
| 26 | Presentation: Sr. Luma Khuder OP "The New Evangelization: Biblical Perspective. La Predicación del Reino de Dios" | 38 | Reports: Sr. Michael Mdluli OP, Continental Coordinator for Africa 2010-2013 | <i>Reports: Programs supported by DSJ</i> | |
| 30 | Presentation: Sr. Pétronille Kayiba OP "The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today": Focused on the reality | 41 | Report: Sr. Sara Böhmer OP, Continental Coordinator for Europe 2010-2013 | 52 | Dominican Volunteers International: Sr. Lucía Fernández OP |
| 33 | Presentation: Bro. Bruno Cadoré OP "The new evangelization and the Dominican mission today in response to the recent Synod of Bishops on the new evangelization and the transmission of the faith" | 44 | Report: Sr. Cecile Espenilla OP, Continental Coordinator for Asia -Pacific. | 53 | DSI presence at the UN: Sr. Margaret Mayce OP |
| | | 47 | Report: Sr. Irene Diaz OP, Continental Coordinator for Latin America and The Caribbean. | 57 | Justice and Peace for DSI: Sr. Toni Harris OP |
| | | | | 59 | Photo Gallery |

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VII DOMINICAN SISTERS INTERNATIONAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY

“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”...



*Sr. M. Fabiola Velasquez Maya OP
DSI International Coordinator,
during the period 2007 - 2013*

... was the central theme which sparked our interest during the seven - day meeting at “Il Carmelo” near Rome. Coincidentally it was our Seventh Assembly which lasted seven days, since number seven in the Bible means “fullness.” In fact, celebrating during the week of preparation for the coming of the Holy Spirit gave us a profound experience of the presence of the Lord in our midst. It changed this place into holy ground, the Cenacle where we pray and await with Mary a Pentecost, an outpouring of gifts and fruits. Now, having come back to the places where we carry out our life and mission, we gladly continue to appreciate and try to share -- while recognizing that we are itinerants and pilgrims of the infinite -- the proclamation of the Good News of God: love and mercy.

Those enriching times we lived: privileged days of sisterhood, dialogue, and learning about each other; prayer, reflection, a joint search for direction and decision making: those experiences have opened up future outlooks and paths for our DSI Movement. It was surprising for all the participants to learn who were the newly elected members of the Coordinating Council: Sr. Marie Thérèse Clément (International Coordinator), Rose Marie Riley (Coordinator for North American), Viviana Sisack (Coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean), Marie Constance Tran Thi Sam (Coordinator for Asia and the Pacific) Else-Britt Nilsen (Coordinator for Europe) and

Faustina Jimoh (Coordinator for Africa). Like the Apostles on Pentecost, they returned happily to their countries and mission sites, moved by the light and strength generously received during the days of Assembly. Each one of them may be sure that, despite the distance that separates us, we are of one heart, in full communion, united daily in prayer.

The sisters who worked with me in the Coordinating Council during these past six years and who completed during VII Assembly the mission confided to them show their gratitude by means of this letter for each and every one of the Apostolic Dominican women throughout the world: for their attentive presence, their sisterly warmth and the sense of the Preaching mission that they have shared with them, both in times of enjoyment and when beset by the risks and concerns of their Sisters and of the peoples among whom they live.

Convinced that “gratitude is the memory of the heart” I take advantage once again of this space in our bulletin to thank you for your confidence, your warm presence and collaboration in every moment and circumstance, in the demanding but at the same time interesting and rich mission of the International Coordination of our Movement. With you today, I leave the past to the mercy of God, the future to God’s Providence, and the present to the Love which becomes BREAD RECEIVED, BREAD BROKEN AND BREAD SHARED ON THE ROAD OF LIFE.

Happy travels for all of You as Pilgrims of the Infinite and Happy Bearers of the Word of Life. □



DSI General Assembly 2013 **New Coordinating Council**

Interview

The New DSI International Coordinator

Sr. Marie Therese Clement OP



Sr. Marie Therese Clement the New DSI International Coordinator for the next period 2013-2019

1. How did you know DSI ?

I found out about DSI in the early stages of its development when Sr. Margaret Ormand on her way to Rome to making the final preparations for the opening of DSI's office passed through the Albertinum in Fribourg where I lived at the time. We spoke of the project in which I was very much interested.

2. What was the motivation for accepting your nomination as candidate to DSI Coordinator International?

The mission of DSI has been, from its inception of interest to me and although I had not, until now, been directly involved two of our sisters have benefited from its formation programme. For this, I felt an obligation to respond to the request, besides I realised that some of the work which I have done in the past and some of my experiences would enable me to best perform some of the required tasks of the International Coordinator. Since my Congregation's last General Chapter in 2011, a decision to open up to the outer world in

collaboration with others despite our limitations in human resources and finances, influenced my response to the invitation to be a candidate.

3. What were your first thoughts and emotions when you received this nomination as a new elected DSI International Coordinator? Although you were a little prepared, of course!

Well, I felt humbled, but with a profound sense of gratitude that religious women from across the globe would choose me for this type of leadership. I always knew that my Religious Congregation, with its unique history was part of a wider body within the Church but on that day this intellectual knowledge became experiential knowledge. I felt truly embraced by the Dominican family and supported by all present at the Assembly. Even if I have embraced, to a large extent the unknown work of DSI, I feel that I know the hearts of the women with whom I will be collaborating in our mission of preaching.

4. How does your Congregation live this new nomination? And how do you feel?

Many of my sisters have congratulated me and promised to pray for me. Some of them thanked me for making myself available for such service to the Order. Others, particularly those with whom I live and work are happy and sad at the same time. The general sentiments of the sisters though, border upon a sense of honour to be able to make a gift to DSI despite our limitations in human and financial resources. I refer to it as a "joyful sacrifice."

5. Let's leave aside the roles for a while and share something to know Marie Thérèse better as a person: who is Marie Thérèse?

I was born in the rural community of Babonneau, St. Lucia to Mr. & Mrs. James Clement the 2nd of five children. Greatly influenced by my paternal grandmother, I developed a yearning to know the Lord in my early years. This early yearning nurtured my appetite for the freedom that I have come to know in working with diverse groups



“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”

Interview: Sr. Marie Therese

Clement OP

of people over the years.

I entered Religious Life in the Congregation of Dominican Missionaries of Our Lady of Delivrande in Saint Lucia in 1983 and pronounced my 1st vows in 1986. My initial formation was completed in Saint Lucia while part of my Junior formation was done in France and completed in my home land where I pronounced Final Vows. Shortly thereafter, I was given an assignment as Local Prioress in the community of Sisters residing and in ministry at the Albertinum, Fribourg. During this time I pursued my Bachelors in Psychology at Webster University, Geneva. After serving a three year term in that community, I pursued studies in Pastoral Counselling and Counselling Psychology at Boston University and Central Connecticut State University, USA respectively.

In 2002, my formal student life came to an end when my Congregation entrusted our mission in Saint Lucia under my care. To date, this mission remains the most daunting responsibility given to me as it entailed being at the service of my peers in leadership as the 1st. Local Sister to assume this role since our foundation in Saint Lucia in 1981. To speak the truth, “I was afraid” although I believed that the Lord was with me, and that this mission, despite my imperfections was to be embraced by me as though it were the Lord Himself whom I was embracing that is, not confining him to the limitations of my intellectual knowing, expectations or even my inadequate understanding and expression of love but rather, to embrace Him with the freedom of letting Him be who He is. How could I love my Sisters in this manner?

Now that I am preparing to take up a new mission, I look back not knowing fully if I have been able to love them into the freedom of God, but I humbly recognize their love in freeing me for this service to DSI which I am about to assume.

The past 11 years have been for me, occasions of continuous striving with my Sisters in ministry both at the local level and in international Congregational leadership to find creative and effective ways of expressing the love of God for us and the true freedom that we come to know in the embrace of His love. “For me there is nothing else!” So the question now with regards to DSI is the same: “How can I work with Apostolic Dominican Sisters through DSI to help people all over the world to experience and radically live out the free-

dom of God’s love for us.”

The youth is my favourite population to work with and I have spent the better part of these 11 years listening to them, planning with and for them. The Family & Youth Mentoring & Empowerment Services (FAYMES INC) of whom I am a founder was created to assist the youth in developing their potential and transitioning in the world of higher education and work. So many of them do not know about the love of God; they have instead, experiences of abuse, rejection, brokenness etc. Which leaves them very angry and disappointed in life. I keep saying “if only they all could experience that love.....”

6. Who were you before entering the Dominican Congregation?

Well, a curious youth searching for idealistic answers to the issues that surrounded me;

Carefree youth, enjoying the privileges of living without much responsibility except for good school grades and one’s physical safety.

A youth with a healthy appetite for adventure and fun.

7. In what way has the context of Saint Lucia where you grew up influenced your way of seeing reality and your thought? And your way of being Dominican?

Life in a small island developing country, especially one, at the time of my childhood and early youth, spiced with ideas of independence from its colonial structures, raised me with keen interest in people and the development of their capacity to excel beyond the boundaries set by colonial governance. My awareness of such political independence directed my craving for greater freedom than could be had in this honourable socio-political venture. My restless search found resonance in the Dominican Order when I encountered the Dominican Missionaries of Our Lady of Delivrande who appeared to have understood and embraced the strife for human autonomy and the freedom to shape one’s destiny with the assistance of another, should that be available, but certainly not under another’s control. I discovered the Sisters’ founding stories to be fascinating: The Congregation’s history intertwined with Martinique’s history where the Congregation began. The idea of picking up broken people without a

“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”



“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”

Interview: Sr. Marie Therese

Clement OP

name, treated as a commodity for years, and believing in them, teaching them and sharing their most prized possessions with them: “their identity!” was a “mind blower” for me. My whole life seemed to have been converging into that moment of realisation of who a Dominican Missionary of Our Lady of Delivrande is. I wanted to be that! I wanted to join that more than a century old long history of giving an individual name to the nameless and sharing of my identity as God’s beloved with others, that they too would claim their identity in Christ.

Later on, I learnt through my formation how all of this experience came together in Scripture and I was able to trace and interpret God’s hand in my life; but it is this experience of the interconnected human and the freedom of the Divine that have brought me to where I am today.

8. Describe Saint Lucia, the place where you were born?

Viewed today as a choice resort destination for northerners, Saint Lucia has grown out of its shy and hidden innocence to join many developing nations in a globalized economy where the strength of one’s voice is determined by the market share that they command in modern industry, sort-after services and finance. This status on the international scene carries both benefits and serious threats to the island and especially its people.

Many opportunities for personal and professional development have opened up to all classes of persons and around the world, Saint Lucians are taking their places in international leadership among others working for the advancement of humanity. We can boast, for example, of the honour of having birthed and nurtured two Nobel Laureates, “Twin Peaks of Excellence,” as the National Archives of Saint Lucia calls them: Sir William Arthur Lewis and Honourable Derek Alton Walcott in Economics and Literature respectively. Like the twin pistons, internationally known Saint Lucian land marks, Sir Arthur Lewis and Honourable Derek Walcott stand tall as heroes pointing the way to how high we as a nation can rise if we want to. We bow our heads though, in humility at the same time pondering ways of constructively engaging our youth to whom the prized vision of human integrity and freedom seem not to have been passed, as many in their brokenness have

not sufficiently developed the fear of God, and know nothing or little of God’s love.

Saint Lucia in the time of my early youth, was a small place, a pristine place, a delightfully complex texture of cultures (food, language, dance, customs, rituals, etc.), residing in a hospitable people who dreamed of excellence in their reliance on God’s Providence. These aspirations were often heard in expressions (translated from Creole) like “if it pleases God; were it not for God, I would take things into my own hands” which built resilience, community spirit and maintained our focus on human life. Today, I think that we are no less concerned about human life, but the ways of caring for one another are probably less self-effacing, shorter term and more protective of our personal space and interests.

So Saint Lucia strives to maintain balance and walk tall in the wide open spaces of globalization while taking care to tirelessly attend to both international concerns which play out domestically as well as our own local issues.

9. Your curriculum vitae seems very rich and interesting...Your life is full of experiences of study and work: tell us the experiences you feel have most affected you, and that have helped you be what you are today...

I do not know if I could speak to a single experience which has shaped me, the events and opportunities in my life have all worked together in weaving the colourful fabric of the person whom I have become. I think that much can be deduced from the aforementioned things concerning my experiences, aspirations and interests. I note though, that my encounters with people are never accidental and that they are all part of God’s plan, that I am elated to wake up to each day. Should there be any common element of fashioning in my life I would think it is people in their ordinary day to day lives who touch my life.

10. If you were to think about someone who has especially contributed to your growth as a person and as a Dominican, to whom should we say thanks?

This person would be Sr. Aimee Gabaloui, in Religion Sr. Marie of the Incarnation, who, during her tenure as General Prioress, welcomed me into

Dominican Sisters International General Assembly 2013



“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”

Interview: Sr. Marie Therese

Clement OP

the Congregation and believed in. She nurtured me and gave me opportunities to grow, experience some of my limitations, push beyond them and to remain accountable to the trust placed and investments made in me.

11. You have worked on several occasions as the person in charge, and I believe this is not a simple mission: what have you learned about human relations during the experiences of leadership? In what way can these experiences help you in the commitment to DSI?

People wish to feel good about what they invest in; they like to know that an exercise is worth their while and they like a general sense of direction. I have learned also not to take myself too seriously and that things work out with some hard work, involvement of persons concerned, openness to people and other realities but certainly without my fussing.

12. Which of your gifts, do you think will be most important to share in DSI, so that it may go forward in a positive way and produce good results?

I think that the gift of openness to others is primary to accomplishing the work of DSI since its mission could only be realised as a team effort.

13. And what do you ask of the others; that is, how can we help you in your ministry with Dominic Sisters International? What do you feel you need ?

I think that I need support, willingness to genuinely dialogue, work together - sometimes going the extra mile in accomplishing a set task, humour and some time and people for fun activities.

14. Is there anything that worries you in this new mission?

Not really. For a while there will be the language barrier to be worked through, but this shall be taken in strides. Many of the members of DSI have promised me their support on which I am counting. Many of them are much more experienced in Religious life than I and so I hope to receive guidance if I need it.



Hna. Marie Therese together with The DSI New Continental Coordinators

15. How have you lived DSI until now as a Dominican sister? How did DSI seem to you from outside? How do you feel your perspective is different today?

As I mentioned earlier, I knew of DSI from its early beginnings. My Congregation has benefited from the formation for formators when it was held in England. I have kept myself informed through the website of developments in DSI over the years. Now that I am positioned on the inside, what I see for now, (and maybe that will change a bit), is the great opportunity that we have to impact our world and to make a difference in people's lives wherever we are on mission.

16. The DSI movement is like an 18 year old adolescent: what does it still need in order to grow and mature from your point of view?

I am not sure about the extent to which I can adequately respond to this question although I am sure, from my experience of human organizations, there must be at least somethings wanting. I think that I would rather allow these to emerge and with the Coordinating Council decide how best to work them through.

17. Do you want to say something to the member Congregations of DSI?

Yes, that it is indeed a great privilege to have

“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”



“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”



Sr. Marie Therese Clement, the New DSI International Coordinator, together to Sr. M. Fabiola Velasquez the last DSI International Coordinator.

been called to serve in this capacity. I look forward to growing in my understanding of the Church and experiencing through the different Congregations how God visits and stays with His people.

18. The last Assembly charged you to carry out not alone, of course the four objectives. What do you think?

I think that these objectives are honourable and the Coordinating Council and I will do our best. The objectives may not all be achievable at the same rate, or even with the same levels of success, but I am sure that with the help of God we will make some significant strides.

19. The office of DSI is in Santa Sabina, the house of Sabina and Dominic. How do you see this?

What a privilege for me to have that experience of working closely with our brothers in a historic place and the seat of leadership of the Order. I look forward to learning more about our Dominican life and preaching and hopefully bring what is unique to Dominican life in my part of the world to Santa Sabina. □

Thank you, MarieTherese, for this information. I wish you the best in your new mission.

DSI-Santa Sabina, Rome, June

DSI International Coordinator's Calendar

September 7: General Promotors Meeting, Rome - Santa Sabina.

September 15: Meeting of the International Bureau of the Dominican Family, Rome - Santa Sabina.

October 27-30: Annual Meeting of DSC, Weber Center, Adrian, MI - USA

October 18-20: USMID Council Meeting, Rome, San Sisto

November 10-18: DSI Coordinating Council Meeting, Rome - Santa Sabina

November 23: General Promotors Meeting, Rome - Santa Sabina. (in the morning)

November 23: DVI Board Meeting, Rome-Santa Sabina (in the afternoon)

December 28-30: USMID Permanent Formation Meeting, Rome, Passionistis Convent.



DSJ General Assembly 2013 **New Coordinating Council**

Interview

The New Continental Coordinator for Africa **Sr. Faustina Jimoh OP**



Sr. Faustina Jimoh OP

1. Could you please introduce yourself?

I am Sr. Faustina Jimoh, OP, a Dominican Sister of St. Catherine of Siena in northern Nigeria. I am from Kabba, Kogi State in the middle belt region of Nigeria. I was born on March 7, 1969 and the fourth in a family of six children. I had my primary and secondary education in my home region and also had a third level education before I joined the convent. I joined the Dominican Sisters on February 1, 1990 as a postulant, made my first vows on December 1, 1992 and perpetual vows on November 25, 2000. In the years after my first vows, I had some training in pastoral ministry, evangelization, information technology and communications and lastly in theology.

2. What is your current mission in your Congregation?

At the moment, I am Prioress General of our Congregation, serving my second term which by God's grace will end on October 31st with the installation of our new leadership team. I have also just finished serving on the leadership of the Nigeria Conference of Women Religious as vice president of the conference.

3. What aspect has impacted you most of the last Assembly?

The aspect that impacted on me most at the just concluded assembly is the whole thrust on new evangelization. It was for me an awakening call to us as Dominican women to seek new ways and methods of expressing our charism of preaching in order to make it relevant to our world today. In short, I call it a new way of 'packaging the gospel' so as to 'attract customers.' The input on the use of modern technology was particularly interesting, I think it is a good prospect to explore in this new evangelisation because that would be very relevant to today's world.

Another aspect is the opportunity to hear the stories of our sisters who are ministering in very difficult and hostile situations. The atmosphere of solidarity which was created at the assembly is a great encouragement for those in these situations.

4. What makes you happy in the new role that you take on DSI as Continental Coordinator for Africa?

I believe my new role as continental coordinator for Africa will avail me the opportunity to be more aware and in touch with our different realities as Dominican women across the continent and thereby give me the basis to foster collaboration and solidarity for our common mission as preachers. The needs in our continent are great. We can do so much by scratching the ground in our tiny corners of the continent where our individual congregations are planted but we can do much more if our resources are harnessed and properly channelled towards meeting the needs of our congregations and our continent.

I am also happy with the opportunity I will have to learn from the experiences of my fellow coordinators from other continents.

5. Who or what can help you in your new ministry with DSI?

I will find very helpful the openness to share

"The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today"



“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”

Interview: Sr. Faustina

Jimoh OP



ideas, resources, etc, among ourselves either as Coordinating Council members or even across our congregations in the different continents. I will appreciate sufficient, prompt and clear communications that will assist me in carrying out my responsibilities as I should. Finally, I would be happy to know that we are working together as friends and Sisters in the spirit of the ‘joyful friar’ – St. Dominic.

6. What do you expect about the work of the Coordinating Council for the next three years?

I expect that we will be able to carry out the mandate which the assembly has given to us in the next three years so as to foster the growth of the DSI Movement.

7. Which are the main challenges and resources in your Continent that you will bring to the DSI level?

The challenges I see in my continent which I shall bring to DSI level is to bring to the awareness of DSI how much poverty and deprivation in many areas the people of our continent have to live with. When I speak of poverty, I speak of it in a broader sense than just not having enough to eat or drink but also in the sense of the lack of opportunities that could enhance the total well being of the human person. For instance there is the issue of lack of opportunity to access qualitative education by many poor African children who have great potentials but just haven’t got the opportunity to bring that potential to birth; there is the issue of lack of or poor health care delivery which leaves people dying of illnesses they could

have been cured of should such facilities exist.

There is the huge issue of trafficking in persons for the purpose of cheap labour or sex trade, what we might call the modern day slave trade; there is equally the huge issue of security challenges in many parts of Africa due either to political, religious or ethnic/tribal sentiments; and also the whole area of irresponsible governance in many African countries where those in authority are concerned only about what benefits them and have no agenda of any kind that promotes and protects the rights of citizens. Being a huge continent, there is also the challenge of distance and of language.

On the other hand, in terms of resources, Africa is very rich in both human and natural resources, a wealth which if fully utilized is enough to cater for every African. Many Africans are experts in different fields and are utilizing them both within and outside the continent although their numbers may not be compared to many more who do not have the opportunity to thrive.

Also each country in Africa can boast of some natural resources which could be accessed to improve the economic life of the people. Generally, Africans are very warm and welcoming, full of life and ready to celebrate life even in the midst of difficulties. The sound of the drum wherever it is heard, is a call to the African to celebrate. I bring this vivaciousness from Africa to DSI.

8. In your opinion how can DSI help your continent?

The sense of solidarity that we already feel in our belonging to DSI is in itself a great help. In addition, I think DSI can help us further by providing us with the resources both human and material that we need to prepare ourselves adequately for our ministry of witnessing in the various situations that we find ourselves. This preparation could be in the area of intellectual and spiritual formation of our members; assisting with setting up projects especially those that could help alleviate the sufferings of the less privileged whom we serve; helping to strengthen the link which we already have with Dominicans of other continents through our membership in DSI, by way of exchange programmes where possible, etc. □



DSJ General Assembly 2013 ***New Coordinating Council***

Interview

The New Continental Coordinator for Europe

Sr. Else-Britt Nilsen OP



Sr. Else-Britt Nilsen OP

1. Could you please introduce yourself?

I entered the Congregation of the Dominicans de Notre Dame de Grâce in the early 1970s. It is a French-Norwegian Congregation and I was the first one to do my novitiate in Norway. Part of my theological formation was in France, where I had the great privilege of having Fr. Hervé Le-grand OP, of the Institut Catholique de Paris as my supervisor in ecumenical studies.

I earned my Master of Sociology and my Doctorate in Theology from the University of Oslo, Norway. For five years, I was the editor of St. Olav, the Norwegian Catholic periodical. I have participated in various research projects as well as authored several books on theological and sociological issues. I have experienced the richness of collaboration with various religious in the US and Asia.

2. What is your current mission / ministry in your Congregation?

I have been the Prioress of my Congregation since 2003. I am also a professor of Systematic Theology at the Norwegian School of Theology in

Oslo, and currently the president of the Christian Council of Norway.

3. What aspect of the last assembly has impacted you most?

The gift of Dominican sisterhood was tangible. Our vitality, youth and vocation as women preachers is remarkable. Evangelization is truly at the heart of our Dominican vocation. The Assembly is a unique promoter for networking across borders and continents.

4. What makes you happy in the new role that you take on in the DSI as Continental Coordinator for Europe?

As the continental coordinator for Europe, I am happy to be given the privilege of sharing to the Dominican family the hopes, fears, joys and dreams of Dominican women in Europe.

The DSI is genuinely engaged in the future of Dominican women. I see the DSI as a valuable instrument for promoting this project, and it is my joy to be a part of this important mission.

5. Who or what can help you in your new ministry with DSI?

My predecessor, Sister Sara Böhmer, introduced the idea of organizing a young sisters' council in Europe. This council of younger sisters, which I hope could be realized in a not too distant future, would surely be a helping hand in my ministry with DSI.

I also count on the support of the sisters in my own congregation, as well as on all Dominican sisters in Europe; not forgetting that we are part of the world-wide Dominican family.

6. What do you expect from the work of the Coordinating Council for the next three years?

I have great expectations for the follow up of

"The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today"



“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”

Interview: Sr Else-Britt Nilsen OP

the work that has already been done. I hope that we shall be able to engage more Dominican congregations actively across the world as there is the urgency of strengthening our Dominican mission of evangelization.

7. What are the challenges and resources of the continent that you represent in the Council?

Europe is the bearer of the great Dominican tradition. This may be a temptation to look to the past, but Europe has got a multicultural, multi-religious and secularized profile over the last two generations, which was previously unknown. This poses both challenges and resources which have so far been underexploited positively. This will be an important field of Dominican endeavor for the future.

8. In your opinion, how can the DSI help your continent?

I see the DSI as a meeting ground for the five continents. Each continent has its own particular wisdom from which we can learn from. The sharing of Dominican life and mission from the different parts of the world could bring new perspectives and dynamism to our own mission in Europe.

As part of the Dominican family, I rely on the support and encouragement of the DSI on our present and future endeavors. □



DSI General Assembly's Details

PARTICIPANTS TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND ITS ORGANIZATION.

- 82 Prioress participants
- 9 delegates of Prioresses
- 8 speakers
- 10 simultaneous translators
- 7 people on staff
- 39 countries
- 5 languages translated



DSI General Assembly 2013 ***New Coordinating Council***

Interview

The New Continental Coordinator for Latin America and The Caribbean **Sr. Viviana Sisack OP**



Sr. Viaviana Sisack OP

1. Could you please tell us something about yourself?

I was born in Santiago del Estero, a province of northern Argentina and I'm the second of four brothers and sisters. The Convent of St. Dominic was very close to my house; there I met the Dominican Family in its various branches, laity, brothers, sisters. I was a law student when I decided to enter the Congregation in April of 1987. I made my first religious profession on February 17, 1990. I studied to be a professor of Theology in the University School of Theology in Mar del Plata, Argentina and then the Bachelor's and Licentiate degrees with a specialization in Biblical Theology in the Angelicum in Rome. Upon my return to Argentina and until 2006 when I was elected provincial, I taught in secondary schools, superior institutes or universities. I also worked actively in diocesan pastoral planning commissions, Biblical ministry, vocation ministry, on the national commission of Justice and Peace. In my congregation

I have served as animator of vocation ministry, provincial counselor, novice mistress...

2. What is your present mission, ministry in your congregation?

At present I am in my second period as provincial prioress of the Latin American Province (Argentina, Brazil, Peru, Uruguay) and I'm on the formation team.

3. What aspect of the last assembly has impacted you most?

This was the first time that I participated in a DSI Assembly, and it was important for me because it allowed me to know a little more and from within about what DSI is and the magnitude of our movement.

4. What makes you happy about the new task you are taking on as Continental Counselor for Latin America and the Caribbean?

I think the objectives of DSI are a real challenge. I am happy and enthusiastic to join with the other sisters of the new Coordinating Council on the road opened by our predecessors, knowing that there is still a long way to go so that our identity as Dominican women—preaching women—may be ever clearer and more deeply rooted. There's a lot of work needed to achieve a greater collaboration between Dominican congregations and the whole Dominican Family, that may permit us to join forces and efforts, to avoid the dispersion of projects, energies and resources, and that may achieve a voice that's audible more for its unanimity than for its potency, at the service of the Gospel, in the promotion of justice, peace, the integrity of creation.

5. What or who can help you in your new ministry with DSI?

"The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today"



“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”

Interview

Sr. Viviana Sisack OP



Sr. Viviana Sisack OP together to the members of The New DSI Coordinating Council.

Undoubtedly, being and working as a team is what will allow us to offer this service in DSI. I also count on the support of the sisters of our continental coordinating team and that of my congregation.

6. What are your hopes for the work of the Coordinating Council for the next three years?

Nothing more nor less than to keep working on the achievement of the important objectives of DSI, seeking to involve all the Dominican congregations, especially those which are or feel distanced from the movement. For that, the integration and communion among those of us who form the coordinating council and the elaboration of a plan for this work will be important.

7. What are the challenges and the resources of your continent that are going to contribute to the Council?

Undoubtedly, my first contribution will be the particular Latin American view, marked by the context, by the experience, the living faith and the theological reflection of the Church of Latin American and the Caribbean, and of religious life, and of women, with their seeking and their options.

In addition, Dominican women in Latin America and the Caribbean count on a confederation (CODALC) which has a coordination-animation team, with policies, priorities and defined actions

that can enrich and facilitate the task of the DSI Council.

8. In your opinion, how can DSI help your continent?

In all these years DSI has greatly supported the formation programs of the sisters, workshops of praxis and preaching, seminars on justice and peace, as well as the project of solidarity with Haiti, and I think it will continue to do so, since through them we respond to the needs of our brothers and sisters and the goals of DSI are concretized.

I hope that we can also work to better integrate within the life of the Family the sisters who, for different reasons, have not participated much in the initiatives of the movement. Sin duda, ser y trabajar como equipo es lo que me y nos permitirá prestar este servicio en DSI. Cuento además con el apoyo de las hermanas del equipo coordinador de mi continente y de mi Congregación. □





DSJ General Assembly 2013 ***New Coordinating Council***

Interview

The New Continental Coordinator for Asia-Pacific

Sr. Marie Constance Tran Thi Sam OP



Sr. Marie Constance Tran Thi Sam OP

1. Could you please introduce yourself.

I am a Vietnamese. I have belonged to the Congregation of Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine of Siena, Thanh Tam, Xuan Loc, Vietnam since 1964.

2. What is your current mission/ ministry in your Congregation ?

I have just finished my second term as Prioress of the Motherhouse. In our recent General Chapter, I was appointed to be Adviser to accompany the newly founded Congregation of Dominican Sisters of Mother of God in Bac Ninh diocese (North of Vietnam).

3. What aspect of the last assembly has impacted you most?

I had been blessed to be able to attend three other Assemblies in 1998, 2001 and 2004 as Prioress of my Congregation. Each Assembly has helped to deepen my Dominican identity more concretely. But this Assembly is more important to me because I have been affirmed to be Coordinator for Asia-Pacific Region. I was so touched

by the trust, the solidarity, the support that all the sisters present have shown to us especially at the conclusion rite when each of us as Coordinator has pronounced what we will bring back to our Region. Such was very moving moment !

4. What makes you happy in the new role that you take on DSI as Continental Council for Asia-Pacific ?

I consider this opportunity as such an honor and privilege that I can serve the International Dominican Sisters, especially my sisters in the Asia-Pacific Region.

I am overjoyed because I will have chance to learn from the Coordinating Council how to work as an international team, to experience the sense of belonging to one family and the sense of "at-homeness" in order to promote our Dominican spirituality.

Certainly I will be enriched by the experiences of the sisters from different cultures with historical/social/geographical contexts.

5. Who or what can help you in your new ministry with DSI ?

" The mercy of God and of the sisters " as I had requested on the day when I received the religious habit /made profession as Dominican sister years ago. More concretely, I have been assured for strong support by Sister Cecille Espenilla, my previous Coordinator, and all the Prioresses/ Representatives of the Asia-Pacific Region. The Prioress and the sisters of my Congregation are always accompanying me in this new mission too. The last but not least important, it is the Coordinating Council that will help me to fulfill this great responsibility.

6. What do you expect about the work of the Coordinating Council for the next three

"The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today"



“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”

Interview: Sr. Marie Constance

Tran Thi Sam OP



seniors who serve as the anchors for the juniors by their valuable experiences in consecrated and apostolate life, together with many juniors with their youthful enthusiastic energy, will be truly Evangelizers for New Evangelization in Asia.

8. In your opinion how can DSI help your continent ?

We do need DSI support our common programs particularly the Leadership and Formation for Formators Courses/workshops; theological formation for the young sisters . □

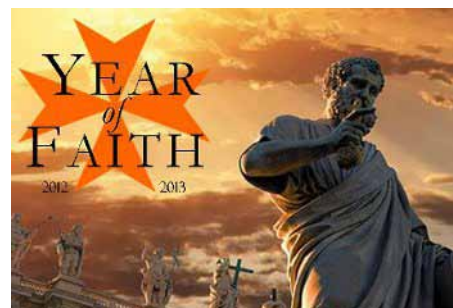


years ?

I do believe that with God’s grace, and the continuous support of the global Dominican sisters, the Coordinating Council can be able to fulfill what the DSI Assembly has entrusted. We will have time to share our experiences with joy and sorrows, with hope and anxieties, successes and fears... in order to have a better understanding of one another, and of course, we will be enriched by moments to be together as sisters in a family! I think that’s very important !

7.What are the challenges and resources of a continent that you provide in the Council ?

In spite of many challenges of the region with 61% of the world population while Catholics are minority just 3% among many major religions besides all kinds of social problems; we still have hope because we are the people with strong sense of the sacred and of transcendence, with creativity, strong bond of family relationship. Our Dominican sisters in Asia-Pacific region, with the





DSJ General Assembly 2013 ***New Coordinating Council***

Interview

The New Continental Coordinator for North America

Sr. Rose Marie Riley OP



Sr. Rose Marie Riley OP

1. In the last Assembly you were re-elected as Continental Coordinator for North America. How do you feel to be the continuity from the former Council to the new one?

It was a true privilege to serve on the DSI Council, 2010-2013. I was the only new councilor and Sisters Fabiola, Sara, Cecile, Irene and Michael were very generous mentors. I hope to share whatever may be helpful as Sisters Marie Therese, Faustina, Elsi, Constance, Viviana and I form the new council. Three years of experience is a short time. In this new term we will all be learning together as we address new issues and build mutual relationships.

2. What aspect of the last Assembly has impacted you most?

During our May Assembly I was very aware of our growth in unity and solidarity as members of DSI. As a maturing organization we have some very real challenges: how do we become a legal entity? How might we strengthen our financial position? All of this, of course, is for the sake of

the mission. The Assembly participants strongly affirmed the mission and goals of DSI in spite of the challenges. I was energized by the affirmation given to the future of DSI. All of us see what DSI has done to bring Dominican Sisters together on a global level. We are all enriched and blessed by the collaborative projects and the deepening of relationships. Our history of 18 years has given us reason to meet the challenges because we believe so strongly in the mission.

I also appreciated the way we organized morning prayer. The small group faith sharing allowed us to connect on a deeper level. It was the perfect way to begin every day.

3. What makes you happy in the role that you take again on DSI as Continental Coordinator for North America?

In this position I have met many dedicated Dominican women across North America. I am humbled by the many ways that Dominicans are preaching. United we can do so much. I am always open to ideas and ways of making global connections.

4. Now you have more experience, who or what can help you in your ministry with DSI?

I know that Sr. Fabiola will help all of us in this transition period. She has worked very hard for DSI and, in the months ahead, will continue to mentor Sister Marie Therese Clement and all of us on the new council.

5. What do you expect about the work of the Coordinating Council for the next three years?

We will follow through on the recommendations from the Assembly. The Commission that will be formed to study the development of a legal identity will be assisting us as we look at that issue. We will also be looking at ways to strength-

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“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”

Interview: Sr. Rose Marie

Riley OP



Sr. Rose Marie Riley was re-elected as Continental Coordinator for North America for the next period 2013-2016

en our financial situation. All of this, of course, for the sake of the DSI mission. As a new Council it will be important for us to establish mutual relationships so that we will work well together and support one another.

6. What are the challenges and resources of a continent that you provide in the Council?

I would say a great challenge is the aging of our congregations. However, with that fact there is also a growing awareness of our vitality for the mission and a wisdom that comes through lived experience. We are Dominican women who thrive on collaboration and learning. We also have strong belief in our young women. We believe that, with our international Dominican family, we can be

the powerful preaching that Dominic established for the Church and world.

7. In your opinion how can DSI help your continent?

DSI keeps us connected to the global Dominican sisterhood. If the DSI Coordinator can travel to our DSC meetings, there is a visible connection. We want to know about our sisters around the world and any ways that we might collaborate with them for the mission. Some of our sisters are in very life-threatening situations. We may not be able to directly assist but we can be united in prayerful support. We want to know one another's stories.

During the DSI Assembly, members from the other continents wanted to know more about the CDF assessment of LCWR. Their interest and supportive response was a blessing to the North American members. □





DSJ General Assembly 2013

Interview

The New International Promoter for Justice and Peace for DSI

Sr. Celestina Veloso OP



Sr. Celestina Veloso recently nominated as International Promoter for Justice and Peace for DSI

1. Could you please tell us something about yourself?

I am a Dominican of the Anunciata, Brazilian. In my congregation this year of 2013 we are celebrating 40 years of the presence of the Anunciata in Brazil. We are a missionary congregation present in 20 countries, and we will soon be in Vietnam as well. Of the 40 years we have been in Brazil, I have been there 31 years since I entered in 1982, a pathway with footsteps and a path to follow. I come from Minas Gerais, I was born in Montes Claros, a city in the north of this State, where there are many rural communities with little presence of priests, but social ministries are organized and, in spite of difficulties, we kept alive the CEB's (Base Christian Communities), a Nucleus of the Conference of Religious of Brazil where we feel like family and always support each

other. Before coming to Rome in the year 2012 I lived in the city of Governador Valladares where I acted as a social worker in a Therapeutic Community, ADQF (Welcoming Association for Chemical Dependents and Families). I worked with the families and the 35 adolescents, youth and fathers of families who come to this community for treatment of drug addiction, seeking sobriety and a new meaning for their lives. I was very happy because it is a challenging and at the same time gratifying mission. Because of its ties to the National Ministry of Sobriety and the Brazilian Federation of Therapeutic Communities (FEBRACT) it was possible to specialize in Chemical Dependency.

I was also committed to parish catechesis, leadership formation of the Diocesan communities, taping programs for the Diocesan radio, Diocesan advisor for Youth Ministry (PAMEN); I was part of the Diocesan team of Vocation Animation Service (SAV). I was part of the diocesan team of Social Ministries, preparing for the fifth Brazilian Social Week which will take place September 2 to 5th of this year with the theme: "A New State, Pathway for a new society of Living Well" and the slogan: The State: for What and for Whom? For me the demonstrations in Brazil at this moment are a concretization of the reflections we've had as we prepare for this 5th Social Week.

In January 2010 I participated in the XIII Assembly of CODALC (Confederation of Dominican Women of Latin American and the Caribbean) which took place in Jundial-San Pablo in Brazil. There I was elected Promoter of Justice and Peace of CODALC for three years. In the face of the post-earthquake outcry from Haiti, we decided to initiate a project of a mission in Los Cacaos, and in that period I accompanied the community of sisters and lay women who were giving their lives for the benefit of our Haitian brothers and sisters, carrying out the challenging and beautiful mission.

(Please see the interview I gave to DSI March-

"The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today"



“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”

Interview

Sr. Celestina Veloso OP

April 2011)

2. What was your last mission or ministry in your congregation?

From 2007 to 2011 I had the mission of animation as Provincial Delegate in Brazil; there we form a Delegation that belongs to the Province of Saint Catherine of Siena which has its seat in Oviedo, Spain.

3. What has most impacted you in the last DSI Assembly, in which you were invited to participate?

Many aspects impacted me, such as: knowing DSI through personal experience the diversity of congregations united by the same charism of our Father Saint Dominic the diversified reality of the continents the joint effort to carry on this inherited charism for almost 800 years

Being there as an invitee supposed that I would be listening, attentive to all that was shared and discussed, and the decisions made, having in mind these three years, until the next Assembly. It was an opportunity to know many sisters, and I will soon be getting in touch with their congregations to see how we can together maintain the flame enkindled for justice and peace.

The courage of Sister Maria Teresa in presenting herself to assume the mission of Coordination of DSI in these times of so many challenges. The democratic process of the election. To perceive the directions that DSI is taking upon becoming a civil and ecclesiastic juridical entity, what it will mean to maintain it in the midst of the economic crisis everywhere.

4. What is that gladdens you in the new task you are assuming in DSI as International Promoter of Justice and Peace?

It makes me happy to know that I am not alone. The Lord walks with us; Saint Dominic is our great protector, since he himself promised to be with his family, more useful than he was when he lived in his times. We are a family and I know that I will be able to count on my sisters and my brothers, as I have already experienced. I am confident and I will, together with others, make my little contribution from my way of being, from our spiritual-



ity and our options. I am still surprised that I said yes, since I never thought of assuming such a mission. Contemplating Mary in the mystery of the Annunciation, her humility, her confidence and availability, I accepted the risk of assuming this mission. Now I live in Rome and I will soon assume the service with which they have entrusted me. I am conscious of the responsibility; I feel small, but I place everything in the hands of the Lord, of our Mother the Virgin, and of Saint Dominic, since we are only instruments in his hands, it is He who does the work. There are challenges in learning languages, and I have already begun; but I think there are other more important elements in this service. I am open to learn, and to make my small contribution; I come to join so many brothers and sisters, lay men and women who are now in this struggle, promoting justice and peace in so many distinct realities throughout the world.

5. What or who can help you in your new ministry in DSI?

I am a woman who likes to work with a team. What I don't know I will ask those who are close to me and know more than I. So I will ask for help. I also believe that without prayer we cannot do anything. This is about a mission, a service. We form a team, we have a Sister coordinator, Sister Maria Teresa, also Sister Lucia of DVI, we have other promoters in the continents and in the con-

Dominican Sisters International General Assembly 2013



“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”

Interview

Sr. Celestina Veloso OP

gregations, we can mutually animate each other since we're united by the same charism and we are all serving for a limited time and it's all about each one doing her best in the mission entrusted to her, as have those who preceded us. I count on the support of Sister Toni for any doubt, and since Sister Fabiola is going to be in the office until December, I know that I can count on her collaboration and support as she has done until now. I think I will continue to have Blanca as a secretary to help me with translations and with secretarial work.

6. What do you hope for from the work of Justice and Peace for the next three years?

To be a link for communion. To take into account what was discussed in the last Assembly. To make a plan for the activities, taking into account the scarcity of resources. DSI is part of the great Dominican Family and together with the Promoter of Justice and Peace we can, as Dominican women, join our forces, for there is great darkness and we are called to illuminate. May our actions be an attempt to respond to the challenges relative to Justice and Peace, since the world cries for peace, but it cannot come without justice, without all peoples and nations assuming the values of the Reign of God and unless we concretize it in our realities, in the today of our history. We who want a better world are many; that's why we need to unite to save our planet, to commit ourselves to the defense of life, to dignity and to the care of creation. We cannot be silent in the face of injustice, waste, exclusion, and of all that goes against the Gospel, the Good News of Jesus. He has come so that “all may have life in abundance.” (John 10: 10)

7. What are the challenges and the resources of your previous mission as Promoter of Justice and Peace of CODALC that you will contribute to the future role that you will exercise?

For me the experience of those three years as Promoter of Justice and Peace was very gratifying, first I would like to thank each sister who formed part of the team in those years 2010-2013, when we met we were comfortable and each one could express herself freely with a lot of confidence and sisterhood. I think the most concrete thing for CODALC was maintaining in those three years

the Project Human Dignity in Los Cacaos, Haiti. We didn't stop at talking about Justice and Peace, but rather we concretized it in the mission that was carried out by the sisters and lay women together. Those suffering sisters and brothers: so many barefoot children, so many sick people, so many unemployed youth, so many deficiencies, and at the same time a longsuffering and hopeful countenance. All of us who experienced that were shocked by the harsh reality that our Haitian brothers and sisters live without water, without schools, without decent housing, without the minimum necessities for living with dignity. That's where our anxiety and indignation came from at the sight of so much waste, consumerism. So many good things are put in the garbage, everything is disposable, and it has to be thrown out. All this shows the great lack of conscience and solidarity. On the other hand it was only possible to maintain the project economically thanks to the solidarity of the sisters, brothers, the NGO Verapaz Action, the laity and DSI; without ever forgetting the disposition of the people who dedicated their time there, putting their gifts and their lives at the service of the Kingdom and the defense of life.

With regard to what I would like to contribute, I think that for that mission some aspects are very important: seeking dialog, recognizing errors, learning with them and from or with others; working as a team without expecting individual protagonisms; respecting each culture and reality, discovering in each people, each continent the wealth of multiculturalism; establishing a communications network, animating and promoting the initiatives of the sisters who make the Kingdom grow; putting ourselves on the way of the discipleship of Jesus each day, making small gestures of solidarity, of closeness, of simplicity like those of Jesus, Saint Dominic and our founders; I want to have attentive ears, open and sensitive eyes and heart in order to hear the cry of those who suffer here in Rome and throughout the world, because their basic rights are denied due to institutionalized injustice and the human heart closed by profit, the bad distribution of income, political and economic corruption. With confidence in the Lord, knowing that He goes ahead and that each of us from our way of being and acting we are making our contribution so that the Kingdom of God may be established in this world.

“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”



“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”

Interview

Sr. Celestina Veloso OP

8. In your opinion how can DSI help you in your new position?

As a Dominican of the Annunciation I am part of DSI, the mission I'm going to carry out is in the name of DSI. Therefore I count on the support and the prayers of all our Dominican Family.

With regard to the office, I hope to be part of a good team, where the sisters, the laywomen who serve as secretaries, and the Justice and Peace Promoter of the Order all collaborate, since we work in a very special place of the General Curia, a place where we know our Holy Father Dominic was often present, and I think that he continues here since one breathes his presence. Each day before coming in I present his sons and daughters to him, I ask him for new vocations, and for fidelity to his legacy and his charism, the search for communion, for truth so as to continue being witnesses and missionaries of the Kingdom and proclaimers of the Word.

Like Pope Francis, I also ask for your prayers so that I may be enlightened in my mission and so that I may know how to face challenges with audacity and wisdom, seeking always the common good, fraternity and that I may soon learn the languages I need so much, and finally I want you to know that I am at your disposition and service. □



YEAR OF FAITH 2012
2013

DSI General Assembly's Comment

Dear DSI

**CONGRATULATIONS AND THANK
YOU FOR ALL YOU HAVE DONE!**

I want to thank you all for the wonderful DSI Assembly 2013. It would be impossible to name everything that has been done but much work lies behind the scenes and that is truly appreciated. For me it was a real joy to participate and to experience that our Dominican bonds have grown, to meet old friends and make new ones and to exchange freely.

The thought that preliminary steps are now being pursued towards becoming a Confederation is of great value and should give us hope, even if it will take time and patience to achieve this.

Thank you for the web-site displays and all the information it contains, the reports and the impressive picture gallery. The smooth running of the conference speaks of careful preparation and organization, so once more: congratulation and God bless you for ALL you have done!

With many warm wishes and greetings from
S M Pauline Burling OP
Stone, England



DSJ General Assembly 2013

Report: DSI International Coordinator

Sr. Maria Fabiola Velasquez OP



Sr. M. Fabiola Velásquez Maya, The DSI International Coordinator presents her Report of the past 3 years to the General Assembly

Dear Sisters,

I have clear memories of all the persons, places and happenings of the last three years, since the last Assembly in May 2010, since I have become the International Coordinator of the DSI. All that I have lived since that time have affected me so profoundly that neither time nor distance can erase it. It has demanded of me great exercise of discernment in order to choose the most significant aspects, those of most interest to share with you during the time we have now at our disposal, because the truth is that I have enjoyed during these years being able to live such a marvelous experience, not only with many apostolic Dominican women, but also with Friars, Nuns and lay Dominicans in many different contexts, cultures, mission locations, and specific situations.

I well know that the General Assembly that meets every three years is a privileged space of meeting, prayer, reflection, analysis and making decisions. What a happy coincidence we find in the fact that this meeting is the seventh. We recall that in the bible the number seven signifies fullness. I believe sincerely that the desires of each person present are that we truly live these days

of our meeting with renewed faith, fraternity and joyful hope, feeling accompanied by the Spirit of the Risen Christ, and illuminated by His Word which is life in our lives, we can continue in our mission of preaching and evangelization.

Every day the conviction grows in me that only if we live this mission under different forms, knowing how to share with others the fruit of a profound experience of God, of true contemplation in the sense that St. Dominic understood, "to contemplate and give to others the fruit of our contemplation" will we be able to re-ignite in ourselves and others an ardent missionary fire that the hearing of the word, and understanding in the signs of our times the beautiful but demanding mission to which we are called to assume as apostolic Dominicans in the new evangelization.

Following the orientations for the future that we decided upon at the last assembly in May, 2010, I have verified in many places and circumstances that during these years we have made a great effort to look carefully and objectively at the reality of our congregations before taking decisions of such great span. Although it is certain that the future does not pertain to us now, but we must prepare for it with audacity, realism and hope.

With joy I have been able to verify that various congregations have decided to revise their apostolic works, their priorities, realizing that we face fewer vocations, and that the sisters we have are getting older and fewer. Also there have been deaths, excommunications and secularizations.

The revision of criteria is basic, but we cannot deny that presently we find ourselves in an historic time of great changes and tensions, of loss of balance and of reference points at different levels. In the work of evangelization we face new and urgent challenges. We well know that our mission as Dominicans is to be attentive to the priorities of mission of the church and of the Order. This truth is undoubtable since just a few months ago the Synod of Bishops ratified it, that the Church must put her priority in the evangelizing task. As apostolic Dominicans we cannot avoid assuming the task of direct evangelization.

"The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today"



“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”

Report: Sr. Maria Fabiola

Velasquez OP



Sr. Fabiola said that for her, this has been the best university she could never have attended anywhere else.

We continually perceive that from our communities, from our different sites and places of mission: parishes, centers of teaching, hospitals, formation houses, there presently exists places especially needy, but which are at the same time ready for a new evangelization. We feel the necessity of reviving faith, hope and love by all the means we have available.

We're not talking about starting over again, however. In the words of St. Paul, "Woe is me if I do not preach the gospel." We must insert ourselves with clarity and courage in the here and now of our history, following the footsteps of our holy Father Dominic and all our predecessors in apostolic feminine Dominican life, in order to live in a renewed manner our communitarian experience of announcing the Word through an evangelization new in ardor, in methods, and expressions. As Pope John Paul II announced in March, 1973.

An evangelization directly principally for persons who have been baptized, but have drifted away from the church, and now live without any reference to Christian life, in order to help them meet our Savior anew, He who can fill our lives with significance and our existence with peace.

The document of the synod on the new evangelization speaks of "new scenes" the first of which is rampant secularization. The second is the phenomenon of migration, the third are the means of social communication, the fourth is the econo-

my, the fourth is new scientific and technological investigations, and the last, politics.

As apostolic Dominicans, every day we are more convinced that the new evangelization urges us to pledge ourselves anew with all our strength, to know how to respond to the deep desire for spirituality of our contemporaries, above all with regard to the new generations in all the places where we meet them. The key question is to know how to quench the thirst of those who carry within themselves infinite desires to live more significant lives.

Completing this introduction, I will share some aspects of my life during these three years.

1. Coordinating Council, which is composed of the General Coordinator and five continental coordinators which are:

Africa: Michael Mduli, O.P.

Asian Pacific: Cecille Espenilla, O.P.

Europe: Sara Bohmer, O.P.

Latin America & the Caribbean: Irene Diaz OP.

North America: Hna. Rose Marie Riley OP.

During these three years we have been able to meet every year for about 7-8 days at Santa Sabina, usually during November. This time of working together has been much appreciated by all of us. For the second period we had to have a different coordinator for the USA and Canada, because Hna. Patricia Simpson had completed her second term.

All of the members realize that these meetings not only permit us to know each other better, but also to know the objective reality of each continent. So during these weeks of meeting together we have to take the time to live a process of discernment and analysis before making decisions that allow us to continue the mission of the Coordinating Council of the Dominican Sisters International.

Presently we have 24,296 sisters, belonging to 150 congregations united to the Order, living the mission of Preaching/Evangelization in 110 countries, in the five continents.

The number of foundations of the congrega-



“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”

Report: Sr. Maria Fabiola

Velasquez OP



Sr Fabiola also made a brief introduction of the Assembly theme, “The New Evangelization and Our Dominican Mission Today”.

tions in the different continents are:

Africa	06
North America	22
Asia Pacific	23
Europe	81
Latin America & the Caribbean	19

With a sense of responsibility in order to fulfill the objectives set forth in previous assemblies, we have verified the important and significant movements of the General Coordinator in order to participate in the general assemblies of the continents, organizing courses and workshops, collaborating personally in some of them, and working with the various continental coordinators.

During these three years I have been able to be present in 20 countries in order to visit and work with Apostolic Dominicans and other members of the Dominican Family in the United States, Germany, Italy, Portugal, France, Australia, New Zealand, the Solomon Islands, Kenya, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Thailand, Czechoslovakia, Vietnam, Cambodia, Belgium, Trinidad & Tobago, Peru, Spain and Mexico.

To some countries, such as the United States, France, Spain and Columbia, I have been several times because of commitments I had made.

Keeping in mind that in the majority of these countries I had been working with the various coordinators who have already informed the appropriate groups of these activities, I will briefly summarize information on programs I have carried out alone or with other persons, not the coordinators.

2010

Principal activities from July to December

July 15-August 25: Medellin, Colombia for 6 weeks visiting family, I took the opportunity to share with different sisters of different congregations, including my own about the events and activities of the Dominican Sisters International since its beginnings in 1995. Especially during the period I have been the Coordinator General.

August 3-September 21, in el “Salesianum “, ROMA, participating in the General Chapter of the Order...

(...) □

Find the complete article: www.dsiop.org

“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”



DSJ General Assembly 2013

Presentations

New Evangelization: Biblical Perspective

Preaching the Kingdom of God



Sr. Luma Khuder OP, is a member of the Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine of Siena from Iraq. Sr. Luma has obtained a Degree in Education Sciences and a Master's Degree in Theology, and she will soon obtain a Doctorate in Christianity and Judaism in Early Antiquity at the University of Notre Dame in Indiana.

Introduction

In 2012, the Church called all believers to undertake a New Evangelization. The New Evangelization, as defined in "Disciples Called to Witness: The New Evangelization," is "a call to each person to deepen his or her own faith, have confidence in the Gospel, and possess a willingness to share the Gospel. It is a personal encounter with the person of Jesus, which brings peace and joy." ¹ The believer's personal encounter with Jesus leads to evangelization about the salvation and hope of the Gospel. Evangelization is the last step in the process of our journey of faith described in the afore-
¹ "Disciples Called to Witness: The New Evangelization," 3.

mentioned document. We first have to deepen our own faith, in order to have greater confidence in the Gospel. We then seek a willingness to share the Gospel with others, all because of a personal encounter with Jesus.

The church calls us to a New Evangelization in order to renew the faith – to awaken faith in Christians so that they become active witnesses to Jesus and the Gospel. Before someone can evangelize to others, he or she needs to start with his or her own faith. One can deepen her faith by returning to the Bible and to the person of Jesus. By being willing to reflect on Jesus' life and mission, a believer is brought to a deeper faith through applying the light of Jesus' life to his or her own life and the life of the world. In other words, we need to return to the theme of discipleship in the Bible in order to encounter Jesus in a new way and revive our faith and the church's faith in order to be able to evangelize. To be Jesus' disciples, we have to encounter and allow him to be one with us so he can proclaim the kingdom through us. When that happens, we can say with Paul that "it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me," (Gal 2:20).

Evangelizing is the mission of the Church, that is every person in the Church. It is the Church's duty, it is our duty, and responsibility to proclaim/preach and teach the Word of God. Jesus' mission of evangelization is to proclaim the Kingdom of God and to call people to participate in it.

Jesus' life, as reflected in the New Testament, is a life of relationship, to his Father and to others. Jesus' main mission was to evangelize about the kingdom of God. He preached the Gospel to bring people back to the Father, to rebuild a relationship with the Father so as to establish the kingdom of God.

Because our ability to participate in the New Evangelization depends on a personal encounter with Jesus, I want to focus on Jesus' way of evan-



“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”

Presentation New Evangelization: Biblical Perspective

gelizing, of living out his mission to proclaim the kingdom of God. Therefore, I will focus on three aspects of Jesus’ life, all of which can be found in the Emmaus narrative (Lk 24:13-34). First, I will focus on how Jesus preached about the kingdom of God, how he healed many and through personal encounter with others changed their lives. Second, I will look at Jesus’ method of evangelizing and the people to whom he directed his message. Jesus was a Jew, but he did not limit his mission to Jews only. He was open to all and preached to all. He did not limit his message to a specific time, place or event. Finally, I will use the Emmaus story as an example of how Jesus leads someone from disbelief to belief. The New Evangelization should imitate Jesus’ preaching and missionary style, because we are to imitate Jesus as Christian disciples.

1. Jesus, the Evangelizer

Jesus is the “first and the greatest evangelizer,”² although he is never referred to as being the evangelizer or the evangelist in the New Testament. The verb “to evangelize” εὐαγγελίζω means to announce or proclaim the gospel, the good news of the kingdom of God. It refers to Jesus evangelizing (Matt 11: 4-5; Lk 4:18, 43; 7:22; 8:1; 16:16; 20:1) as well as to other figures such as the angels evangelizing (Lk 1:19, 2:10; Rev 10:7; 14: 6), or John the Baptist (Lk 3:18) and Jesus’ disciples (Lk 9:6).

Jesus begins his ministry by preaching the good news “the gospel” of the kingdom of God as salvation, which requires repentance. The Gospel of Mark introduces Jesus and his mission with these words:

And after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.” (Mk 1:14-15)

Matthew’s summary of Jesus’ ministry is similar. He says:

² Paul VI, *Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Nuntiandi* (8 December 1975), 7: AAS 68 (1976) 9

From that time Jesus began to proclaim, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near...And Jesus was going about in all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and *proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom*, and healing every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people.” (Matt 4:17-23)

Luke says: “But [Jesus] said to them, “*I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God to the other cities also; for I was sent for this purpose*” (Lk 4:43).

These three verses from the synoptic gospels announce that the heart of Jesus’ purpose on earth was preaching the kingdom of God. So we see in the New Testament that “to evangelize” means to announce the kingdom of God. The expression “kingdom of God” appears many times in the Scriptures, and it expresses the nature and the core of Jesus mission.³

The kingdom of God requires, as Jesus says, μετανοέω to participate in it. This word is translated in the bibles to “repentance,” but this Greek word also means “change of mind, turning away, turn from.” This latter meaning from the Greek word means that Jesus is calling us not only to repent from our sins but also to change our way of thinking to Jesus’ way of thinking. Once we change our way of thinking, the next step is to believe in and proclaim the “good news,” the kingdom of God, which is for everyone.

Jesus’ evangelization awoke the faith of people in God. People who believed in his message experienced the power of God in Jesus and the power that was working in them. Therefore, the expression has an active and dynamic meaning because God’s power and dominion is being exercised and manifested in the world through Jesus’ ministry “and more fully after Jesus’ death in the church, and yet to reserve the ultimate ideal for the all-encompassing reign of God in his heavenly kingdom.”⁴ The kingdom of God already has been

³ It appears sixty-seven times in the New Testament almost always on the lips of Jesus. The synonymous phrase, “kingdom of heaven,” appears thirty-one times in the Gospel of Matthew.

⁴ C.C. Caragounis, “The Kingdom of God/Heaven,” in DJG, 420-424.



“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”

Presentation New Evangelization: Biblical Perspective

established and we are to participate in it and experience it and announce that God is love, forgiveness, peace, justice and hope which are the reality of the “kingdom of God.” We cannot do that if do not work closely with people.

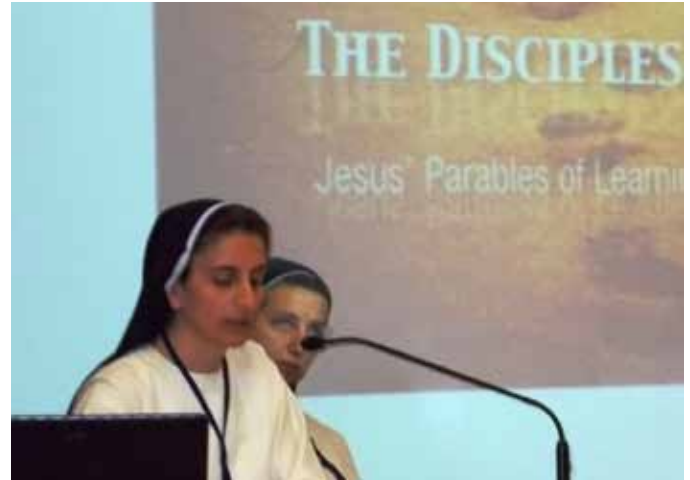
2. Jesus Mission and Method of Preaching

a. Preaching and Healing

Jesus in his earthly life was on a journey. He journeyed with people and taught them. Jesus did not limit his preaching to one group or another. He spoke to common people, to Jews, non-Jews, outcasts and marginalized people. He spoke to the people as they were able to understand, sometimes in parables (Matt 13:3-9, 18-23; Lk 8:18, Lk 13:6-8, Jn 15:1-8), and other times he used stories or symbols. Jesus was a transforming teacher and a miracle worker. He did not teach theological or philosophical views about God. He drew from the everyday experiences of his listeners and employed the language of the people in his preaching and teaching. He also connects the task of preaching to the ministries of teaching and healing: “And he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal” (Lk 9:2). Jesus’ aim was that everyone to know that the kingdom of God is near, and it starts in everyday life.

Jesus’ missionary activity witnesses to the reality of a gracious God. He even defines his life’s purpose in light of the kingdom: “I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God to the other cities also; for I was sent for this purpose” (Lk 4:43). Jesus interpreted his exorcisms and healings as manifestations of the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is Jesus’ message, and it is also the essence of his evangelizing. When a person encountered Jesus and confessed his faith in God, that person allows the kingdom of God to reign over him. The kingdom of God is the reign of God that is manifested in groups or individuals. The Kingdom of God is among us (Lk 17:21).

In process of healing people, he accompanied them in their journey of faith and led them to see for themselves the kingdom of God, and when they saw the kingdom of God, those believers could not keep the good news to themselves, but they announced to others. Jesus’ mission and evangelizing was not an easy task nor was it accepted by everyone, nor was the mission of his disciples ac-



Sr. Luma Khuder during her presentation in DSI General Assembly 2013

cepted. We have enough examples show that Jesus was faced by oppositions but that did not stop him from proclaiming the truth about the gospel of the kingdom nor did it stop him from pointing out the unjust in the society.

Jesus method of evangelizing was obvious in the way he treated people. He was willing to help everyone and even when he held back from helping the Syro-Phoenician woman, she defended her case, expressed her faith that Jesus could heal her daughter, and therefore convinced Jesus to help her daughter (Mk 7:25-30).

Jesus did not rely on words alone of teaching and preaching to convince people as to who he was. Much of Jesus’ ministry was done through acts of healing, “and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal” (Lk 9:2; c.f. Lk 10:16; Mk 16:15). On a number of occasions, he stated that if they did not believe his words then they should believe because of His miracles. The miracles⁵ of Jesus, nearly all of which involved

⁵ John 10:25 “Jesus answered, ‘I did tell you, but you do not believe. The miracles I do in my Father’s name speak for me.’”

John 10:37-38 “Do not believe me unless I do what my Father does. But if I do it, even though you do not believe me, believe the miracles that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father.”

John 14:11 “Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves.”



“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”

Presentation

New Evangelization: Biblical Perspective

healing attested in a powerful way to the love of the Father for those he had created so it was part of evangelizing.

Healing led to salvation (Lk 18:42). Jesus healed the whole person. He impacted the lives of those he met and healed so profoundly. They could not keep what happened to them secret. It is also our experience of Jesus’ impact on our lives that inspires us to do the same – to evangelize in Jesus’ name. Jesus’ healings and miracles were to point people to the source of it all, the Father.

Jesus did not distinguish between the old or young (Lk 8:40-56), the poor or rich (Lk 10:17-22; Matt 8:5-13), or the sinners like Zacchaeus (Lk 19:2-10) and the prostitutes (Jn 8:1-11) and those who considered themselves holy like Nathanael. Jesus was able to touch the deepest parts of people and transformed them.

Jesus’ love and his faith in the Father was the reason for his mission. His relationship to the Father led him to love of others, and Jesus invited people to participate in that relationship Jesus’ goal was to fulfill the will of God (Matt 7:21). The relationship with the Father was a reason for him to proclaim the good news. In other words, the deepest meaning of the kingdom of God is the “saving relationship between YHWH and his people”⁶ and it proclaims the salvation activity of God in the life of people.

b. Time and Place

Jesus did not choose a specific time and place to preach. He used incidental occurrences and events. Jesus’ whole life was preaching. In his preaching, Jesus attracted people in massive crowds as well as people as individuals. He was very hospitable with everyone. He healed a man with a demon in a cemetery, raised the dead, and taught. He saw Peter, James and John fishing with their nets and boats; he spoke to them there and then, not waiting for a different place or time. While resting at a well, Jesus spoke to the Samaritan woman in the middle of the afternoon and filled her empty jar with the Word of God. Jesus

⁶ Donald Senior, Carroll Stuhlmueller, “Jesus and the Church’s Mission” in *The Biblical Foundations for Mission*. (the University of Michigan: Orbis Books, 1983), 146.



called Matthew to follow him (Matt 9:9-13) while Matthew was sitting at the tax booth collecting taxes. He talked to Matthew in kindness, in contrast to Matthew’s experience of rejection by most people. Jesus spoke with Zacchaeus while he was up in a tree (Lk 19:10). Jesus even ministered to the repentant thief on the cross (Lk 23:43).

The kingdom of God is beyond time and place. It is manifested in the world through Jesus and continues in the life of those who believe in him and participate in this kingdom. It came as a mystery, in an unexpected form through the person and work of Jesus.

Jesus uses examples and illustrations to speak of the kingdom of God, to connect it to everyday life experiences. He uses parables about fathers and sons, bridesmaids and bridegrooms, seeds and trees, shepherds and sheep. He says that the kingdom of God begins as something small and insignificant, yet blossoms into something large and pervasive. Jesus’ teaching and preaching was based on people’s past understanding and experience of God, but Jesus wanted them to know the true God that is beyond rituals and laws. He wanted to revive their faith in the God of Israel and to have a personal and intimate encounter with him.

c. The Mission of the Disciples

Jesus calls disciples, and after preaching to them and teaching them, he sent them to the nations...

(...)

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DSI General Assembly 2013 Presentations

The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today



Sr. Petronille Kayiba OP, (Democratic Republic the Congo) is a member of the Dominican Sisters of the Rosary. She has served as Provincial for her Congregation and as Justice and Peace Promoter for Africa, and is at present teaching theology in the Congo.

To develop the title that I was given, I have decided to focus on two main themes. The first concerns the historical context in which we speak of the New Evangelization. The second relates to our specific Dominican mission in this responsibility. First, I want to focus on the historical context.

I. The historical context of the New Evangelization

After the Second Vatican Council, the universal Church understood the need for a new approach and for new methods for evangelizing the world in these times. The world changes so quickly that the historical context which determined the work of the council has little relevance for our times: whence the need to raise three questions.

1. What is the starting point for discussing the New Evangelization: The answer is Africa. But the Africa which has strong ties with the rest of

the world. 2. From what viewpoint am I perceiving this African situation? There, likewise, the answer is simple: a woman's perspective. 3. Finally what is the religious identity that grounds my call as an African woman? I am speaking basically as a follower of Christ. A Dominican woman Religious.

These three questions and responses are the framework for my presentation. But one question crops up: What is the time frame that shapes my perspective? I am speaking about the time when the African churches became strong, that is, the period that followed the work of the Second Synod of African Bishops. This Synod directed its attention appropriately to the New Evangelization of Africa. The message, the proposals of this Synod and the publications of men and women theologians immerse us in a wide range of ideas pertinent to the New Evangelization of Africa.

1.1. What did the Synod say about the New Evangelization?

The Second Special Assembly of Bishops said—in relation to the theme of the New Evangelization—that it is in continuity with the depth of content from the “First African Synod: The Church Family must be a Service of Reconciliation, Justice, and Peace.” These four elements characterize the New Evangelization in Africa. First, Service –diakonia. Then reconciliation, and finally, justice and peace.

These four elements indicate that the New Evangelization must be rooted in the history and the lived experience of the African people. To recall the words of Vatican II: “to share the sufferings and the hopes” of those to whom we are sent. The New Evangelization is not a handing on of ideas (Lumen Gentium) already acquired. It represents rather a common search in the service of God, neighbor, and ecology, a service of reconciliation based in justice and leading to peace.

The New Evangelization is centered on a



“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”

...focus on the reality context

decisive event: the Death and Resurrection of Christ (E.A.,n.1). Inspired by the light of the Risen Christ, we are at the service of reconciliation, justice, and peace. Expressed in another way, the Synod of Bishops for African insists on the lived reality of people, of contexts, and events that we must assume is the space for the personal manifestation of God and his Son in the Spirit.

The Paschal Mystery, as we call it, is the Mystery of the Passion which opens into joy by the power of the Spirit sent by the Father. Focusing on Easter, the Synod Fathers paid close attention to the suffering of present day Africa in the grip of wars, violence of every kind, and multiple conflicts.

The New Evangelization is, in the Risen Christ, a practice and a school for the Christian and humanizing resolution of conflict and leads to the joy and the proclamation of the Word (cf. Irenaeus) That means that the New Evangelization is basically a “New Pentecost.” (Proposition Ile Synod, n.2). There is no Christ without the Holy Spirit and vice versa. As a consequence, the suffering of the passion, the joy of the resurrection, the universal overflow of the joy of Pentecost constitute “the program” which profoundly determines the New Evangelization of the world and especially that of Africa--suffering and desirous of peace through the power of Christ’s peace and reconciliation.

1.2. What does the Synod propose as new approaches to this New Evangelization?

So that the New Evangelization is not reduced to simple publicity notices, or slogans, we need people in new roles to serve Africa and her people. We need new strategies. We need a hopeful outlook for Africa, an outlook that flows from the experience of the empty tomb and the morning of Pentecost.

The Easter and Pentecost perspectives do not deny the real causes of suffering. On the contrary, we begin by searching for the deepest causes of injustice and of disastrous situations so that social justice can be achieved and by that means to announce Jesus Christ as the salvation and justice of God in the Spirit.

Human responsibility must be determined

with care, precision, and justice so that peaceful reconciliation may be possible. For the African Synod this is possible, thanks to the people’s deep faith in the Easter and Pentecost mysteries. These divine missions (Easter and Pentecost) are the substance of the message of the New Evangelization in today’s Africa. Death-Resurrection and Pentecost must be the source of hope for contemporary Africans. The inhabitants of this continent ought to benefit from the positive effects (humanization and fullness of days) that flow from the life of Jesus and the gift of the Spirit in today’s world. Sadness, pessimism, and fatalism are contrary to the message of Easter and Pentecost. Reconciliation, justice and peace are necessary for the fulfillment of each person, every society and the whole universe.

1.3. What does the Synod understand by reconciliation, justice, and peace?

The texts already published relative to this Synod reveal clearly that service reconciliation, justice and peace must be understood in the perspective of salvation. All are concrete manifestations of the will of the Father to save Africa by the service of his Incarnate Son, the one who is the peace of the world. Reconciliation, justice, and peace are the gift of God and his Son in the Spirit.

In other words, what the Synod understands by “service” “reconciliation,” and “peace,” depends completely on the spiritual life. It is from this perspective that the socio-political situation finds its greatest impact and meaning.

Service, reconciliation, and peace are a mandate from God, a mission that emerges from salvation history. Our awareness of the life of Jesus and the holiness that comes from the Holy Spirit urges us to speak of service and reconciliation, of justice, and of peace in a Christian perspective. In other words, it is in reconciling oneself with God, in His incarnate Son and in the Holy Spirit (theological dimension) that reconciliation with others (the anthropological dimension) and with creation (the cosmological dimension) is possible.

1.4 How do we engage these three dimensions?

The response of the Synod is by education and personal witness, as well as justice, peace,

“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”



“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”

...focus on the reality context



tation of God in and through our history. Preaching is not a successive uttering of words which have for their purpose a purely intellectual, ideal or abstract signification. Preaching is the path which leads the human person to drink deeply of the Life of God which is realized in the Word become Jesus Christ.

Briefly, preaching is not theoretical because it is the breakthrough, the manifestation of God’s own self. The full manifestation of God is accomplished by and in the Divine works. It is Easter and Pentecost which are the focus of Dominican preaching because they are the events when God gave himself once for all.

reconciliation, and service. Preaching reconciliation, justice and peace, must be a service that flows from education and instruction. The effects of such preaching must be creative enough to be seen historically, generating structures that testify that we live in a world reconciled to God.

II.3 Easter and Pentecost

II. Our Mission as Preachers

Preaching is not a recital of past events. It is about the present because it is based on the events of the world and the society in which one’s preaching takes place. [In French the reference is to the “precheuse,” that is, the woman who preaches]. The experience that she is living through as a woman is the experience of someone who endures, who experiences again the empty tomb and finally someone who is comforted by the peace of the Resurrection and the experience of Pentecost. Preaching is the following of Christ in and through one’s life. It is a deep commitment that flows from conversion, that is a re-reading of one’s own story and that of one’s people and to discover there the salvific, trusting, and necessary presence—the commission which comes from the Spirit of the Risen One.

In the historical context of Africa, to speak of our mission as women preachers situates us at the crossroads of a theology of inculturation and creativity, a situation that is unfolding across the continent. But before developing this second part, I must discuss three essential elements of my theme.

II.1. Mission:

In theology and in Christian spirituality the word mission refers first to the sending of the Incarnate Son and the Spirit through the Father. The “missionaries” of God are Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. As followers of Christ, sent by the Holy Spirit, we participate in a single mission: that of the God who wishes to be reconciled with the entire created universe offering us pardon by the gift of his justice in the Holy Spirit. Our mission is such that the Spirit may continue to be manifest in and across the world in an outburst of everlasting Peace.

Pentecost is the joy of moving beyond fear and the gift of universal communication. It is the reason for community preaching. It is the special event that allows a woman to realize her womanhood as a way of revealing the Word of God to her people.

II.2. Preaching

Preaching is the living communication of the Word of God throughout and within events of today. The Word of God is the personal manifes-

Allow me to tell you personally that like several others here, I have experienced the stripping of the earth, the trembling that makes one think of the empty tomb, the Passion and the whole mystery of the Resurrection. I have had the experience of the call of Moses before the burning bush. Everything caught fire without, however, turning to ash...

(...) □

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DSJ General Assembly 2013

Presentations

The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today in response to the recent Synod of Bishops on the New Evangelization and the transmission of the faith



Fr. Bruno Cadoré OP, Master of the Order of Preachers, during his presentation in DSI General Assembly.

The call to a “new evangelization” resounds particularly at the heart of the Order of Preachers, recommended to the bishops by Pope Honorius III (following the confirmation of the Order) as friars “totally dedicated to the evangelization of the Word of God.” In some way this is a “definition” of the vocation of the Preachers - which, along these lines, could be defined by the vow of preaching which is clearly inscribed in the apostolic dynamic. It has to do, actually, not only with placing in the light the consecration of each one to preaching (evangelization) of the word of God to all and everywhere, but also to inscribe the project of evangelical communion (*vir evangelicus and vir apostolicus*) in the footsteps of the first community walking with Jesus that declared that it had to connect with many places to be evangelized.

The remarks which follow have as their purpose the consideration of the Dominican mission

as “an echo” of the recent Synod of Bishops on the new evangelization and the transmission of the faith:

- The mission of the Order, as Dominic wished it, is at the service of the Church and ought not-even if the postmodern separatist tendencies could incite us in that direction-it ought not contribute to the construction of juxtaposed Catholic identities. It has to do rather with us ourselves claiming the initiative opened by the Synod and placing our own charism at the service of the Church by contributing according to our own grasp of this dynamic of evangelization.

- These remarks will only be “in echo”: it is not about reporting what a Synod might have said: for that, we will have to wait for the apostolic exhortation of the Holy Father or to read the message of the Synod which explains the dynamic proposed to the Church in general and to particular Churches. Besides, it would be difficult to create a synthesis of Proposals which are themselves the synthesis of the exchanges that went on during the three weeks. We will, then, insist even more on the reality of the event that the Synod represented and its significance for the Dominican mission.

After having proposed a reading of the history of the concept of new evangelization, we hope to show how the event of the recent Synod highlights what is at stake in an evangelization which can be identified with the essential elements of the Dominican mission. On this basis we will formulate several proposals for the apostolic creativity of the Order.

Recent Archaeology of the Concept of “New

“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”



“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”

... in response to the recent Synod of Bishops on the New Evangelization and the transmission of the faith.



Evangelization”

When we speak of new evangelization-and thus of renewal (new ardor, new methods, new expressions, said John Paul II), how can we not think of the time of the foundation of the Order of Preachers, when what was at stake was the confrontation with something new in the Church and in societies. This was a time of mutations to which other movements were also trying to respond, movements of “return” to evangelical radicalism. It is in this context that the movement of mendicant Orders was born. It was a time of new ardor: Francis and Dominic were choosing mendicancy. Dominic left the cloister and chose to pray without ceasing. It was a new message: itinerancy would be their way of getting close to people and befriending them, like the itinerancy of the first community of disciples that accompanied Jesus, preaching on the roads of Palestine. Encounter, friendship and dialogue became the axes of the new method of evangelization of the Word of God and of the announcement of the proximity of the Kingdom. It was a new expression: the mendicants chose to go out into the world leading a new form of religious life, which would not be monastic, but inspired by the Rule of St. Augustine, signifying at the heart of the world the value of community (the first name of the primitive Church) and the promise of unanimity (horizon of care for the common good as the responsibility of all). These new religious wished to be apostolic and contemplative, gathered in the Cenacle, then called and sent out into the Galilee of nations, attentive to the urban and social mutations and actors of the intellectual life promised in the

new universities, to promote the charism of each and to root individual vocations in the communal and democratic search for unanimity. Even if it is only in a suggestive manner, are there not as many invitations today to confront many of the critical challenges of contemporary changes that mark the context of the new evangelization?

These invitations are invitations to renew the rooting of the Dominican mission in what has constituted the intuition of the foundation: such is the grace that is offered to us at this moment when we are preparing to celebrate the jubilee of the confirmation of the Order. Having said that, it is important to be attentive to a risk that is very contemporary. In fact, today, in order to affirm the strength and the specificity of a conviction, the reflex many of us have is that of separatism. Renewal calls us instead to the in-depth rootedness of our convictions in a dynamic that surpasses us and, in some way (to pick up again the beautiful expression of Benedict XVI) expatriates us from ourselves.

To give to the concept of “new evangelization” its contemporary scope – that which led to the convocation of an ordinary Synod of Bishops consecrated to this theme – it is best to identify the successive stages of its usage. This could constitute some reference points for our reflection on our own mission today, as members of the Dominican Family.

- The emergence of this new “concept” is happening in the wake of Vatican II. Let us not forget that the convocation of the council by John XXIII came, in some ways, as a response to a very intense movement of consciousness in the Church of the necessity of a profound change. That consciousness led to the affirmation of the necessity of reaching into the depths of what is essentially the Church, the Body of Christ, sacrament of the salvation of the world. We speak, then, of new evangelization in this context of a renewed reflection on the subject of the Church *in* the world, the Church *for* the world.

- The notion of evangelization evokes, in the recent history of the teaching of the Magisterium, the post-synod exhortation of Paul VI, in 1975, *Evangelium nuntiandi*. This text represents a kind of “charter of the preaching of the Gospel,” inviting us to situate the very charism of the Order in



“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”

... in response to the recent Synod of Bishops on the New Evangelization and the transmission of the faith.



the heart of the mission of the Church, at the same time as we are “cooperators” in this mission and as “servants” of the Church, always in quest of corresponding more and more to what makes up its essence: to commit oneself to the way of “the mission of Christ.” We must remain conscious of this second point, that this service consists not only of taking our part in the “active work” in the mission, but also in witnessing by religious consecration to “the following of Christ,” this essential dimension of the Church. This underscores the importance of the link between the renewal of evangelization and the renewal in religious life.

• It was in 1979, that Pope John Paul II utilized the term “new evangelization” in Poland (Nowa Huta): “In these new times, in this new condition of life, the Gospel is announced in a new way. A new evangelization has begun, as if it were a new announcement, though in reality it is always the same. The Cross remains standing in a world that is changing.” We are, then, on the threshold of a very significant upheaval in the world. We witness social and political movements which will lead to the opening of Central and Eastern European countries. The world, from now on, will no longer be placed under the threat of a cold war, and evangelization is called to enter into dialogue with the desire for freedom (liberation) which is announced. From this point of view, the mission of evangelization is confronted with the process of reconciliation and with the promotion of rights and freedom.

• In 1983, in Haiti (on the occasion of a meeting of bishops of Latin America) at the moment when he was calling for a change in the reality of that country, so poor and so badly led, Pope

John Paul II called once more for “a new evangelization, new in its ardor, new in its methods and in its expression.” Here again the declaration comes on the threshold of a radical change in the country (fall of the dictatorship of Mr. Duvalier). It comes also in the context of a Latin America in pursuit of the challenge of its reconstruction. This reconstruction will come about as much by the promotion of democracy as by the affirmation of the primary care that the Church owes to the situation and to the fundamental rights of the poor of this world, with whom and for whom ought to be established justice and peace in view of the promotion of the common good. It will be noted in passing that a change in the field of missiology is underway, marked for a long time by the objective of the “evangelization of the elite.” We remember here the affirmation of the Synod of 1971, according to which “Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel.” This highlights the central place of this priority in the mission of the preaching of the Order.

• In 1978, in the exhortation *Christifideles laici* (43), John Paul writes: “The hour has come to undertake a new evangelization: the phenomenon of secularization strikes the people who are Christian as dated, and this phenomenon calls out for, without any delay, a new evangelization.” He takes this call up again in 1990, in *Redemptoris Missio*, commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Decree of Vatican II on the mission of the Church, inviting all the ecclesial forces to engage themselves in the new evangelization and the mission ad gentes. Here appears the concept of the “wave” of secularization that will hold the attention of numerous analyses of the countries and cultures which, having one day received the Gospel, have become less familiar with it, and even opposed to it. For the Order, born in Europe, that constitutes a call to evaluate the manner in which preaching has accompanied and is accompanying the adventure of the creativity of modern reason.

• In 1992, in *Dabo vobis*, the same Pope reiterates his call, centering it on the pastoral mission: “The primary pastoral task of the new evangelization is incumbent on the whole people of God...

(...) □

Find the complete article in www.dsiop.org

“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”



DSI General Assembly 2013 ***Presentations***

Social Communications and Dominican Sisters International



Fr. Eric Salobir, General Promoter for Social Communication of the Order of Preachers, during his presentation in DSI General Assembly.

My dear sisters,

First of all, I wish to express my joy in meeting you and in speaking today « within our family »; specifically, the Dominican family. This morning is an opportunity to strengthen the collaboration among brothers and sisters in our common work of preaching.

This morning, in my capacity of promoter for social communication, I would precisely like to not just speak to you about social communications; rather of this work I have just mentioned which takes us to our depths: preaching. The thing is that in the 21st century, the proclamation of the Gospel can not do without the media. They allow us to enter the farthest homes; they offer a forum to reach large numbers of people and the means to convey even the less mediatic pastoral actions.

In our attempt to follow the steps of the Blessed Dominic at the heart of the contemporary world, we are faced with two challenges: the first one con-

sists in offering a preaching including the media (and I will come back later to the use of the word « including »). Such preaching aims at gathering the faithful around the Word of God and to have a dialogue with non-believers. The second challenge consists in sketching a « numeric doctrine » of the Church in the image of its social teaching: a thought to help our contemporaries to walk in an increasingly media universe.

These challenges revolve around three themes, which represent the outline of my address:

- The proclamation of the Word: its transmission and the work of evangelization,
- Spirituality: prayer and sanctification,
- Religious life: common life and its governance.

For each point, I will strive to quickly paint a picture of the situation and then indicate what strategy the Order has established to attempt to respond to the challenges we face. It is true that situations are very different from one country to the other, from one continent to the other, and we must gamble to maintain a general purpose. However, you may correct what is not directly adequate to the context you find. The important aspect is to in fact sketch a general overview and to discern the major changes in an increasingly globalized world.

An Order of Preachers A place for Truth?

As we said at the beginning, what connects all of us present here is not a habit of the same colour or a common name, rather the concern we all share for preaching. Whatever form it takes, this preaching is rooted in a reality which has become our « Veritas » motto. As preachers, the first question we must ask ourselves is thus: « what room does the media environment make for Truth? ».

Now that we have just celebrated 20 years since the creation of the Internet, we have fully entered into what we call the digital revolution. A revolution that does not spread at the same speed in



“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”

Social Communications and DSI



every country, but one which the French philosopher Michel Serre predicts will bring consequences as profound as the invention of writing or the printing press. In fact, even though it is not yet experienced in every country, the use of the Internet and computers in general changes our way of thinking. We do not write a text in the same manner with a computer as with a pen. We do not communicate in the same manner by voice or text message. Therefore, it is from this digital perspective that we must ask ourselves this question.

However, a first observation can seem negative. In fact, in the Internet, there is no place for Truth in principle. As you probably know, the Web is comparable to a vast spider web on which each site and blog is a knot. We go from one to the other by following links in a completely horizontal manner. So then, what distinguishes the actual value of each piece of information, its reliability or truthfulness? Nothing. There is no legal authority in digital networks, much less imprimatur, only an authority of fact: the one giving a good search engine indexing, a presence at the top of the list of responses from Google. The visits to a site, its popularity builds on the value of the information it contains. From a Catholic theology perspective, one unknown with hazy theories may be more consulted than the sites of the ecclesiastic institution. There is total relativism in this regard!

We could see it as a digital reflection of a common attitude in post-modern societies which have strongly rejected all forms of tradition to only rely on reason. Once again, the observation cannot apply in the same manner in all countries and cultures; however, the fact remains: Internet users do not give credit, by principle, to society or institutions, whether these are businesses, unions, political parties or the Church. They even show an actual mistrust. For them, what matters is not so much the search for Truth as much as the preservation of their freedom.

Young Internet users have therefore chosen to discover everything by their own means. They apply to the extreme the « tabula rasa » inherited from Descartes and they have grown used to decrypting everything. We therefore better understand this information bulimia which some call « infobesity » as well as the need for total transparency reflected by the Wiki leaks phenomenon: when you alone can decide what is important, you must have access to all information.

Yet, in a world with changing benchmarks, Internet users do not feel alone. They have stopped trusting institutions, among which the Church, then the media, to now rely on their social networks contacts: « it's true; all my friends on Facebook say so! » The voice of the parents has been silenced to be replaced by the one of experts, then peers.

In short, on the Web there is no truth that is previous or superior to the Web: no space anticipated for a prominent authority. If we wish to uphold the Truth that is Christ, we must infuse him into the network and combine the legal authority that grants this Truth with the authority of fact that brings popularity. It is up to us to prove the credibility of what we present. It is up to us to make Truth popular!

(...)

Find the complete article in www.dsiop.org

“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”



DSJ General Assembly 2013

Reports of DSJ Coordinating Council

2010 - 2013

Continental Coordinator for Africa

Sr. Michael Mdluli OP



Sr. Michael Mdluli OP

SEPTEMBER 2010 - MAY 2013

2010 September

DSA Coordinating Council Members meet in Nairobi-Kenya (Preparation for 2011)

Highlights

The planning for DSA General Assembly which was to be held in Kenya 2011.

Plan to involve Young Dominican Sisters for the first time in DSA General Assembly in the similar way that DSI Assembly did in 2010.

- Planning for the Seminar/ Workshop on JPIC Training to be organized by Sr. Toni Harris for Dominican Sisters in English-speaking Countries in Africa.

- Analytical study of the Post Synodal Docu-

ment of Pope Benedict XVI with Africa Bishops calling Africa to "Take courage and take responsibility for your own future growth."

- Total commitment to strengthen the campaign against Human Trafficking in various Countries where this is rife.

Challenges

The call to learn new Official languages – English for French speakers and French for English speakers in order to facilitate communication which is very hard.

To find better ways to show concern and sensitivity to our Dominican Brothers and Sisters in the war torn Countries in Africa where conflicts are a reality.

Challenge to Women to be Preachers not only in Works of Mercy but also the Word, and Africa still lags behind in the understanding of this Call to Women.

A big challenge exists where inter-cultural and inter-religious dialogue are difficult between Muslims and Christians in Africa. An urgent need exists of education on these issues.

Collaboration

A number of Dominican Sisters Congregations are trying hard to work together – organizing Conferences, Formation Houses used centrally, they share. They share the buildings, financing of the workshops, training personnel. The Dominican Sisters in various African Countries and in their Zones do implement the Objectives for DSI and DSA. Sisters JPIC in Africa are working very well but no collaboration exists between Brethren and Sisters as Family in Justice issues. Dominican Youth organization not taking off in the Sisters' Zonal



“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”

Report: Coordinator Council for Africa

areas. This is regarded as specialization for the Brethren.

Challenges in a wider Context in the Family

According to the Statutes for the Dominican Brethren Inter-Africa Council there is Article 9 that mentions the following – “ To arrange a joint meeting between Coordinating Council for Inter-Africa Dominican Brethren and Coordinating Council for Dominican Sisters in Africa.” This is not happening. Another move towards the Coordinating Council for Dominican Sisters Africa to liaise with the African Lay Dominican Fraternity; this has also not taken shape.

2011

MAY 2011 General Assembly for Dominican Sisters Africa - Kenya.

The Theme for 2011

“Shaping our Dominican Future with Realism, Daring and Hope”

Highlights

The members of the General Assembly came from Eastern Africa, Western Africa, Central Africa and Southern Africa. Up to now Northern Africa is still not part of DSA. Sisters from Africa at this Assembly were overjoyed at the presence of Sr. Fabiola Velasquez Maya O.P., DSI Coordinator, Sr. Lucia Fernandez O.P DSI Volunteers, Sr. Toni Harris the JPIC Coordinator for DSI and Sr. Margaret Mayce O.P. from US our Liaison at United Nations. Following the style of DSI General Assembly of 2010 DSA Assembly decided to invite Young Finally professed Sisters 40 years and below to attend for the first time. The emphasis was the Call to Women Preachers in Africa – Sr. **Petronella Kayiba OP** our Dominican Sister from Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) was the keynote speaker.

Challenges that Sr Petronella raised

The Human Rights Declaration states clearly that “ all have a right to express their word.” It is time for women in Africa to shed off the shackles which they still keep for themselves in spite of freedom already given by law.” Women should not limit themselves to the service of charity only



DSI Coordinating Council, period 2010-2013

but preach the Word at various levels. The new challenge is for women to free their own word and empower themselves.

Realities in Africa causing Concern: the negative impacts of globalization and marginalisation in Africa. Raw materials taken from Africa to developed Countries for manufacture. The final product returns to Africa too expensive for local consumers. Leaders hang too long on positions and cause the Country to run down.

Religious intolerance especially among Christians and Muslims. Trafficking of Human persons. Poverty, disease, wars and displacement of peoples.

Accomplishments: At this Assembly DSA members including the Prioress Generals and other Leadership managed to work together on the 5th Draft of the DSA Statutes and it was finalised.

The presence of Young Dominican Sisters 40 years and under at the assembly had a chance to make valuable contributions with confidence and had time to connect with others for the first time. Sr. Fabiola made Africa realize that they as Continent are part of the wider world in spite of difficulties in the Continent. Sr. Toni Harris had time still to plan new Justice and Peace Workshops for Africa as members from various Zones were present. In August 2011 Sr. Toni Harris organized Justice and Peace Seminar for all English speaking Zones in Zambia on Social Teachings of the

“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”



“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”

Church. The same was repeated for Dominican Sisters in the French speaking Zones in 2012.

New Horizons: After the General Assembly Sr. Fabiola O.P, Sr. Lucia O.P and Sr. Michael O.P made a journey to visit Dominicans in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The purpose was to visit Dominican Families both the Sisters and the Brethren. This was the first visit in Congo by Dominican Sisters from the International Body and it was well appreciated. Life in the Congo is very difficult because the wars and poverty in the country looks you in the eye the moment you leave the Airport building. Faith is very strong and Catholicism very sound and grounded. Evangelization by the Catholic Church and in particular Dominicans is outstanding.

2012

January 2012 The Coordinating Council had a Meeting in Johannesburg

Present: Coordinators came from Tanzania, Benin, Burkina Faso, Uganda, South Africa, Ivory Coast, Kenya and Nigeria. This was a time of conflicts in Nigeria and a number of people died but our Sister managed to come to the meeting.

This was a planning meeting for the future and also respond to the responsibilities coming from Rome (Dominican Sisters International) especially The Jubilee theme for 2012: Women Preachers.

2 The Call for Apostolic Sisters to Visit the Dominican Nuns every year in May: In South Africa a group of 11 Sisters managed to undertake this visitation in on 9th June 2012. That was the Feast of Corpus Christi. At that particular Monastery challenges are as follows:

-The monastery is far from the rest of the Dominican Families in the Country; they are isolated.

- No vocations coming in and only receive transfers from other monasteries outside the country and members aging.

- Local Bishop has few priests – he struggles to get a permanent chaplain for the Nuns.

-Nuns are joyful and grateful for the visits and

Report: Coordinator Council for Africa



Sr. Michael during the Opening of DSI General Assembly

sharing from now and again.

3 The Impact on the seriousness of the USMI Report on Human Trafficking in Africa. Dominican Sisters in Africa would very much like to form links with USMI in Rome to assist in their endeavours to carry out their Awareness Programmes especially in rural areas.

4 The Visit of Pope Benedict XVI in Benin, West Africa - The Theme of Reconciliation, Justice and Peace did not appeal only to Catholics in the Region but up to now it is the theme for all Christians.

2013

Plans to be taken Seriously for this year

1 The Young Sisters 3 Year Programme -Jubilee 800 years as it ends in 2016.

2 DSI Project for Africa – Workshop for: Communication and Evangelization in African Context. This will be in Johannesburg-South Africa from 1-14 July 2013 □

Dominican Sisters International General Assembly 2013



DSJ General Assembly 2013

Reports of DSJ Coordinating Council

2010 - 2013

Continental Coordinator for Europe

Sr. Sara Böhmer OP



Sr. Sara Böhmer OP

Dominican Sisters Europe – a Kaleidoscope.

Yes, a Kaleidoscope, and not a mosaic – a kaleidoscope is always in change. And also Dominican female life in Europe is in an ongoing process of change!

In 15 minutes I want to take you with me on a journey into this kaleidoscope of Dominican life.

Dominican Sisters in Europe – a great diversity of languages, cultures, traditions.

The generalates of 81 congregations are here, of which 20 – a quarter - count less than 25 sisters.

App. 7000 sisters living in Europe, with app. 420 sisters - 6% - younger than 50 years old, app. half of them living in Central and Eastern Europe.

The main challenges of Europe:

- how to assure a good life for the old sisters on the last part of their journey in dignity
- how to assure leadership in very small and old congregations
- what to do with the institutions
- how to guarantee formation and future for the younger generation

The answers to these challenges depend on the specific situation of the congregations and language zones. Large international congregations such as the Sisters of the Presentation, the Dominicanas de la Annunciata or the Sisters of San Sisto will find other solutions than the sisters of St. Catherine from the Netherlands with 7 old members. The kaleidoscope will show some attempts to these very different situations. If we turn the kaleidoscope, we will find different answers. And who knows what answers we – or the Lord - will find in the future...

To answer to these challenges, there are some choices:

- to solve the problems by your own
- to search for any form of collaboration
- to involve lay people

How do the sisters in Europe try to respond to the challenges?

1. Assure a good life for the old sisters on the last part of their journey in dignity

- There are small congregations who decide to die in dignity because they accepted their situation. They use the possibilities of the specific country such as bringing the sisters to retreat homes, if possible in own convent groups, but if not possible also in groups with lay. Examples for this we find especially in the German and English speaking zone, above all in the Netherlands, but

“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”



“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”



also in Spain and Belgium.

- Sisters who have retreat homes by themselves offer possibilities for other religious people to join them. This goes across the religious families: e.g. in the Netherlands there are retreat houses with members of 10 different congregations.
- International congregations bring sisters to Europe to serve for a period and help the sisters in the last phase of their life. For the sisters in non-European countries this is sometimes a possibility to express their thankfulness to what they received from Europe.

2. Assure leadership in very small and old congregations

As far as I see, this topic until now is still not enough discussed in many parts of Europe. Especially in the Netherlands, where nearly every religious is already old and where we find congregations with e.g. 100 sisters between 78 and 103, leadership is a high item. But it would be necessary to discuss this in other parts of Europe also, especially if there is not the choice to receive leadership from other countries. In the Netherlands, we see that congregations have lay people in leadership, and some few congregations – non-Dominican - already have a majority of lay in the General Council. Also the question of the bursar is a high item – what to do if you do not have a skilled sister anymore? In this sector, answers are poor, and it would be worth to exchange more on this subject.

Report: Coordinator Council for Europe

One answer is that a small congregation joins a bigger one. Sometimes this happens – the Dominican sisters of Auch decided to join the sisters of the Presentation. But this is the exception.

3. What to do with the institutions?

This is a question which troubles especially the younger generation. In every meeting with the younger Sisters this topic rose as a high item. How to carry the institutions where in former times everyone was engaged, but nowadays only few Sisters still serve?

Answers to this question depend on the situation of the different countries and the juridical possibilities. In some regions, the congregations do not have institutions any more or made a juridical construction which permits them to have influence, but also to give high responsibilities to lay people.

The most difficult item seems to be the schools. There is a collaboration and exchange especially in SEDEP and the Groupement Fraternel, thus in Spain and France where Dominican school collaborations exist. In Central and Eastern Europe, the sisters are highly engaged in schools and some of them recently got the properties back – with all the problems this carries also.

The threat is to see the institutions only as a burden and not also as a chance for mission. Are they our new fields of preaching? The people working with us come from a secular environment, and even baptized employees often do not know much about their faith. How could we be present in a new way as Dominican sisters? Our institutions also can be seen as locations of New Evangelization – do we have possibilities to fill this with life?

4. Assure formation and future for the younger generation

There is a younger generation, not high in numbers, but present and active.

One of the main things I did in the times of being the coordinator for Europe was trying to bring the younger generation together, to encourage them to go on together, knowing each other, dreaming together, perhaps doing projects together.



“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”

Report: Coordinator Council for Europe



sister.

These initiatives and reflections on this encouraged us to discuss the question whether the new coordinator for Europe should have something like a “council of young sisters”. Until now, the coordinator met once a year with the representatives of the language groups, but any collaboration across the borders is difficult and costs energy which the boards in Europe normally do not have. So what if we would encourage the younger generation to take initiatives, to work together on items and perhaps also on projects? This idea was received with great openness, and some language zones already identified a sister who will be the young representative of their proper language group in the new European setting.

We met several times in Düsseldorf with a group of about 20 sisters, if possible three from each language zone, to discuss high items or to have a study week together. Most of the sisters – all up to a maximum age of 45-- appreciated these meetings very much, because they recognized that they are not alone. For the sisters of Central and Eastern Europe this is not so virulent, because they still have a large group in this age, and the Congregation of St. Margaret from Hungary is the youngest congregation in Europe with an average age of about 40 years. But in other parts of Europe, we find one or two younger sisters here and there, and it is important that they find themselves together with other Dominican sisters of the same age.

No one knows where this will end. We do not talk about merging, fusions or going together in a juridical sense. But who knows what the European kaleidoscope will show in some years? We want to be open for the movings of the Holy Spirit. Moving the colors of Dominican female life, so that new pictures can rise. Europe, the kaleidoscope, stays full of colors and possibilities – full of life! □

Some language zones took up this initiative. In the German speaking zone, there are self – organized meetings from younger sisters once a year. The Spanish speaking zone organized for the first time a meeting of sisters younger than 50 in September 2012, and this meeting was very successful. The Central and Eastern European sisters organized a study week together with Helen Alford from the Angelicum and Fr. Francisco Compagnoni which also was open to sisters of other regions. And while we are here, a session on Dominican liturgy takes place in Toulouse, organized by a younger French sister together with a Norwegian



Sr. Sara during the Cultural Night of DSI General Assembly. 2010-2013

“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”



DSJ General Assembly 2013

Reports of DSJ Coordinating Council

2010 - 2013

Continental Coordinator for Asia -Pacific

Sr. Cecille Espenilla OP



Sr. Cecille Espenilla OP

NOTA: Please view the video of this report on the website of DSI (www.dsiop.org)

PART I- Collaborative Programs of Asia-Pacific

1) 8th Conference of Dominican Justice Asia-Pacific, Peace and Care for Creation July 4-9, 2010 Sawangan, West Java, Indonesia
DSI Participants: 30 Sisters from 15 Congregations from 5 countries

2) Dominican Family Course for Leaders from Asia-Pacific
January 16-Feb. 4, 2011 (3 weeks)
Caleruega, Batangas, Filipinas
DSI Participants: 24 Sisters from 18 Congrega-

tions from 7 countries,
15 Sisters attended per module

3) 7th Course of Dominican Women Formation Leaders from Asia-Pacific
February 7 – April 1, 2011
2 months
Caleruega, Batangas, Filipinas
DSI Participants: 15 Sisters from 13 Congregations from 4 countries, 9 Sisters attended per module.

4) Dominican Family Conference for Leaders from Asia-Pacific
February 3-11, 2012
Saigon, Vietnam
DSI Participants: 49 Sisters from 33 Congregations from 13 countries and 3 Sisters from Rome

PART II – Election of Coordinator and Approval of of DSI-AP

1) Coordinator de Justice for Asia-Pacific, Peace and Care for Creation
Sr. Hermine Nurhayani, OP
Dominican Sisters of Indonesia
Years 2010 – 2014

2) Coordinator of DSI Asia-Pacific
Sr. Tran Thi Sam Marie Constance, OP
Dominican Sisters of Saint Catherine of Siena
Thanh Tam, Vietnam
Years 2013-2016

3) Feb. 8, 2012 – Approval of the Statutes DSI Asia-Pacific

PART III – Visits of the Coordinators of DSI

Sr. Fabiola and Sr. Cecilia

AUSTRALIA: Feb. 11-25, 2011
Congregations visited:

Dominican Sisters International General Assembly 2013



“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”

Report: Coordinator Council for Asia -Pacific

- a) Dominican Sisters of Eastern Australia and Solomon Islands
- b) Congregation of the Holy Cross
- c) Dominican Sisters in Northern Adelaide
- d) Dominican Sisters in Western Australia
- e) Dominican Sisters of Malta

SOLOMON ISLANDS: Feb. 26 – Mar. 2, 2011
Dominican Sisters from Eastern Australia and Solomon Islands

NEW ZEALAND: Mar. 3 – 8, 2011
Dominican Sisters from New Zealand

Sr. Cecilia

LEBANON: Sept. 20-24, 2011

Sisters of the Rosary of Jerusalem

- a) Dominican Sisters of the Presentation
- b) Dominican Sisters of Saint Catherine of Siena (Sisters from Iraq)

JORDAN: Sept. 25-28, 2011

- a) Sisters of the Rosary from Jerusalem
- b) Dominican Sisters of the Presentation
- c) Dominican Sisters of Saint Catherine of Siena (Sisters from Iraq)

JERUSALEM. Sept. 28 – Oct 6, 2011

- a) Sisters of the Rosary of Jerusalem
- b) Dominican Sisters of the Presentation
- c) Dominican Sisters of Saint Catherine of Siena (Sisters from Iraq)

KOREA: Sept. 5-12, 2012

- a) Missionary Religious of St. Dominic
- b) Dominican Sisters of the Presentation

JAPAN: Sept. 13-30, 2012

- a) Missionary Religious of St. Dominic
- b) Roman Congregation of St. Dominic
- c) Congregation of Maryknoll Sisters of St. Dominic

VIETNAM: January 26-29, 2013

- a) Dominican Sisters of Saint Catherine of Siena, Thanh Tam
- b) Dominican Sisters of St. Rosa of Lima
- c) Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine of Siena, Tam Hiep
- d) Dominican Sisters of Our Lady of the Rosary



PART IV – Other Collaborative Programs of DSI

1) May 31, the Dominican “Visitation Day”; the Apostolic Sisters (DSI) visit the Dominican Nuns

- a) PHILLIPPINES
 - a) Monastery of Our Lady of the Rosary
 - b) Queen of Angels Monastery

- b) JAPAN
 - Monastery of Seto

“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”



“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”

c) KOREA
Monastery of the Mother of God

d) AUSTRALIA

Dominican Sisters from Eastern Australia and Solomon Islands

had a unique way of celebrating "Visitation Day." According to Sr. Jill Shirvington: "Since we don't have nuns on this continent, we made contact with a monastery in Canada and we sent them a PowerPoint about our preaching. In exchange, they sent us a film." According to the OP-FAM "This has occasioned the interchange of very effective PowerPoint presentations which are valued highly by both groups. Undoubtedly, this enriching experience will continue in the future through prayer and kind gestures between the two different groups of women located in the extreme opposite ends of the earth, who maintain their precious Dominican heritage in common."

2) DSC NU-NGO and DSI

Five Sisters from DSI represented the continents of Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe, Latin America and North America who participated in the sessions of the UN and in the parallel session de la Commission on the Juridical and Social Condition of Women (CSW57) at United Nations in New York from March 3-15, 2013. Sr. Cecilia Espinilla from the Philippines represented the region of Asia-Pacific. Sr. Margaret Mayce, representative of NU-NGO facilitated the participation of the Sisters from DSI.

PART V –Dominican Women and the Mission of Preaching

The Dominican Sisters from Asia-Pacific are involved in several ways of preaching, such as the following: Education / teaching, care of the sick, care of children and elders, love and care of orphans, helping single mothers and saving babies from abortion, restoring Mother Earth, preaching to women, preaching by means of paintings like Sister Mary Horn of New Zealand, preaching by means of Social Media (Facebook and Twitter), preaching by means of radio programs, preaching by means of choral, concert and orchestral music for students; preaching by means of laughter with Sr. Agatha Lee, of Korea, who gives conferences and seminars about the power of laughter to some

Report: Coordinator Council for Asia-Pacific

10,000 persons a year; and Sr. Helen, of Australia, who has lost her sight, but continues to be active in the ministry with the help of a guide dog.

Explicit announcing of the Gospel must be the fundamental aspiration in all the varieties of preaching (2010 Chapter of the Order).

"Woe is me if I do not preach the Gospel!" 1 Cor. 09:16.

"The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission of Today," theme of the 7th General Assembly of DSI. □





DSJ General Assembly 2013

Reports of DSJ Coordinating Council

2010 - 2013

Continental Coordinator for Latin America and The Caribbean

Sr. Irene Diaz OP



Sr. Irene Díaz OP

Prior to reporting on the CODALC activities, we must recall its purpose: "The search for unity through the practice of communion, motivated by the Dominican spirituality and the accomplishment of projects related to the charism and spirituality."

Its structure includes the General Assembly which comprises the leaders or major superiors of each congregation, who meet every three years to plan, reflect, evaluate, and the Coordinating team

responsible for executing the planning and agreements made at the Assembly.

As Coordinating team, we meet every year and the regional delegates visit the national federations during the year.

During the three years, we meet with the brothers from CIDALC to define the reflection topic for the joint meeting.

In January of 2010, the Assembly took on three priorities:

- To free female Preaching so it may be a prophetic voice among our peoples.
- To promote comprehensive formation recovering the Dominican roots and popular wisdom.
- Continue the mission of justice and peace as a dimension of our identity.

These priorities are achieved from the various areas and projects to which I will now refer.

JUSTICE AND PEACE. During these three years, the promoters of Justice and Peace from CODALC and CIDALC participated along with the national justice and peace commissions to events, forums, seminars in favour of justice and peace, human rights, the care and protection of the environment.

An important event was the Seminar with the theme "the woman and her mission in the area of defence of life," held in Santiago, Chile, in 2011.

PRAXIS AND PREACHING. One of the objectives of this area is to take on the new challenges of Preaching. During the three years, there were several workshops of praxis and Preaching

"The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today"



“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”



at a regional and continental level. We are aware that art today is a great means for preaching as an expression of the search and contemplation of God manifested through the different artistic creations.

From September 11th to the 18th, 2011, the 3rd Predicarte was held in Cusco; a meeting of Artists from the Dominican Family of Latin America and the Caribbean whose motto was “Life cries and calls for our compassion.” It was attended by 31 brothers and sisters from different countries.

FORMATION. This area focuses on the brothers and sisters of the Order and Congregations responsible for initial formation. CODALC AND CIDALC are responsible for organizing an intensive and appropriately themed workshop in the three years.

In August of 2012, a workshop was held under the theme of “The vows in Dominican life,” for a period of fifteen days and with 74 participants: nuns, friars and apostolic sisters from 17 countries. We worked based on an integrated view of the different dimensions of the person, taking into account a biblical, psychological, theological

Report: Coordinator Council for Latin America and The Caribbean

and Dominican perspective.

In addition to all these activities, during the 2010 Assembly, CODALC gave its solidarity to the people from Haiti as they faced a difficult situation following the earthquake which nearly destroyed the country, by launching a solidarity project named Project for Human Dignity; its main objective was “to create the minimum necessary conditions to offer a more dignified life to its inhabitants” aiming at the achievement of a sustainable development.

The creation of a community capable of living on location and responsible for the development of the Project was an important aspect for the development of the same.

To this date, several areas of activity have been addressed:

- The infrastructures with the construction of roadways for the transit and communication among the different groups who live in small villages.
- the installation of drinking water since these people did not benefit from this service;
- health, based on traditional and alternative medicine, taking advantage of their own resources. Much interest was placed on the formation of health promoters.
- education: there are large numbers of children who have no access to minimum schooling.
- We have also approached the young, boosting sports and music to promote physical and mental health.
- The area of evangelization, which covers all other areas but also includes its own activities and objectives.

We express our gratitude for the work performed in coordination with DSI and CIDALC, in addition to all the financial support. □

Dominican Sisters International General Assembly 2013



DSJ General Assembly 2013

Reports of DSJ Coordinating Council

2010 - 2013

Continental Coordinator for North America

Sr. Rose Marie Riley OP



Sr. Rose Marie Riley OP

Nineteen Dominican Generalates in North America are members of Dominican Sisters International. Two Generalates are located in Quebec Province, Canada. These congregations are the Dominican Sisters of the Trinity, Montreal, and the Dominican Missionary Adorers, Quebec City.

The remaining North American DSI Dominican Generalates are located throughout the United States:

New York: Dominican Sisters of Amityville, Blauvelt, Ossining, Sparkill, and Maryknoll;

New Jersey: Dominican Sisters of Caldwell;

Midwest: Dominican Generalates are found in Columbus, Ohio; Racine and Sinsinawa, Wisconsin; Adrian and Grand Rapids, Michigan; and Springfield, Illinois.

Southwest: the Dominican Sisters of Houston, Texas, and Taos, New Mexico;

California: the Dominican Sisters of Mission San Jose and San Rafael;

Washington State: the Dominican Sisters of Tacoma, Washington

While these Motherhouses have very specific locations, our areas of mission do not. Mutual relationships with our global Dominican family have flourished as we have engaged in international ministry, collaborative projects and study programs. Here we discover the richness of Dominican Sisters International: Dominican Sisters on every continent, from every continent, building global bridges.

The Dominican Sisters of North America are more than a location. The heart of their identity is found in their collective mission statement. This is what I discovered when I put the mission statement of each congregation together:

It is easy to see what dominates the mission we preach: Gospel, Preaching, God, mission, Dominican, truth, women, sisters, preachers.

Within our mission we meet the challenges of our day, seeking the grace of new growth and opportunity.

Two major events have impacted religious life in the United States since 2008. The Apostolic Visitation was announced on Dec. 22, 2008, by Cardinal Franc Rodé, then prefect of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life (CICLSAL). Our participation included the Major Superior's communication with Mother Clare Millea, completion of a lengthy questionnaire and for some, on site visits by Apostolic Visitation Teams. Mother Clare's

"The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today"



“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”

Report: Coordinator Council for North America



words of former LCWR President, Franciscan Sr. Pat Farrell:

“We are in a time of crisis and that is a very hopeful place to be.

“We cannot allow it to consume an inordinate amount of our time and energy or to distract us from our mission.

“Through it all, we can only go forward with truthfulness and integrity. Hopefully we can do so in a way that contributes to the good of religious life everywhere and to the healing of the fractured Church we so love. . . We walk a fine line. Gratefully, we walk it together.” (Presidential Address, LCWR National Assembly, August 2012)

We walk forward, celebrating new life along the way. On our North American Continent there are many stories of challenges that have ushered in new life and transformation. These are just a few of them.

In the fall of 2012, the Dominican Sisters of the Trinity in Montreal and the Dominican Nuns of Berthierville, entered into a covenant relationship. The Nuns had an aging and oversize monastery. The sisters had a retreat center that was underutilized. As a result of conversations the nuns now occupy one half of the retreat center. This is their new monastery. The sisters continue their retreat work on the other side. Here we find transformation in the form of a new model.

The Dominican Missionary Adorers, located in Quebec City, Canada, continue to celebrate the life of their foundress, Mother Julienne of the Rosary. Mother Julienne’s life was testimony to a holy resiliency as she faced numerous challenges before founding this congregation in 1945. Documents for the cause of her beatification and canonization have been accepted in Rome, to the Congregation for the causes of the Saints.

In the United States, new life emerges through the sharing of resources and deepening of collaboration. In December of 2012 the Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine De’ Ricci merged with the Dominican Sisters of Peace. This new connection brings to 8 the number of congregations that now form the Dominican Sisters of Peace.

official reports were submitted to Rome in 2012. To date there has been no report back to the Congregations in the United States.

In April, 2012, the Vatican’s Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith announced the findings of a doctrinal assessment of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious commonly known as LCWR. All seventeen DSI Congregations in the United States are members of LCWR. Presently the executive leadership of LCWR and the three Bishops in charge of the assessment are meeting periodically. There is nothing further to report on this assessment at this time. The next LCWR Assembly will be held August of this year. We anticipate an update at that time.

The Apostolic Visitation and the Doctrinal Assessment have been surprising and painful realities in our day. But we recognize that challenge also brings opportunity for new life. These events have increased solidarity among women religious both in the United States and globally. The contemplative response of North American Sisters has brought a new clarity and strength to our mission and identity. This is well expressed in the

Dominican Sisters International General Assembly 2013



“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”

Report: Coordinator Council for North America



2011. This event was the direct result of the DSI Plenary in May, 2010 and was sponsored by DSI. This assembly brought forty younger Dominican sisters together to explore what it means to be Dominican in this century. They gathered under the theme of “Walking Together with Realism, Daring and Hope.” In the course of three days they discussed their hopes and dreams for Dominican religious life and the unique challenges of being the younger members of their congregations. They shared their experiences and celebrated the cultural diversity that has enriched their lives. Keynote speakers Sisters Toni Harris and Sister Margaret Mayce, along with Sister Fabiola, led them deeper into the global reality of our day.

In this age of technological advance, our younger sisters encourage us to make use of technology for the sake of the mission. Consider these words from two sisters who participated in this gathering of younger Dominicans:

I really think it’s important for us to continue building our theological formation, and I think this can be done easily online so that sisters from around the world can be a part of the programs. We see these programs as being part of an institute or university so that those who will need a certificate or degree for mission will be able to do that. (Adela Langa, second year Novice, Adrian)

A hope that we have is really using technology for mission. I know over here there are several of our sisters who are afraid of technology, so how do we use various forms of social media for outreach? We preach using social media, so how do we use it to reach out to different people who aren’t being addressed in other forms of ministry? (Jenn Schaaf, Novice, Blauvelt)

We carry the commitment and hopes of all of our sisters as we begin this 2013 DSI Plenary. On behalf of all of the DSI Dominican Sisters of North America I thank you for your attention and pledge our prayers for the success of this gathering: all for the sake of God’s mission! □

All DSI Dominican congregations in the United States participate in various networks that support and enhance the mission. These include a Collaborative Dominican Novitiate, justice and peace organizations, and for some, non-canonical regional entities. For instance, Congregations in the East come together as “Dominican Sisters in Committed Collaboration.” The “Dominican Alliance” includes Congregations of the Midwest and Southwest. Sisters on the west coast form the collaborative entity known as “Ocean Pacific.”

The Dominican Sisters Conference is a new non-canonical organization which unites the sisters and associates of the United States Dominican Congregations in their mission to preach the gospel of Jesus, standing as a clear voice for truth, justice and peace.

Of great significance for Dominican Sisters International is the “Younger Dominican Sisters” gathering held at Mission San Jose in October

“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”



DSJ General Assembly 2013

Reports of the Programs

that DSJ supports

Dominican Volunteers International



Sr. Lucia Fernandez OP - DVI Director

Dominican Volunteers International

Report to the General Assembly of DSI

One of the most important things in any project is to identify your general and most important objective. For that reason I have begun by saying that DVI "is a project of the Dominican Family which seeks to provide contact between persons and communities in order to carry out the mission of the Holy Preaching. It is to encourage and strengthen a common participation of nuns, friars, sisters and laity in the mission of preaching the Gospel to the whole world. It does not follow just any charism, but rather that of Saint Dominic. We send volunteers -- who already have some formation and interest, and have received a specific formation in DVI -- to Dominican communities that are already working, preferably among poor and excluded populations.

In order to really carry out this goal, we must be supported by two very important pillars which

are:

- The Welcoming Community. This group opens their doors and their arms so that the volunteer, who is away from home, may find the affection and trust that any community ought to offer to a person who will stay with them as another member of the family. This new person is going to share a whole year with them, helping them in the Preaching of the Word and the daily tasks of the community. Generally the volunteers, supported in their faith, want to share by placing all that our Lord has given them at the disposal of those most in need.
- The Sending Community. This group is very important. It provides discernment with the person who wants to be a volunteer. This group tries to know the person well. They make sure that the volunteer is ready for the mission so that the volunteer will not have unpleasant surprises when they finally arrive at the mission.

All the Dominican Family needs to know the Dominican Volunteers. This group will become ever more important as time goes by, since our communities are aging. If we want to continue our apostolic works we need to be helped by those who also belong to this great Family, those who are going to work with us in the field of Evangelization and Preaching of the Word. □





DSJ General Assembly 2013

Reports of the Programs

that DSJ supports

DSI presence at the United Nations



Sr. Margaret Mayce OP, DSI delegate at The United Nation

UNITED NATIONS NGO REPORT DSI MAY 2013

At the gathering of this Assembly three years ago, those present gave their overwhelming support to the continuation of the presence of a Dominican Sister at the United Nations in New York. Though the challenges presented by great physical distances can be quite daunting, I feel that we have made significant progress in fostering a greater bond between our sisters world-wide, and the work done in New York in your names. And the most significant event in this regard is what I would like to begin with.

This past March, the five continental areas of DSI were represented at the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women in New York. It was my privilege to welcome Sisters Paulina Chioma Ogbonnaya from Nigeria; Cecilia Espenilla from the Philippines; Edel Murphy from Ireland; Pamela Robles Espinoza from Peru; and

Corinne Sanders from No. America. The theme of the Commission was the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls. Our sisters had the opportunity to attend the formal sessions of the Commission, as well as side events sponsored by NGOs and Member States. The topics addressed included honor killings; women's economic empowerment; violence against women and girls in conflict situations; domestic violence; violence against women and HIV in Africa; efforts aimed at eliminating female genital mutilation; and the importance of educating and engaging men and boys in the prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls. As a follow-up to the meeting of the Commission, I sent the statements made by the Member States who are currently members of the Commission, to the Continental Coordinators and the Justice Promoters of DSI. It is my hope that they will share this information with the sisters. This way, the sisters have an idea of what their countries are saying at the UN regarding violence against women and girls - and they might be able to make a judgment as to whether or not what a country says, is true. This might encourage sisters to support their governments in the good they are doing - and challenge them where they need to be challenged. This is a concrete way in which the sisters at the grass roots can participate in the work I try to do in New York.

While in New York, the sisters from DSI enjoyed the gracious hospitality of the Dominican Sisters of Hope, who provided us with lovely accommodations in their Motherhouse. In the evenings, we shared a meal, socialized and reflected together on what we had heard and experienced during the day, and what the implications were for the situation of women and girls in our respective parts of the world. I believe that each one of us came away from the experience convinced that the deep connection of our spirits is what ultimately can overcome the great distances that otherwise separate us. It was a marvelous experience of the Dominican Family and a great sign of hope for our continued collaboration in this important work.

"The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today"



DSI representative at The United Nations



What made this larger experience of DSI at the UN possible, was a conversation I had at the last Assembly with Sr. Elizabeth Mackie, the Prioress of the Dominican Sisters of New Zealand. Elizabeth told me of the interest of one of her sisters in having an experience at the United Nations. So, in January, 2011, Sr. Jacqui Ryan arrived, and worked along with me for the next four months. One of Jacqui's greatest contributions to the work we do at the UN was in the area of global climate change. Being a resident of New Zealand, she had a familiarity with the small island nations of the South Pacific, and was able to teach me a great deal about the threat posed by changing global temperatures and the consequent rising sea levels. I hear from Jacqui regularly, and feel a deeper connection with that part of our world because of the gift of her presence in New York those four months.

Thanks to this deepening connection between the UN-NGO Office in New York and DSI, I was invited to attend the assembly of Dominican Sisters Africa in May, 2011, in Nairobi, Kenya, where we reflected together on the theme, Preparing

Report of the Programs that DSI supports

Our Dominican Future in Africa with Realism, Daring and Hope. I came away with a sense of awe and great respect for the dedication of our African sisters, who each and every day confront the challenges of crushing poverty; violence against women and girls; the tension between Christians and Muslims; the reality of HIV/Aids; the lack of adequate technology and the burden which this places on communication; and the reality of war and armed conflict. I was personally challenged by our Sr. Petronille Kayiba, who invited us all to remember that the future is always before us; and that there is no need for despair in Africa. In Sr. Petronille's words - "Divine Blessings are here." And it was my experience that many of those Divine Blessings are in the persons of our Dominican sisters throughout the Continent.

So now I would like to share with you just a few of the major areas in which I am involved at the UN - and these are areas that have major implications for many of you and the people with whom you live and minister.

The first is that of :

1) SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY ERADICATION

As many of you know, the deadline for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals is 2015. However, despite progress in many parts of the world, poverty continues to persist like a plague, and the gap between the rich and the poor continues to widen. I would like to highlight two significant areas of my work related to efforts directed at poverty eradication and human rights-based social development

SOCIAL PROTECTION FLOOR INITIATIVE

Access to adequate social protection is recognized by the international community as a human and social right. However, today between 75 and 80 percent of the world's population has no access to social security. When financial and economic crises occur, as in 2008-2009, these people have no social protection to fall back on, throwing them into even deeper poverty than before. The concept of a social protection floor is rooted in the fundamental principle of social justice, and in the specific universal right of everyone to social



DSI representative at The United Nations

Report of the Programs that DSI supports

security and to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of themselves and their families. The basic idea is that no one should live below a certain income level, and everyone should have access to basic social services. The components of a social protection floor include :

1. Basic income security throughout the life span : such as pensions for the elderly and persons with disabilities; child benefits; income support benefits; services for the unemployed.
2. Universal access to essential affordable services – health care, water and sanitation; education; food security; housing – and other services defined according to national priorities.

The Social Protection Floor would be nationally defined, and based on the availability of resources within a given country. It should secure protection aimed at preventing and alleviating poverty, vulnerability and social exclusion. A number of middle and low-income countries have already made great strides in extending social protection – including Argentina, Brazil, El Salvador, Haiti, Mexico, Mozambique, the Philippines, Rwanda, South Africa, Thailand.

Financial Transaction Tax / Military Budgets

Of course the question from governments is always “how will we pay for this????” Representatives of non-governmental organizations do have an answer to this, although it is an answer that governments do not want to hear. There are two specific ways to assist the poorest countries to establish a social protection floor :

- First, by placing a tax on financial transactions worldwide. Millions of dollars are traded on the open market each day, in New York; in London; Frankfurt; Tokyo....and not one penny is taxed. A Financial Transaction Tax would levy a small tax on these huge financial transactions, and begin to build up a global fund for development and social protection.
- Secondly by taking a portion of national military budgets and diverting this money to a fund for global development and social protection.

It goes without saying that both of these sug-

gestions are feasible; it is simply a question of political will. And when it comes to shifting political will, civil society – people like you and me - has a huge responsibility.

At the United Nations, NGOs are lobbying the Member States to incorporate the Social Protection Floor into their national policies, and to adopt a Financial Transaction Tax as one way of financing this. And throughout the world civil society is calling on national governments to do the same. As a follow-up to this Assembly, I will send information to the continental coordinators and Justice Promoters, asking them to encourage their Sisters to contact national governments and lobby for the adoption of these very important measures, which would enable people to enjoy the essential human rights which are theirs.

2) HUMAN RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT POST-2015

GUIDING PRINCIPLES ON HUMAN RIGHTS OF PERSONS LIVING IN EXTREME POVERTY

Today almost half of the population in developing countries lives in extreme poverty, and is denied basic human rights, such as the right to an adequate standard of living, including food, housing, education, health care, water and sanitation. People living in poverty across the world are often excluded and marginalized from political power and processes, and their right to participate in public affairs is often ignored.

In 2009, The United Nations Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights was established, with a mandate to evaluate the relationship between the realization of human rights and extreme poverty. The Special Rapporteur, Ms. Magdalena Sepulveda (Chile), submitted her report – the Guiding Principles on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights - to the Human Rights Council in Geneva, where it was adopted in September 2012. The Guiding Principles are based on the understanding that eradicating extreme poverty is not only a moral duty but also a legal obligation under existing international human rights law.

A human rights approach respects the dignity and autonomy of persons living in poverty and empowers them to meaningfully and effectively

“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”



DSI representative at The United Nations

Report of the Programs that DSI supports



Coordinators and Justice Promoters to use with our Sisters throughout the world.

Our Dominican presence at the United Nations in New York and in Geneva, is a continuation of the more than 500-year history of Dominican advocacy on behalf of human rights. The work that Olivier and I do in the names of our Dominican brothers and sisters throughout the world, is done in the spirit of our brothers Antonio Montesinos and Bartolome de las Casas – and if they were here with us today, I have no doubt that they would be urging us to advocate for both a human rights-based approach to development, and a social protection floor. Our common advocacy on behalf of human rights is one way in which we can help all of our brothers and sisters to enjoy the fullness of life which God so dearly desires for them. ▣

participate in public life, and to hold policy makers accountable.

The Guiding Principles are global in scope. They should be used by all countries and regions at all stages of economic development, with due regard to national specificities. They are based on a relational and multidimensional view of poverty that recognizes that the empowerment of persons living in poverty should be both a means of realizing the rights of the poor and an end in itself.

Some of the foundational principles which are essential to this human rights-based approach to poverty reduction include :

- Dignity, universality, and interdependence of all rights
- Equal enjoyment of all human rights by persons living in extreme poverty
- Equality between men and women.
- Rights of the child
- Participation and empowerment –

As with the Social Protection Floor, civil society worldwide is lobbying national governments to incorporate these Guiding Principles into policies designed to reduce and eliminate poverty. I will be providing information to the Continental



Dominican Sisters International General Assembly 2013



DSJ General Assembly 2013

Reports of the Programs

that DSJ supports

Justice and Peace for DSI



Sr. Toni Harris OP, International Promoter of Justice and Peace for DSI

“Great gift” and “wonderful privilege”: these are the responses that come to my mind when anyone asks me what it has been like to serve as International Promoter for Justice and Peace for DSI during these past six-and-one-half years. Imagine these opportunities:

- Accompanying Dominican Sisters in Cambodia as they travel to remote fishing villages. There they gathered with the small minority of Christians -- one or two Catholic families -- in the village for prayer and catechesis.

- Coordinating with local Dominican Sisters in Zambia a program for other Dominican Sisters from many countries in Africa. This program integrated the themes of development, Catholic Social Doctrine and the essentials of our Dominican charism.

- Gathering for a time of prayer with Dominican Sisters in a barren field marked with pink crosses in Juarez, Mexico, near the US border. These crosses bear the names of women whose bodies were found discarded near the field. They are among the hundreds of unsolved murders and the thousands of disappearances of women in that area.

- Joining with Dominican Sisters and Brothers in Lyon, France, for their justice and peace conference for the francophone Dominican Family. The theme was, “Testimonies: Justice and Peace in the World with the Dominican Family – the Other: a Dominican Approach.”

- Traveling with a delegation of Sisters

from the USA to visit Iraqi refugees in Lebanon and Syria. This Sisters' Delegation, sponsored by Catholic Relief Services, attempted to better understand the realities of the refugee crisis created by the US invasion of Iraq.

These opportunities – and many others like them – resulted from efforts to implement the goal of DSI that is directly related to the Sister Promoter’s mission: “To foster a more compassionate world order through the promotion of peace and justice, the integrity of creation and human rights, especially those of women.” During these past several years, implementation of this goal has been given concrete form through these major areas of responsibility:

- Animation – Promotion

Examples of “animation” efforts included presentations about the integral nature of our work for justice to conferences of our Dominican Family, especially elected leaders, in all the continental areas.

- Formation – Education

“Formation” efforts were expressed through a variety of presentations, workshops and conferences. For example, a two-week program entitled, “Development Grounded in Legacy and Charism,” offered in Zambia (2011) and Burkina Faso (2013).

- Communication

Avenues of “communication” included information on DSI website, articles in DSI Newsletter, email communication with Sister JPIC Promoters, “Skype” conference calls, “Facebook” page (beginning) and Action Alerts.



“The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today”



International Promotor of Justice and Peace for DSI

- Collaboration

“Collaboration” endeavors involved presentations to other branches of the Dominican Family, regular work with the groups of intercongregational JPIC promoters based in Rome and JPIC training sessions for groups of religious from other congregations.

- Solidarity

Demonstrations of “solidarity” included time spent with communities of Dominican sisters in remote locations, learning about their lives and their efforts to create a more just world. Solidarity was also expressed through communications with sisters in troubled and conflicted areas.

It has also been a privilege to have had two opportunities in these past years (2009 and 2013) to meet with the members of the International Dominican Commission for Justice and Peace (IDCJP). I am especially grateful to our Dominican sisters who have served on this commission of the Order during these years:

- Africa: Paulina Chioma, OP (Santa Caterina da Siena, Italia); Gianna Masera, OP (Unione San Tommaso)
- Asia-Pacific: Hermine Nurhayani, OP (Indonesia); Rosa Yaya, OP (Adrian /Remedies)
- Europe: Marie Laure Denès, OP (CSRD)
- América Latina y el Caribe: Migdalia Perez, OP (Missionaries of the Rosary); Noemi Zambrano, OP (OLR/St. Catherine)
- North America: Lucianne Siers, OP (Grand Rapids); Dustyne Farnan, OP (Adrian)
- United Nations: Margaret Mayce, OP (Amityville); Eileen Gannon, OP (Sparkill)
- DSI: Maria Fabiola Velasquez, OP (Présentation)

(It is a matter of concern for me that, since Marie Laure concluded her service [March 2012],



Report of the Programs that DSI supports

no Sister Promoter from Europe has been recommended for nomination to the IDCJP.)

During these past several years, in opportunities that I have had to meet with our Dominican Sisters serving in forty-seven countries, I have repeatedly emphasized the following points:

- The most significant work for justice and peace occurs at the local levels where our Sisters live and minister.

- “WE HAVE FAMILY” in 110 of the world’s countries; where one of our Sisters serves, we all stand in solidarity with her.

- Action for justice and participation in the transformation of the world are integral elements of our Dominican vocation. This conviction is grounded in the words of the world’s bishops: “Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel, or, in other words, of the Church’s mission for the redemption of the human race and its liberation from every oppressive situation.” (Justice in the World, 1971, #6)

- As we look around our world and when we reflect seriously on the Gospel, we cannot help but be challenged to work to bring our reality into closer conformity with Gospel demands. That challenge means working toward the elimination of everything in our society that does not respect and sustain the basic dignity, fundamental rights, and decent quality of life for all persons.

- Working for justice is not optional, nor is it simply a dimension of our lives. Rather, it is a dynamic perspective that informs both our being and our doing. This perspective shapes our prayer, our life in common, our living of the vows -- all that we do.

- Everyone, in every apostolate, has the opportunity – and responsibility – to help make the world more just and peaceful.

Thank you to Margaret Ormond OP, Maria Fabiola Velasquez Maya OP and all of DSI for this “great gift” and “wonderful privilege”. With “um grande abraço”, let us warmly welcome our new International Promoter for Justice and Peace for DSI, Celestina Veloso Freitas OP (Anunciata)! ▣

The countries that Sr. Toni has visited are available in her Report for the DSI General Assembly in: www.dsiop.org



"The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today"



"The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today"



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Dominican Sisters International General Assembly 2013



"The New Evangelization and our Dominican Mission Today"



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**SEVENTH
DSI GENERAL ASSEMBLY
ROME, MAY 9 - 16, 2013**

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