

**ACTS**  
**of the**  
**GENERAL CHAPTER OF DIFFINITORS**  
**of the**  
**Friars of the**  
**ORDER OF PREACHERS**

Bogota  
2007

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## LETTER OF PROMULGATION

Having (St. Dominic) gone to Paris and after passing the night in the church of Saint Mary of Rocamadour, some German pilgrims, having heard him recite the psalms and the litany with his socius, joined them with devotion as companions. For four days they supported him at their own expense. However, the man of God lamented and told his socius Bro Bertrán: *“I am completely aware that we are reaping from them these material goods, but we are not sowing in them what is spiritual; let us kneel down and ask God the gift to be able to understand them and to speak with them in order to announce to them the Word of God”*. Having done so, they spoke German for four days, causing the admiration of those men. Walking with them, they preached to them.

Rodrigo de Cerrato, Vida de Santo Domingo, 30

My dear brothers in St. Dominic:

During the General Chapter of Prior Provincials, celebrated in the city of Bogotá, we brothers meditated on the passage we have just quoted from the life of Our Father. In this simple and itinerant scene, somehow there are different elements present that *“inseparably interconnected, harmoniously balanced and mutually enriching comprise in synthesis the life of the Order”*.<sup>1</sup>

We Capitular friars inspired ourselves in the words of the Gospel that say: *“... God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life”*. (John 3, 16). For this reason, the mission of the Order expresses our way of **“loving the world”**. From this point of view, the friar is called to be a man that

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<sup>1</sup>. LCO I § IV.

brings people together, a man of dialogue. Hence, the whole world is his cloister. The General Chapter wanted once more to highlight the contemplative roots of our vocation and at the same time, renew the call to **the universal mission of the Order**.

Taking up the reflection of the Chapter of Providence regarding **our intellectual life** as *MISERICORDIA VERITATIS* and in continuity with the practical guidelines set out by the Chapter of Krakow, we Capitulr friars are aware that Saint Dominic conceived study as an integral part of the life of each friar in his pilgrimage towards the contemplation of Him who is our happiness. When Bro Dominic dispersed his friars, in a way he nourished a *propositum* in his heart, to send them to Bologna or Paris to study. Similarly, nearly eight hundred years since the confirmation of the Order, we are aware that, faithful to our tradition – and beyond our having a *Ratio Studiorum Generalis* – we need to outline a new strategy for our intellectual mission in the Church and in the World.

We have also decided to renew our passion for Dominican life, strengthening it in genuine fraternity. In 1203, Dominic set out on his first journey to the Marches with his bishop Diego. His meeting and dialogue with the innkeeper of Toulouse would change the life of both of them: Dominic did not return to Osma and the innkeeper fully embraced the faith in Jesus Christ. Our **common life and mission** call us to “passion for collaboration”, “passion for community”, “passion to be disciples” having everything in common, and definitively to “passion for the God of Jesus Christ and for Humanity”! Saint Dominic encourages us once more like he did to his companions along the way “*Let us walk and think about the Saviour*”.

The desire to preach the Gospel to all nations impels us to invite others to join in this mission. Once more, we thought about our **young men in formation**. Rather, aware of how delicate a task formation is, we wrote a “**Letter to a formator**”. We also realistically asked ourselves: “What type of young people are coming to the

Order? What are the challenges facing formation? Based on this, we acknowledged that formation is “a subject that belongs to the whole Order”.<sup>2</sup> In this framework, we wanted to offer a word about the “community of formation”, “those responsible for formation» and «on-going formation”.

In our Order, **government** is not a ‘special science’ or an ‘arcane mystery’ which only a few experts share while others are excluded. Dominican government is not for some who legislate and others who obey. It is a ministry to which all the brothers are called since the time of our religious profession which – indeed – gives us ‘voice’ and ‘vote’. From this point of view, the General Chapter wanted to offer a word in order to strengthen communication in communities, and between local and provincial communities; in order to ensure collaboration and cooperation in taking up common projects; in order to carry out a mission “without frontiers”<sup>3</sup> from which no entity – however weak or small it might consider itself to be – can be excluded.

Finally, in our religious life, when we ask, we should trust that what we receive will be good for us and for the others. Based on this affirmation, we reflected on our **economic life**; the need for transparency and clarity in the management of goods on the part of each friar, of every community, of every province and of the whole Order. This involves asking and giving account of our administration. We administer goods that are destined for the mission which will be shared in solidarity with those who do not have them. They do not belong to us. They were given to us in order to contribute in a subsidiary way to projects that ensure this mission.

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We have evaluated, discerned and proposed all of this to the Order from the Convent of St. Dominic in Bogotá. With their warm welcome, their contagious joy and enthusiasm, the friars of the

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<sup>2</sup> Cf. ACG 1992 Mexico 27.2.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. ACG 1986 Avila 22.

Province of St. Louis Bertrán of Colombia offered us an ideal framework for our Chapter. My gratitude, both personal and in the name of the Order, goes to the Prior Provincial, Bro José Gabriel Mesa Angulo who, with much generosity accepted the responsibility to house the Chapter. A special mention must go to Bro Orlando Rueda Acevedo, General Secretary for the Chapter, for his «effectiveness» based on his deep ‘affectivity’. Thanks must be given also to his immediate collaborators: Bro Carlos Ariel Betancourt and Bro Giovanni Guarnizo (vice-secretaries); to those who ensured communication between us (translators and interpreters), between us and the world (the secretariat, those in charge of the web-page, communications, chronicle, etc.), between us and Our Lord (those responsible for the daily liturgy, the church decoration, etc.).

To our student friars, our brothers, a word of heartfelt gratitude and encouragement. I said it at the beginning of the Chapter and wanted to repeat it also at the end: “You are the future of the Order. However, do not forget that – gathered in a General Chapter – we are also your future and with our word written down in these Acts we wanted to prepare this future for you”.

We celebrated together our joys and our hope, and also our sorrows and pains. In His mysterious Providence God wanted our dear (+) Bro Dominique Renouard, brother, collaborator and great friend, to live his Easter during the celebration of the General Chapter. Could we have chosen a more beautiful framework to commend this “good and faithful servant” to the Lord, to Our Lady of the Rosary of Chiquinquirá and to Our Father Saint Dominic? Bro Dominique, rest in peace and be for us “another Dominic” from heaven!

\*\*\*\*\*

With this present letter, I promulgate the Acts of the General Chapter of Prior Provincials, which met in our convent of St. Dominic in Bogotá, Colombia, from July 18 to August 8, 2007.

On this day, the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, we also recall the so-called “Dominican Pentecost”. According to tradition, on the 15th of August 1217, 790 years ago, Saint Dominic dispersed his first friars from Prouille.<sup>4</sup> There, the first Dominican community had been founded towards the end of 1206. For this reason, the mission of the Order is intimately linked to our contemplative sisters and from Bogotá we wanted also to send them a letter. Our Father’s biographers tell us that, on that day, having invoked the Holy Spirit, Dominic told his first friars, who were still few in numbers, to disperse, for seeds have to be thrown to the wind, since heaped up they can bear no fruit and will rot to no avail. To the logical question that they could have asked, “*What are we going to do in Paris, Bologna or Rome?*” He answered them: “*Preach, study and found priories*”.<sup>5</sup>

When they read in these Acts about the Order’s preoccupation regarding our presence in China, Haiti, Chiapas or Ciudad Juárez in Mexico, the “*Verapaces*” in Guatemala, Cuba, Aruba, Equatorial Guinea, Rumania, Baltic States, Russia, Ukraine, etc. many brothers might ask: “*What are we going to do in these places?*”. The answer will not be long in coming, for it is the same one: “*Preach, study and found priories*”.

Given in Rome, in our Priory of Santa Sabina, on the 15th of August 2007, Solemnity of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary.

Fraternally in Saint Dominic

Bro Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa OP  
Master of the Order

Bro Juan Pablo Corsiglia OP  
Secretary

Prot. 50/07/880 Bogotá 2007

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. E. de Salagnac, *Peculiaridades con que Dios distinguió a la Orden de Predicadores*, II. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *Proceso de canonización de Santo Domingo – Actas de testigos de Bolonia; Testigo V: Fray Juan de España (o de Navarra)*; Cf. fr. Vincent de Couesnongle, *La dimensión contemplativa de nuestra vida Dominicana* (30 de junio de 1982), en *IDI 200*, marzo de 1983, 33-38.

## DIFFINITORS

### UNDER

#### **FR CARLOS ALFONSO AZPIROZ COSTA** MASTER OF THE ORDER OF PREACHERS

##### *Ex Master of the Order*

fr. Timothy RADCLIFFE

##### *Prior Provincials*

- fr. Francisco Javier CARBALLO FERNÁNDEZ, Province of Spain  
fr. Gilbert NARCISSE, Province of Toulouse  
fr. Bruno CADORÉ, Province of France  
fr. Riccardo BARILE, Province of St. Dominic in Italy  
fr. Daniele CARA, Province of St. Catherine of Siena in Rome  
fr. Giovanni DISTANTE, Province of St. Thomas Aquinas in Italy  
fr. Hans-Albert GUNK, Province of Germany  
fr. Allan James WHITE, Province of England  
fr. Krzysztof POPLAWSKI, Province of Poland  
fr. Antonio GARCÍA LOZANO, Province of Aragon  
fr. Benedikt Tomáš MOHELNÍK, Province of Bohemia  
fr. Ivan MATELJAN, Province of the Annunciation of the BVM in Croatia  
fr. José Manuel VALENTE DA SILVA NUNES, Province of Portugal  
fr. Luis MARÍN DE ESPINOSA LABELLA, Province of Betica  
fr. Bernard M. VOCKING, Province of the Netherlands  
fr. Patrick LUCEY, Province of Ireland

- fr. Gonzalo Bernabé ITUARTE VERDUZCO, Province of St. James in Mexico
- fr. Benigno GAMARRA PADILLA, Province of St. John the Baptist in Peru
- fr. José Gabriel MESA ANGULO, Province of St. Louis Bertrand in Columbia
- fr. Tito B. MURCIA FLORIÁN, Province of St. Catherine of Siena in Ecuador
- fr. Bonifacio GARCÍA SOLIS, Province of Our Lady of the Rosary
- fr. Domien Dolf VAGANÉE, Province of St. Rose in Flanders
- fr. Javier Ma. POSE, Province of St. Augustine in Argentina
- fr. Dominic IZZO, Province of St. Joseph in the USA
- fr. Paul GATT, Province of Pius V in Malta
- fr. Yvon POMERLEAU, Province of St. Dominic, Canada
- fr. Emmerich VOGT, Province of the Holy Name of Jesus in the USA
- fr. Dietmar SCHON, Province of Upper Germany and Austria
- fr. Michael MASCARI, Province of St. Albert the Great in the USA
- fr. Thomas CASSIDY, Province of the Assumption of the BVM in Australia and New Zealand
- fr. Vicente Ma. MICALLEF Province of fr. Bartholomé de las Casas in Brazil
- fr. Didier BOILLAT, Province of the Annunciation of the BVM in Switzerland
- fr. Joseph NGOSIDINH, Province of the Queen of Martyrs in Vietnam
- fr. Edmund NANTES, Province of the Philippines
- fr. Martin Joseph GLEESON, Province of St. Martin de Porres in the USA
- fr. Ignatius MADUMERE, Province of St. Joseph the Worker in Nigeria
- fr. Dominic MENDONCA, Province of India
- fr. Benedikt Robert HAJAS, Province of Slovakia

fr. Alexis PÁEZ OVARES, Province of St. Vincent Ferrer in Central America

*Vice-Provincial*

fr. James CHANNAN, Vice-Province of the Son of Mary in Pakistan

*Vicar Generals*

fr. Andrzej KOSTECKI, General Vicariate of Hungary

fr. Félix FERNÁNDEZ RODRÍGUEZ, General Vicariate of St. Laurence the Martyr in Chile

fr. Philippe COCHINAUX, General Vicariate of St. Thomas in Belgium

fr. Roger GAISE, General Vicariate of the Democratic Republic of Congo

fr. Mark JAMES, General Vicariate of South Africa

fr. Celestine HUANG, General Vicariate of the Queen of China

fr. Jacek SZPREGLEWSKI, General Vicariate of the Guardian Angels

fr. Mariusz WOZNIAK, General Vicariate of Russia and the Ukraine

fr. Marcos Luis ESPINEL ARAÚZO, General Vicariate of the Holy Cross in Puerto Rico

*Delegates of Vicariates*

fr. Gabriel NÁPOLE, Regional Vicarite in Latin America of the Province of Aragon

fr. Tomás TURRADO CARRACEDO, Provincial Vicariate in Venezuela of the Province of Betica

fr. Henri PAROI, Provincial Vicariate of the Solomon Islands of the Province of the Assumption of the BVM in Australia and New Zealand

fr. Carlos CAVAR, Provincial Vicariate fr. Vicentii Bernedo in Bolivia of the Province of Germany

fr. Ángel Jorge SALDÍAS PEDRAZA, Provincial Vicariate in Bolivia  
of the Province of St. Albert the Great

fr. Paul Dzung TRAN, Provincial Vicariate in Canada of the Province  
of the Queen of Martyrs in Vietnam

*Delegates of Convents under the immediate jurisdiction of the Master of  
the Order*

fr. Jean-Michel POFFET, Convent of St. Stephen in Jerusalem

fr. Joseph AGIUS, Convent of SS. Dominic and Xystus, Rome

OTHER PARTICIPANTS AT THE CHAPTER

*Procurator General of the Order, Assistants of the Master of the  
Order and the Syndic of the Order*

† fr. Dominique RENOUARD, Vicar of the Master of the Order

fr. Robert OMBRES, Canonist. - Procurator General (cf. ACG 1998 n. 196)

fr. Chrys McVEY, Socius for the Apostolic Life

fr. Márcio Alexandre COUTO, Socius for the Intellectual Life

fr. Cletus NWABUZO, Socius for the Provinces of Africa

fr. José Bernardo VALLEJO MOLINA, Syndic of the Order

fr. Manuel MERTEN, General Promoter of the Nuns

fr. Mark EDNEY, Director of IDI

fr. Ignatius PERKINS, Lay Brothers (cf. ACG 2004 n. 295)

*Members of the Dominican Family invited by the Master of the Order*

Sr Clara Mercedes del Rosario ARENAS, Nun

Sr Isabel María de la Trinidad ORENES FERNANDEZ, Nun

Sr Rosario DE MEER, Roman Congregation of St. Dominic

Sr Marie Thérèse PERDRIault, Dominicans of the Presentation  
Miss María Isabel SERRANO GUARGUATI, Lay Fraternity  
Mr. Duncan MacLAREN, Lay Fraternity

*Moderators*

fr. Gordian MARSHALL  
fr. Luis Carlos BERNAL  
fr. Jean-Louis LAROCHELLE

*Secretaries*

fr. Orlando RUEDA ACEVEDO, secretary general  
fr. Carlos Ariel BETANCOURT OSPINA, vice-secretary and  
syndic of the general chapter  
fr. Giovanni GUARNIZO VALENZUELA, vice-secretary  
fr. Juan Ubaldo LÓPEZ SALAMANCA, public relations

THOSE WHO ASSISTED AT THIS CHAPTER

*Interpreters*

fr. Leo ALMAZAN  
fr. Louis-Marie ARIÑO DURAND  
fr. Jean-Ariel BAUZA SALINAS  
fr. David BELLUSCI  
fr. Sixto José CASTRO  
fr. Germán CORREA MIRANDA  
fr. Didier CROONENBERGHS  
fr. Alejandro CROSTHWAITE  
fr. Emilio Bautista GARCÍA ALVAREZ

fr. Dominic IP  
fr. Mario JABARES  
fr. Manuel Angel MAESTRO MARTIN  
fr. Philip McSHANE  
fr. Paul Dominique MASICLAT  
fr. Nelson A. MEDINA FERRER  
Sr. Támara MURILLO  
fr. Michael O'ROURKE  
fr. Carlos QUIJANO  
Sr. M. Laetitia YOUCHTCHENKO

*Assistants*

fr. Anderson AGUIRRE SÁNCHEZ  
fr. Iderman ANDRADE SUÁREZ  
fr. Jorge Andrés ANGARITA SOLANO  
fr. Alonso ARÉVALO MARTÍNEZ  
fr. Elkin Alexi BALLESTEROS GUERRERO  
fr. Ismael Leonardo BALLESTEROS GUERRERO  
fr. Danny BARRETO GÓMEZ  
fr. Franklin BUITRAGO ROJAS  
fr. Javier Antonio CASTELLANOS  
fr. Ariel Calixto CASTELLANOS SÁNCHEZ  
fr. Esneider CLAROS CASTRO  
fr. Miguel Ignacio CELY GUESGUAN  
fr. Arles DURÁN AVENDAÑO  
fr. Atanasio FLÓREZ MOLINA  
fr. Germán FLÓREZ MOLINA

- fr. Sergio Alexander GALEANO HENAO
- fr. Alvaro Luis GALLÓN RIVERA
- fr. Rodrigo GARCÍA JARA
- fr. Adrián Mauricio GARCÍA PEÑARANDA
- fr. Willington GIRALDO BETANCUR
- fr. Alexis GONZÁLEZ GONZÁLEZ
- fr. Oscar Eduardo GUAYÁN PERDOMO
- fr. Edgar Leonardo GUTIÉRREZ RIVEROS
- fr. José Gregorio HERNÁNDEZ TARAZONA
- fr. Oscar Andrés JIMÉNEZ CIFUENTES
- fr. Yelmer Alonso LARROTTA CRUZ
- fr. Ericsson José LÁZARO PÉREZ
- fr. Christian Mauricio LÓPEZ MARULANDA
- fr. Andrés Felipe LÓPEZ RAMÍREZ
- fr. Jaime Andrés MARTÍNEZ ROMERO
- fr. Edwin MEJÍA MENESES
- fr. Wilson Fernando MENDOZA RIVERA
- fr. Juan Carlos MENJURA SUÁREZ
- fr. Leonardo Fabio OROZCO GUTIÉRREZ
- fr. Fariel Mauricio PABA TORRES
- fr. John Fredy PENAGOS GRANADA
- fr. Camilo Ernesto RAMÍREZ HERMIDA
- fr. Andrés Felipe RIVERA GÓMEZ
- fr. Walter Yezid RIVERO FLORES
- fr. Rodrigo RIVERO GUTIÉRREZ
- fr. Luis Fernando ROBLES CASTRO
- fr. Hender Alveiro RODRÍGUEZ PÉREZ
- fr. Wilmar Yezid RUÍZ CORTÉS

## ABBREVIATIONS

---

fr. John Alexander SÁNCHEZ BARRETO  
fr. Reinel SÁNCHEZ VARGAS  
fr. Hernan Darío SARMIENTO PÉREZ  
fr. Jorge Andrés SOSA CHINOME  
fr. Edgar TÁMARA PUERTO  
fr. Edgar Antonio THOMAS MURIEL  
fr. Ricardo Ernesto TORRES CASTRO  
fr. John Edison URREGO ROMERO  
fr. Héctor Mauricio VARGAS RODRÍGUEZ  
fr. Camilo Ernesto VILLAMIZAR AMAYA  
fr. Miguel Alonso ZÚÑIGA BARRIOS

## ABBREVIATIONS

**CIDALC:** Inter-Provincial Conference of Dominicans in Latin America & the Caribbean

**CODALC:** Conference of Dominican Sisters in Latin America & the Caribbean

**DOMUNI:** University of Human and Religious Sciences on the Internet (Toulouse)

**DSI:** Dominican Sisters International

**DVI:** Dominican Volunteers International

**ESPACES:** Dominican Centre(s) for Spiritual, Cultural & Social Realities (Europe)

**IAOP:** Inter-African Conference of the Order of Preachers

**IDEO:** Dominican Institute of Eastern Studies (Cairo)

**IEOP:** Inter-European Conference of the Order of Preachers

**MJDI / IDYM:** International Dominican Youth Movement

**ONG:** Non Governmental Organisations



## CHAPTER I

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. The Master of the Order, fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, in a circular letter of 15 November 2006, issued at Rome, according to the norm of LCO 413, II, convoked the General Chapter of Prior Provincials, to be celebrated in the Convent of Saint Dominic (Bogotá) of the Province of Colombia, from 18 July until 8 August 2007.
2. The Master of the Order, fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, according to the norm of LCO 414, appointed fr Orlando Rueda Acevedo as the Secretary General of the Chapter, and fr Carlos Ariel Betancourt Ospina and fr Giovanni Humberto Guarnizo Valenzuela Vice-Secretaries, all three being members of the Province of Colombia.
3. The Master of the Order invited the following members of the Dominican Family to the Chapter: for the nuns of the Order, Sr Isabel María de la Trinidad Orenes Fernández and Sr Clara Mercedes del Rosario Arenas Colmenares; for the sisters of the active life, Sr Rosario De Meer (Dominican Roman Congregation of Saint Dominic) and Sr Marie Thérèse Perdriault (Dominicans of the Presentation); for the Dominican Laity, Mr Duncan McLaren and Miss María Isabel Serrano Guarguati.
4. fr Gilbert Narcisse, fr James Channan and fr Benigno Gamarra Padilla examined the *testimonial* letters of the vocals during the evening of 17 July and the morning of 18 July.

5. On 4 June 2007, Memory of St. Peter of Verona, the Master of the Order, fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, sent a letter to the Holy Father, Benedict XVI, informing him of the celebration of the General Chapter in Bogotá.

FRATRES ORDINIS PRAEDICATORUM  
CURIA GENERALITIA

His Holiness, Benedict XVI  
Vatican City

Rome

4 June 2007  
Memory of St. Peter of Verona, Martyr

Your Holiness,

Once again I write to you in the name of the Order of Preachers and, as a sign of our commitment and fidelity to the Church, I humbly ask your prayers and blessing.

God willing, from 18 July until 8 August, Solemnity of Saint Dominic de Guzmán, we celebrate our General Chapter of Prior Provincials in the Convent of Saint Dominic of Bogotá, Colombia.

The Order of Preachers is going through a special time of grace, as we celebrate this very year the VIII centenary of the foundation of the first community of contemplative nuns, that is, the monastery of Saint Mary of *Prouille* (France). Thus we have begun a novena of years that hopefully will be completed, please God, in 2016, when

we will celebrate 800 years of the confirmation of the Order by your predecessor, Pope Honorius III. We are confident that all this will foster interior renewal so that we continue preaching the Good News of Jesus Christ, going forth in fidelity to our first love (Rev 2:4)

With this spirit the brethren representing the Provinces meet every three years to discuss and define, evaluate and plan our life and mission as preachers ‘useful for the salvation of the souls,’ as Honorius III wrote on 22 December 1216 in the Bull *Religiosam Vitam*.

This is the second time that a General Chapter is celebrated in Bogotá. The former one—a Chapter of Diffinitors—gathered in 1965 before the closure of the Second Vatican Council. At that time, faithful to the inspiration of the Council, we initiated the process of revision of our Constitutions—which was completed in 1968.

I have also communicated this notice to the Prefect of the Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, His Excellency, Archbishop Franc Rodé, C.M.

Profoundly grateful for your Petrine Ministry, with the whole Order I humbly beg your Apostolic Blessing, and, if possible, a message of hope for the coming General Chapter.

Your Holiness, once more I address you using the words of St. Catherine of Siena, “Sweet Christ on Earth.” I implore the Holy Spirit to enlighten you in your task so that you may always discern ‘what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect’ (Rom 12:2).

In Christ, Our Lady of the Rosary and Saint Dominic,

fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, O.P.  
Master of the Order

6. On 10 July the Secretary of State of the Holy See, His Excellency Card. Tarcisio Bertone, SDB, sent the following letter in Spanish to the Master of the Order and to the capitulars, along with the Apostolic Blessing of His Holiness Benedict XVI:

Secretariat of State  
Vatican City, 10 July 2007

fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, O.P.  
Master of the Order

Most Reverend Father,

It is with great pleasure that I undertake the task of conveying the appreciation of His Holiness Benedict XVI for having been timely informed of the celebration of the General Chapter of Prior Provincials of the Order of Preachers which takes place in Bogotá.

On this occasion, the Holy Father wishes to extend a cordial greeting to all the Capitular Fathers, on whom he invokes the assistance of the Holy Spirit so that their reflections and deliberations respond to the needs of this centuries-old, distinguished Order, and the important mission it has done and is doing for the good of the Church.

The Chapter, by its very nature, is a tangible manifestation of the presence of the Dominicans in many parts of the world, among diverse languages, lifestyles and cultures, as a fitting response to the universal call that has characterised the Order since its founding. Nonetheless, as it is also expressed by the General Chapter, such diversity is not a source of separation or division, but it shows and

reinforces the great gift of communion and unity that the Order has maintained for many centuries through the most varied circumstances of history. Therefore, the gathering of the Capitular Fathers has to be lived with a profound religious spirit of community, nourished by prayer, imbued with fraternity and animated by the spirit that Saint Dominic wanted for his children. In this regard, it must also be a true example for all communities in the Order wherever they may be.

Dedication to study, service to the truth and commitment to preaching are characteristics that distinguish the Dominicans and are also decisive factors for promoting communion within diversity. Indeed, the truth, if served humbly and with fidelity, is a force that knows neither boundaries nor unconquered strongholds. All the same, the preaching of the Gospel leads to the farthest ends of the world (see Mark 16:15) to announce Christ, “who wants all people to be saved and to come to a full knowledge of the truth” (1 Tim 2:4). With the hope that this Chapter will be animated by the most authentic spirit of the Order, will find a way best suited to meet the needs of evangelisation in our times and infuse hope and encouragement to act accordingly, the Holy Father reiterates his appreciation and thanks to the Order of Preachers, while invoking the maternal intercession of Our Lady of the Rosary, and imparts to the Capitular Fathers the requested Apostolic Blessing, pleased that it is extended to all Dominicans.

Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone  
Secretary of State

7. His Excellency, Mons. Gianfranco A. Gardin, OFM Conv, Secretary of the Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, on behalf of the Cardinal Prefect, who was not in Rome during those days, sent a letter to the Master of the Order, on 18 June 18 2007, expressing his best wishes for the celebration of the General Chapter in Bogotá.
8. The Master of the Order, fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, having consulted the capitulars and observing LCO417, I, 3°, appointed the diffinitors fr Roger Gaise of the General Vicariate of the Democratic Republic of Congo, fr Martin Joseph Gleeson of the Province of St. Martín de Porres (USA) and fr Félix Fernández Rodríguez of the General Vicariate of Chile revisers of the texts of the Acts of the Chapter.
9. On 18 July 2007 the General Chapter began with the Solemn Mass of the Holy Spirit in the conventual church of Saint Dominic, concelebrated by all the capitulars and presided over by the Prior Provincial of the Province of Colombia, fr José Gabriel Mesa Angulo, who in his homily invited the capitulars to discover in the Chapter the presence of the Holy Spirit through the proclamation of the Word, and the sense of community and peace.
10. The Master of the Order, fr Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, having consulted the capitulars, according to LCO417, I, 4°, confirmed the arrangement of the members and presidents of the eight commissions as previously prepared:

*Commission I: Apostolic Life (English) - Vie Apostolique (Français)*

**fr. Thomas Cassidy - President**

fr. Krzysztof PopBawski

fr. Gonzalo Ituarte

fr. Paul Gatt

fr. Mariusz Wozniak

fr. Celestine Huang [fr. Dominic Ip – translator]

fr. Chrys McVey (*Socius for Apostolic Life*- LCO 410 § I)

fr. Manuel Merten (*Promoter of the Nuns* - LCO 410 § II)

fr. Ignatius Perkins (Invited – ACG 2004 Krakow n. 295))

Mr. Duncan McLaren (Lay Dominican - Invited)

**fr. Bruno Cadoré - Vice-President**

fr. Luis Marín de Espinosa Labella

fr. Didier Boillat

fr. Domien Vaganée

fr. Andrzej Kostecki

fr. Ivan Mateljan

fr. Giovanni Distanto

fr. Roger Gaise

fr. Jacek Szprglewski

Sr. Rosario de Meer (Apostolic sister- Invitada)

Miss María Isabel Serrano Guarguatí (Lay Dominican - Invited)

*Commission II: Intellectual Life (Français)*

**fr. Gabriel Nápole - President**

fr. Gilbert Narcisse

fr. Riccardo Barile

fr. Joseph Agius (*Sub MO, Angelicum*)

fr. Jean-Marie Poffet (*Sub MO, Jerusalem*)

fr. Timothy Radcliffe (Ex MO)

fr. Joseph Ngo Si Dinh

fr. Benedikt Mohelnik

fr. Márcio Couto (*Socius for the Intellectual Life* - LCO 410 § I)

*Commission III: Formation (Español)*

**fr. Alexis Páez Ovares - Presidente**

- fr. Antonio García Lozano
- fr. Benigno Gamarra Padilla
- fr. José Gabriel Mesa Angulo
- fr. Vicente Micallef
- fr. Michael A. Mascari
- fr. Marcos Luis Espinel Araúzo
- fr. Ángel Jorge Saldías Pedraza (Vic. Bolivia)
- fr. Daniele Cara
- Sr. Isabel María Orenes Fernández (Nuns- Invited)

*Commission IV: Vida de los frailes (Español) - Life of the Brethren (English)*

**fr. Francisco Javier Carballo Fernández – Vice-President**

- fr. José Manuel Valente da Silva Nunes
- fr. Benard M. Vocking
- fr. Tito Murcia Florián
- fr. Félix Fernández Rodríguez
- fr. Carlos Cavar (Vic. Bolivia)
- fr. Tomás Turrado Carracedo (Vic. Venezuela)
- Sr. Clara M. del Rosario Arenas Colmenares (Nuns - Invited)

**fr. Mark James - President**

- fr. David Dominic Izzo
- fr. Philippe Cochinaux
- fr. Henri Paroi (Vic. Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea)
- fr. Dominic Mendonca
- fr. Edmund Nantes
- fr. Cletus Nwabuzo (*Socius for the Provinces of Africa - LCO 410 § I*)
- Sr. Marie Thérèse Perdriault (Apostolic sister- Invited)

*Commission V: Economic Life (English)*

**fr. Patrick Lucey – President**

fr. James Channan

fr. Marty Gleeson

fr. Benedikt Hajas

fr. Hans-Albert Gunk

fr. Ignatius Madumere

fr. José Bernardo Vallejo Molina (*Syndic of the Order* - LCO 410 § I)

fr. Mark Edney (Director *IDF* – LCO 410 § II)

*Commission VI: Government and L.C.O. (English)*

**fr. Allan White – President**

fr. Bonifacio García Solís

fr. Yvon Pomerleau

fr. Emmerich Vogt

fr. Dietmar Schon

fr. Javier María Pose

fr. Paul Tran Trung Dung (Vic. Canada)

fr. Robert Ombres (*Peritus* – cf. *ACG Bologna* 1998 n. 196)

... fr Dominique Renouard (*Vicar of Master of the Order* - LCO 410 § I)

11. The Master of the Order set up a **Special Capitular Commission** to draft a message to the contemplative nuns of the Order for the jubilee of the 800 years of their foundation. The commission – consisting of fr. Manuel Merton (*Promoter of the Nuns*), fr. Chrys McVey (*Socius for the Apostolic Life*), fr. Javier Maria Pose, Sr. Clara Mercedes del Rosario Arenas Colmenares and Sr Isabel Maria Orenes Fernandez – drew up a “Letter to the nuns of the Order of Preachers” the text of which was approved by the Chapter. The letter, written in the name of the General Chapter, forms part of the Acts.

12. The General Chapter approved as moderators of the plenary sessions: Br. Jean-Louis Laroche, Br. Gordian Marshall and Br. Luis Carlos Bernal, who were previously proposed by the Mater of the Order.
13. The Chapter approved norms of procedure which were proposed by capitulars.
14. On July 18 2007, the Master of the Order presented his *Relatio de statu Ordinis* to the capitulars (the document, signed in Rome on June 24 2007, Solemnity of the Birth of John the Baptist, had been sent beforehand to the capitulars). After the presentation there followed meetings of different language groups and an exchange of questions and answers in the capitular hall with the Master of the Order.
15. The Socius of the Master of the Order together with the Syndic of the Order and other officials of the Order presented their respective reports which were made available to the members of the Chapter.
16. On July 20 2007, in a day of reflection prior to the beginning of the of the Commissions, Br. Gustavo Gutierrez Merino and Sr. Clara Mercedes del Rosario Arenas offered two conferences inspired by the theme of the recently concluded V General Conference of the Bishops of Latin America and the Caribbean: *“Disciples and Missionaries of Jesus Christ so that our people may have life in Him – I am the Way, the Truth and the Life”*.
17. The Archbishop of Bogotá S.E. Cardinal Pedro Rubiano, and the Apostolic Nuncio S.E.R. Mons. Beniamino Stella, paid a courtesy visit to the Capitulares on 21 July 2007.
18. S.E.R Mons. Leonardo Gomez Serna, OP, Bishop of Magangue visited the Capitulars and spoke with them on Monday July 30 2007.
19. During the Chapter the following reports were presented to all the Capitulars:

- fr. Robert Ombres (Procurator General of the Order) spoke about some juridical-canonical subjects relating to the work of the Procurator General.
  - fr. Mark Edney (Director of *International Dominican Foundation – IDF*) spoke about this institution and its plans for the future.
  - fr. Celestine Huang, fr. Dominique Ip, fr. Bonifacio Garcia Solis and fr. Krzysztof PopBawski spoke about the importance of the mission of the Order in China.
  - fr. Jose Bernardo Vallejo Molina (Syndic of the Order) presented – at the request of the Chapter Commission on Economic Life – the financial report of the Order.
20. Following the General Chapter of Krakow (July 28<sup>th</sup> to August 15<sup>th</sup> 2004) the Master of the Order nominated the following collaborators:
- fr. Robert Ombres, *Procurator General* (13 October 2004)
  - fr. José Bernardo Vallejo Molina, *Syndic of the Order* (6 November 2004)
  - fr. Cletus Chidozie Nwabuzo, *Socius for Africa* (1 August 2005)
  - fr. Prakash (Anthony) Lohale, *Promotor of Justice and Peace* (5 November 2005).
  - fr. Scott Steinkerchner, *Promotor of the Internet* (25 November 2005)
  - fr. Márcio Alexandre Couto, *Socius for the Intellectual Life* (2 February 2006)
  - fr. Mark Edney, *Director IDF* (23 February 2006)
  - fr. Christophe Holzer, *Secretary General* (1 April 2006)
  - fr. Edward Ruane, *Socius for the Provinces of the U.S.A.* (1 September 2006) and *Co-Director DVI* (22 June 2007)
  - fr. Juan Pablo Corsiglia, *Secretary of the Master of the Order* (1 February 2007)
  - fr. David Kammler, *Promotor of Dominican Laity* (25 March 2007)

21. Since the General Chapter of Krakow (2004) the following brothers were consecrated Bishops:
- fr. Jean Marie Henri LEGREZ (Province de Toulouse), Bishop of Saint-Claude (France).
  - fr. George Frendo (Province of Malta), Auxiliary Bishop of Tirana –Dürres (Albania).
  - fr. Paul Cremona (Province of Malta), Archbishop of Malta (Malta).
- The Holy Father also nominated:
- fr. Cristopher Cardone (Province of *Saint Joseph*, U.S.A ), Auxiliary of Gizo (Solomon Islands), as bishop of Auki (Solomon Islands)
  - fr. Robert Rivas (Province of Ireland), Bishop of Kingstown (Saint Vincent and Grenadines) as Coadjutor to the **Archbishop of Castries** (*Saint Lucia*).
22. The Holy Father nominated fr. Wojciech Giertych (Province of Poland) as Theologian of the Papal Household on 1 December 2005.
23. The following were nominated masters of Sacred Theology (since January 2004 to present Chapter):
- fr. Richard Aquinas Schenk, Province of the “*Holy Name*” , U.S.A. (7 January 2004)
  - fr. Stanislaus Hoang D. Cánh, Province of Vietnam (24 March 2004)
  - fr. Sebastián Fuster Perelló, Province of Aragón (28 August 2004)
  - fr. Martín Gelabert Ballester, Province of Aragón (28 August 2004)
  - fr. Esteban Pérez Delgado, Province of Aragón (8 October 2004)
  - fr. Thomas Raymond Potvin, Province of Canada (24 November 2004)
  - fr. Mauricio Beuchot Puente, Province of Mexico (19 November 2006)
  - fr. Benoît Montagnes, Province of Toulouse (29 April 2007)
  - fr. Adrian Schenker, Province of Switzerland (5 May 2007)

24. At the request of the Master of the Order, in order to commemorate the 800 anniversary of the foundation of the first Dominican Monastery by St. Dominic in Prouille, in 1206, the Holy Father granted, through the Apostolic Penitentiary, on 7 October 2005, a plenary indulgence to all the faithful who, in accordance with the usual conditions, visit any Dominican monastery in the world, the Basilica of Santa Sabina in Rome and the Basilica of St. Dominic in Bologna.
25. Between 29 April and 4 May 2006 the Master of the Order presided over a meeting of all the international organisations of the Order, gathered in Fanjeaux, to commemorate the 800 years of the foundation of the monastery of Prouille, the first Dominican monastery by St. Dominic, where a special Mass was celebrated for the opening and closing of the gathering.
26. The Master of the Order assisted at the International Congress of Lay Fraternities of the Order held in Pilar (Province of Buenos Aires), Argentina from 18 to 24 March 2007.
27. On 28 November 2003 the Master of the Order was elected a member of the Executive Council of the Union of Superiors General (USG.) for three years, 2003–2006, as the representative of the Mendicant Orders, and a member of the “Council of 16” which links the UISG and the USG. with the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life. (They form part of the Council of 8 Superiors General of the UISG and 8 Superiors of the USG which meet in the Congregation three times a year).
28. The Master of the Order was invited to participate in the Plenary Session of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life. This took place in the headquarters of the Dicastery between 27 to 29 September 2005.

29. The Master of the Order, having been elected on 26 November 2004, by the Assembly of the USG as one of 10 representatives for the XI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops with the theme "*The Eucharist: source and summit of the life and mission of the Church*", participated in that Assembly from 2 to 23 October 2005.
30. On 5 November 2005 the Holy Father, Benedict XVI, received the Master of the Order in private audience.
31. The Master of the Order, with the approval of the General Council, established by Decree of 7 November 2005, Feast of all the Saints of the Order, the Province of Saint Vincent Ferrer of Central America.
32. Since the General Chapter of 2004, the Master of the Order, in accordance with LCO 398 § III, made canonical visitation of the following Provinces and Vicariates of the Order: *Aragón*: 9-22 September 2004; *Slovakia* (fraternal visit) 14-18 October 2004; *Santiago de México*: 6-30 December 2004; *France*: 12 February -14 March 2005; *Poland*: 31 May -3 July 2005; *San Vicente Ferrer in Central America*: 28 August -24 September 2005; *Toulouse*: 27 November -9 December 2005; *Switzerland*: 12-21 December 2005; *Germany*: 3-21 February 2006; *Scandinavia*: 12-18 March 2006; *Baltic Countries*: 18-25 March 2006; *Vicariate General of the Congo* 3-15 April 2006; *Province of the Holy Name, USA*: 1-27 June 2006; *Province of St. Catherine of Siena in Ecuador*: 12-25 August 2006; *Province of the Netherlands*: 29 September -10 October 2006; *Province of St. Rose in Flandres*: 10-20 October 2006; *Convent of St. Albert the Great (Albertinum)*: 27-31 October 2006; *Province of Argentina* (fraternal visit): 8-22 December 2006; *Convent SS. Dominic & Sixtus (Angelicum) and 'Convitto' International St. Thomas*: 26 February - 3 March 2007; *Betica* (fraternal visit): 6 - 16 March 2007; *Convent of St. Mary Major*: 11 June 2007.
33. The Master of the Order preached a retreat to the brothers of the Vicariate General of Puerto Rico 5 to 12 August 2006.

34. In recent years the Master of the Order preached the following retreats to the Contemplative Nuns of the Order gathered together by country or region, namely:  
*Nuns of Spain*: 10-19 September de 2003; *Nuns of Italy*: 27 August -3 September 2004; *Nuns of Mexico*: 16-25 August 2005; *Nuns of USA & Canada*: 29 June -8 July 2006; *Nuns of Latin America (Southern Zone) and St. Justus - Buenos Aires (Argentina)*: 27 August -3 September 2006; *Nuns of Latin America (Bolivian Zone) and Chosica (Peru)*: 6-14 September 2006. Also to the *Apostolic Sisters of Santa Maria dell'Arco (Naples)*: 12 November 2006.
35. The Master of the Order participated in the general Assembly of the Dominican Youth Movement in Santo Domingo (Dominican Republic) and made an informal visit to the brothers of the Provincial Vicariate of Santo Domingo (Province of Spain) from 3 – 5 August 2006.
36. On 24 November 2006, the Master of the Order was elected a member of the “Council of 16”. This Council links both unions of Superiors General (UISG and USG) with the Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples.
37. On 18 July 2007, at the beginning of the General Chapter, the Master of the Order announced that fr. Brian Pierce will be the Promoter General for the Nuns (as from 6 January 2008); fr. Javier Maria Pose will be Socius for Latin America and the Caribbean (as from 2 February 2008) and fr. Antonio Garcia Lozano will be Socius for the Iberian peninsula (as from 1 November 2007).
38. On Sunday 29 July 2007, in the conventual church of Santo Domingo, Bogotá, the bishop of Magangué, S.E.R. Mons. Leonardo Gomez Serna, OP, ordained eight deacons to the priesthood, all belonging to the Province of St. Louis Bertrand, Columbia.

39. On 30 July 2007, fr. Dominique Renouard of the Province of France, Socius of the Master of the Order for the Provinces of North-West Europe and Canada – Vicar of the Master of the Order – dies suddenly during the Chapter. On the same day, in the evening, the Master of the Order presided at a Requiem Mass for the deceased in which all the capitulars, and many brothers of the Province of Columbia, participated. The homily was preached by fr. Bruno Cadore, Prior Provincial of the Province of France. The celebration also brought together a large group of Dominican sisters from different Congregations who were present in Bogotá. On 2 August 2007, after the celebration of Mass the remains were transferred to France for burial.
40. On 4 August 2007, the Master of the Order announced to the capitulars that fr. Edward Ruane, Socius for the Provinces of the United States of America, will be his new Vicar. He also announced that fr. Louis-Marie Ariño Durand, of the Province of Toulouse, will be the General Promoter of the Rosary.
41. On 5 August the capitulars and helpers of the Chapter visited the National Sanctuary of Our Lady of Chiquinquirá. They were received by the local bishop, S.E.R. Mons. Luis Felipe Sanchez Aponte, the Mayor of the city and other dignitaries. A significant number of the faithful gathered for the celebration of Sunday Mass. During the celebration, presided over by the Master of the Order, who also preached the homily, the capitulars consecrated the Order to Our Lady of the Rosary. On this occasion they used the same prayer which the Diffinitors of the General Chapter of Krakow had used before Our Lady of Czestochowa when they visited her Sanctuary in Jasna Gora on 8 August 2004. (The text of the prayer of consecration was taken from the *Analecta Ordinis Praedicatorum* 31 (1954) 388 – 389).
42. On 7 August 2007 the General Chapter approved, on the proposal of the Master of the Order, the appointments of fr. Francisco Javier Caraballo Fernandez (Prior Provincial of the

Province of Spain); fr. Michael Mascari (Prior Provincial of the Province of St. Albert the Great, USA) and fr. Krzysztof PopBawski (Prior Provincial of Poland) as members of the *Directorium* of the Pontifical University of St. Thomas in Rome (PUST – *Angelicum*) until the next Chapter.

43. The General Chapter formally concluded its work on 8 August 2007, Solemnity of Our Holy Father Dominic de Guzman, with a concelebrated Mass in the conventual Church of Santo Domingo, Bogotá. The Master of the Order presided and preached at this Eucharist.
44. On 28 October 2007 the beatification of 74 martyrs of the Dominican Family in Spain from the XX century will take place; namely 62 brothers, 9 apostolic sisters, 1 nun and 2 lay Dominicans. Heading the list of this glorious army of martyrs is fr. Buenaventura Garcia de Paredes (Master of the Order 1926 – 1929). A martyr is a preacher of faith par excellence. Therefore the beatification is a grace for the Dominican Family, inviting us not to forget our brothers and sisters, who by the witness of their lives, have become a great sign of hope, encouraging us to follow Jesus Christ to the end. They died forgiving and the forgiveness they offered inspires us to continue promoting a spirit of reconciliation which our world so badly needs.

45. **Letter to the Nuns of the Order of Preachers**

Dear Sisters in St Dominic,

We, your brothers, gathered here in Bogota for the General Chapter of Priors Provincial, remember what happened 800 years ago when you, our sisters, and the first fruits of our father Dominic’s vision, came into being. Jordan of Saxony described this for us: ‘In order to give assistance to certain women of the nobility whose parents were led by poverty to give them over to the heretics for training and support, he established a

monastery between Fanjeaux and Montreal in a place called Prouille. There, to this day, handmaids of Christ give a pleasing service to their Creator. By the vigour of their holiness and the noble purity of their innocence, they lead a life which is of spiritual benefit to themselves, a source of edification to men, a joy to the angels, and a pleasure to God' (*Libellus Nr. 27*).

Together with you we joyfully celebrate the monastery, *Blessed Mary of Prouille*, as the first foundation of a Dominican Community and as the beginning of a process which led to the confirmation of the 'Order of Preachers' by Pope Honorius III on 22 December 1216. From the beginning, you, our sisters, are not just an essential part of the Order: you are at the very heart of the Holy Preaching and an 'always efficacious help to the life of the apostolate of your brethren' (cf. *Aniceto Fernandez, 22 July 1971, in his letter of promulgation of the provisional text of the revised LCM*).

Dominicans are men and women of the word. But our words are empty and fruitless if they are not born in silence. Every Dominican is called to the silent attentiveness to God's word. But your vocation, in the silence of the monastery, is a constant reminder to us of the fertile ground of all our preaching.

For 800 years you have 'sought, pondered and called upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in solitude so that the word proceeding from the mouth of God may not return to him empty, but may accomplish those things for which it was sent' (cf. *Fundamental Constitution of the Nuns*). Your prayer, your life of contemplation, your world of enclosure and silence – without abandoning humanity as the place to meet God – your work, your seeking the truth at the heart of things, your belief in God's faithfulness, your searching the Scriptures with loving hearts, your practice of penance – all of this is the way you share in the common mission of the Order.

We, here in Chapter, the 287<sup>th</sup> in the Order's history, and on behalf of our brothers throughout the world, thank you for being preachers to your brothers. Thank you for reminding us that the Gospel demands a wholehearted response like yours.

How could we have done without you in the past? How can we do without you in the future?

That future is uncertain for many of our monasteries in some parts of the world. They are already, or soon will be, experiencing difficulties. Only a close cooperation of the monasteries in these regions can ensure the continuation of Dominican Monastic life. For the good of the Order and its mission we promise you our support as you search for what may be painful solutions, but which guarantee the future of Dominican monasteries, in general, over the possible and mere survival of a single monastery at whatever cost.

During the meeting of the International Commissions and Councils of the Order – including the International Commission of the Nuns of the Order – which took place in Prouille / Fanjeaux from 28 April to 04 May 2006, the participants sought to 'catch fire from Dominic's vision.' The gathering was a preparation for the celebration of the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of the first Dominican Community. At the end of the meeting a message was sent to the members of the Dominican Family, informing them of what was agreed upon and what commitments were made by all the branches including the nuns but in a way appropriate to their vocation (cf. IDI Nr. 443 – June 2006).

It is difficult to communicate the high esteem of those at the meeting for you and your vocation and the desire to know you more. The Dominican Youth explicitly asked 'to know the nuns better and that the nuns help them when they question themselves about their vocation,' and they addressed their brothers and sisters within the Dominican Family with this appeal: 'We,

young people, lack experience and we ask you to accompany us as we try to find our way forward. Please, keep helping us in our Dominican formation.' The Laity would like the nuns to be their partners in prayer. The friars would like the nuns to be a more visible heart of the family by their hospitality, and their liturgy, so as to be a challenge to the activism of the friars, and that they engage themselves in permanent formation. Therefore we ask you, to embrace all the branches of the Dominican Family with your prayerful support, to share the fruit of your contemplation, reminding us again and again, that 'we are all called to be contemplatives, and the renewal of the contemplative life is one of the greatest challenges the Order faces' (cf. *Timothy Radcliffe's, 'A city set on a hilltop'*).

When the Jubilee Year of the foundation of the first Dominican Community ends, we begin a 'novena of years' from 2008 to 22 December 2016, when we celebrate the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the confirmation of the Order. These nine years are 'a pilgrimage to our origins,' dedicated to the rediscovery of Dominic's original intentions, rekindling them in today's Church, today's society and today's world, discovering together new paths to travel.

We are aware, that this asks a conversion from each of us. We, your brothers, ask you to accompany this 'novena of years' with your continuous prayer that 'we may walk faithful to our first love' (*Rev 2.4*).

Carlos, the Master of the Order, prayed that 'all of us, the sons and daughters of Saint Dominic, prepare ourselves to make this pilgrimage to our monasteries joyfully; let us there drink of the fresh simplicity of the «love we had at first», feeling ourselves at the feet of Jesus, that we may be with Him and listen to Him. Let us live this time with intensity and grace, sharing with our contemplative communities the joy of their consecration, the fruitfulness of their silence, the beauty of their liturgy, their

special love for the Word' (*Letter announcing the Jubilee Year, 29 April 2006, Prot 50/06/465*).

We can't close this letter to you, our beloved sisters, without confessing our forgetfulness of your unique place in the Order. How often have we forgotten that you were the first fruits and so dear to our father Saint Dominic that one of his last concerns was the building of the monastery at Bologna: 'It is absolutely necessary, brothers, that a house of nuns should be built, even if it means postponing for a time the work on our own house.' Dominic entrusted the monasteries to us all. And we are entrusted to the prayer and the care of the nuns. This mutuality is at the heart of the Order. Thank you for leading, as Blessed Jordan wrote, 'a life of spiritual benefit to yourselves, a source of edification to men, a joy to the angels, and a pleasure to God.' Your future is our future and, even more, the future of the Holy Preaching, the common mission of the Order.

Fraternally yours in our Holy Father S. Dominic

Yours brothers gathered in General Chapter

Bogota, Colombia 08 August 2007

Feast of S. Dominic

## CHAPTER II

### THE APOSTOLIC LIFE

#### LOVING THE WORLD

##### *Call to Renewal*

46. In this time of thanksgiving which leads us from 2006 to celebrate in 2016 the eighth centenary of the confirmation of the Order, the Master of the Order in his "Relatio" to this general chapter underlined that it was urgent that we should renew ourselves in the full sense of our Dominican mission. Hearing this call, the chapter invites the brothers to consider the apostolic mission of the Order from this point of view. With this goal the chapter, basing itself on the richness and diversity of the preaching of the brothers everywhere in the world, emphasises *four fundamental dimensions for our mission today*.
47. *Preachers are first of all people of encounter and dialogue*. It is reported (Frachet, *Life of the Brethren*, II, 10) that Dominic, when he walked with "German" pilgrims and wished to respond to their spiritual needs, invited his companions to prepare themselves to speak to them of Christ saying: "Let us kneel down and pray to understand them, so that we may be able to speak their own language and thus preach!" Thus the elements of apostolic encounter were pointed out: to meet, to pray, to listen, to dialogue, to search to understand the needs, and then to preach.
48. *Preachers are sent on mission to love the world, following Christ, whose presence they desire to reveal*. From many sides, the world which we see today arouses great concern: conflicts, violence

done to humanity, exclusions, suffering caused by migrations, the insecurity which many experience, new religious movements preaching exclusivity, the perverse effects of globalisation, the risks of ecological disaster, risks to the human family stemming from politics of national security. In all of this, the members of the Dominican Family can attest that it is the poor who are the first victims. At the same time, we are witnesses to, and sometimes in solidarity with, the immense hope with which many work to make the world of today and of tomorrow a home for everyone. This is, for example, what the World Social Forum bears witness to and it is good for members of the Dominican Family to take part in it. We note also certain positive effects of globalisation, such as the riches which the intercultural reality of our towns from now on represent, the improvement in the conditions of life produced by science and technology, the efforts to attain greater equality among men and women, the benefits of progress in the means of communication. It is this world of contrasts, with its fluctuating changes which affect us all, that we should love and retain hope for its future.

49. *The preacher has the world as cloister.* This is why all of us have to take responsibility for the global mission of the Order. The very rapid change in the world today and the intensity of the expectations that hope should be sustained constitute a "*kairos*" for us: in the name of the common mission of the Order we are invited to dare to respond to the calls which lead us beyond the frontiers of our communities and Provinces.
50. *The preacher is a member of the Dominican Family.* Because of this, it is with determination that we have to develop apostolic collaboration among the brothers, the nuns, the apostolic sisters, the laity, and other Dominican movements. The complementarity of each will give greater strength to our witness to hope.

51. (*Petitio*) We petition the Master of the Order and the Provinces to prepare in a fitting manner the celebration of the eighth centennial of the confirmation of the Order of Preachers in 2016 so that the celebration, which began in Fanjeaux in 2006 and which launched the decade of the Dominican Family, may be an occasion for renewal of our vocation as preachers.
52. (*Petitio*) We petition each Province to look for what additional collaboration it could bring to the universal mission of the Order, including, if need be, the cessation of one or other activity according to the report of the Socius for Apostolic Life (cf. no. 40).
53. (*Commendatio*) We recommend to the next regional meetings of Provincials that they study the theme of migration.
54. (*Exhortatio*) We exhort the promoters of permanent formation to propose to the brothers appropriate means to better understand the changes affecting our world and their impact on our preaching.
55. (*Petitio*) We petition the Priors Provincials with their Councils to promote collaboration within the Dominican Family and to evaluate it regularly.
56. (*Petitio*) We petition each Province and Vicariate to promote the vocation of Lay Dominicans within the Dominican Family in their region, to reflect with them on their role as preachers and to collaborate with them for a more effective preaching of the Gospel. In this perspective, we petition the brothers to learn about the conclusions of the recent international council of lay Dominican fraternities (Buenos Aires, March 2007).

*Spiritual Élan for Preaching*

57. The Chapter provided the opportunity to become aware that certain Provinces are more fragile than others and that all the brothers cannot be equally involved in new forms of apostolate called forth by the new state of the world. Nevertheless we all

participate in the same mission; and we send out a call to everyone to renew together our spiritual and apostolic energy at personal and community levels.

58. All of us regret that we cannot take on some apostolic commitments, or we acknowledge our own unwillingness. Nevertheless, the first asset of our apostolic energy remains esteem for the desire our brothers and sisters have for preaching the Gospel. This energy has, further, every reason to be strengthened when we know that in the Order one fifth of the brothers are currently in formation.
59. The return to the witnessing of the first brothers clearly shows that it was a passion for the salvation of the men and women of their time which opened up for them the meaning of the mercy and the quality of the compassion of Dominic. Our spiritual tradition also shows how dialogue with God animated the apostolic vocation of the first generations. This reality of spiritual life, of contemplation, liturgical celebration and intercession, is the surest reference point allowing us to dare to invent new modes of meeting and preaching in the world of today.
60. We also have the good fortune of living with brothers. From them we find support and encouragement when necessary. They are also given to us as people with whom we can talk about the joys and anxieties of the mission. With them we discover again that, when God sends us to preach, he calls us with confidence to engage all of our humanity in the apostolic encounter. Thus community life is, and should more deeply become, the place where our identity as preachers is rooted in a spirituality of the Incarnation.
61. (*Exhortatio*) We exhort the priors of the communities of the Order to be mindful that brothers, in returning to the sources of their apostolic zeal, really put fraternal and contemplative life in the first place.

62. (*Commendatio*) We recommend that conventual lectors, in stimulating study in common, should be keen to invite communities to consider issues met by the brothers in their apostolic work as their starting point.
63. (*Exhortatio*) Concerning study in common at the level of the whole Order, we exhort the Priors Provincial and the Regents of Study to ask the Socii for Apostolic Life and Intellectual Life to call upon the collaboration of the centres of study of the Order (the Faculty of Social Sciences at the Angelicum, the Historical Institute, Provincial centres of study, Dominican Universities ...) in examining the issues raised in the apostolic life.

*Hearing and Meeting the Needs of Hope*

64. Stimulated by a spirituality of the Incarnation, concern for the humanity of each person is at the heart of our way of following and proclaiming Christ. In a world where human beings are often forgotten, isolated and despised, witnessing to hope often means, first of all, helping people discover how much they are fundamentally equal and that, on this basis, they have the right to be different. This also means contributing to the taking down of the walls that are put up between individuals, groups and social statuses, so that the "gathering" of which the prophet speaks may be established (cf. Isaiah 60).
65. The Order today is, moreover, witness to the fact that persons and societies suffer from situations of structural humiliation (for example, human trafficking and forced labour, marginalization of indigenous peoples, but many others as well). Our tradition encourages us to support respect for people's rights, taking the diversity of cultural contexts into account. It is an invitation for us to make real today links which, in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the brothers wanted to establish between

the confrontation with injustice, solidarity with victims, theological reflection, and the proclamation of the Gospel. This way of proceeding constitutes a method for our meeting with human realities.

66. For us preachers, to witness to hope is our way of contributing to the building up of a Church which may truly be a sign of gathering and of communion, a place of dialogue and fraternity. Thus, as brother Damian Byrne liked to say, our charism reminds the Church of its task of preaching, and this is for us an invitation to learn our own frailties in this domain.
67. With Dominic, who dreamed of meeting the “Cumans”, we are aware that our mission must always carry us further. Indeed, a priority of our Order is to meet with those who are far from the faith, and this concern must stimulate our apostolic creativity and our boldness in explicitly announcing the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
68. Many Provinces, for example, have tried out new kinds of preaching through the media and the new technologies of information and communication. These are, without doubt, means of meeting different audiences, often far removed from the Church, of promoting new kinds of exchange between people, and thus of discovering new languages for the preaching of the Gospel. Exchange of experiences and developing collaboration are surely a creative stimulus for the Order’s preaching.
69. (*Petitio*) We are aware that the theme of “Justice and Peace” periodically provokes contradictory debates in some of our Provinces, and we petition the brothers to go beyond these contradictions and consider the challenge which this theme represents for the preaching of the Gospel. This is why we reaffirm the importance of the offices of General Co-promoters and of Regional and Provincial Promoters for “Justice and

Peace,” insisting that the nomination of the Provincial and Regional Promoters be accompanied by a description of duties and precise objectives adapted to the context of the countries and the Provinces, and also a budget.

70. (*Exhortatio*) Echoing the message addressed by the members of the international commissions of the Order gathered in Fanjeaux in May 2006, we exhort the brothers to unite themselves with the whole Church to realize the Millennium Development Goals, signed by all the governments of the United Nations in the year 2000, in order to eliminate dehumanizing poverty in the world and to promote integral human development (cf. Appendix).
71. (*Petitio*) We consider the presence of the Order at the United Nations in New York, through the Dominican Leadership Conference, and at Geneva, through the work of the Non-Governmental Organization “Dominicans for Justice and Peace”, to be very important, and we especially thank Brother Philippe Leblanc for the work he has accomplished there. This NGO has made and will continue to make reports to international bodies on serious situations witnessed by members of the Dominican Family. We petition the Socius for Apostolic Life to define the job description of the Permanent Delegate of the Order at the UN and to evaluate the statutes and the operation of the NGO to improve its effectiveness.
72. (*Petitio*) Moved by the suffering of innocent victims of hatred and violence, we unite ourselves during this Chapter with the Iraqi people, and especially in solidarity with our Dominican brothers and sisters. We petition every member of the Dominican Family to be aware of their witness and to pray for the suffering people of Iraq and for a future of reconciliation and peace.

73. We recall with veneration the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the martyrs of El Salvador and Guatemala, in particular of sisters Ita Ford and Maura Clark of the Congregation of Maryknoll, and of our brother Carlos Ramiro Morales López. We remember also all those members of the Dominican Family who were martyred for their faith or for showing love for others.
74. (*Commendatio*) With the anniversary of the arrival of the Order in the Caribbean and in Latin America (1510) approaching, we recommend to the Master of the Order, to the Provinces, especially the Vicariate of St. Dominic in the Dominican Republic, to CIDALC to take initiatives within the Dominican Family to actively celebrate the memory of this first community, whose prior was Peter of Córdoba, including some activities in solidarity to help those most in need the Caribbean region.
75. (*Petitio*) Aware of the social reality of many people in Colombia (poverty, forced displacement, kidnappings, missing persons and social discrimination...), we petition the Dominican Family throughout the world to remember in their prayers the joys and sorrows of this people. We are sure that these prayers will encourage the Dominican Family in Colombia to continue its mission to struggle against injustice, foster solidarity towards the most disadvantaged, advance theological reflection and proclaim the Gospel.
76. (*Commendatio*) We recommend to the general promoter for the Internet, in conjunction with the General Council and with appropriate collaboration, to continue developing a mission on the Internet. He will, in particular, be concerned to facilitate the use of this medium for the least favoured entities of the Order.
77. (*Petitio*) We petition the Master of the Order to name a webmaster for the Order's site who will present a report on its development at the next plenary session of the General Council.

*Choose to dialogue*

78. The preaching of the Order is thus characterized by certain convictions: promotion of freedom, the search for truth, a willingness to dialogue, trust in intelligence, attention to the humanity of each person, hope in communion, respect for each person's quest for truth. We ourselves are searching for the truth, experiencing uncertainty and sometimes awkwardness in establishing dialogue between ourselves and with others. We believe, however, that these convictions about preaching give us the mission to encourage by dialogue a world of hope and compassion, to promote the values of the Gospel, and to contribute to revealing the presence of God to human beings.
79. Now, today, certain changes which affect cultures and societies risk drawing "fracture lines" (an expression of brother Pierre Claverie) in the world, in contradiction with the convictions which animate our preaching. This is why in the renewal of our apostolic life, particular attention must be paid to the following realities: migration, inter-religious confrontations, the deviation of certain new religious movements, certain difficulties of ecumenical dialogue, anxiety of the youth for their future, new forms of poverty, ecological threats, increasing fundamentalism, attacks on human life. As preachers we wish, in spite of the gravity of these realities, to promote dialogue in these areas.
80. (*Exhortatio*) Due to the gravity and complexity of the realities just evoked we exhort the brothers, as much for study as for action, to collaborate with competent professionals and the institutions already involved in these fields.
81. (*Exhortatio*) Recognising the primordial role of scientific knowledge and of the development of technology in the transformation of our world, we encourage the brothers to develop to the maximum pastoral and intellectual activities in this area where science and faith can dialogue to the benefit of both.

82. (*Declaratio*) Inter-religious dialogue was one of the frontiers declared at Avila in 1986 which we wish to emphasise again. This frontier, which has a long history in the Order, concerns us today because of the places in which we are established. It is in meeting with others who see a different face of God that we discover our true identity as “a people for others”. This encounter can be expressed by various collaborations in action for a more just and human world, in liaison with other ecclesial institutions already involved; this would constitute a solid basis for dialogue. This concern for such a dialogue should not, however, make us insensible to those who do not recognise themselves in any religion.
83. (*Petitio*) Islamic-Christian dialogue has become one of the crucial questions of our time and one of the great challenges for our preaching in certain regions of the world for several reasons: globalization, the growth in religious extremism, questions raised by religious pluralism and cultural diversity. Some brothers are already confronting this challenge with competence and determination (Cairo, Istanbul, Lahore, Palermo), discerning with Muslims the mystery of God’s designs. We petition the Provinces to encourage vocations for this mission and to favour collaboration with these specialized centres. We also petition these centres to develop the appropriate means so that their work can stimulate the entire mission of the Order.
84. (*Commissio*) Many centres are engaged in ecumenical dialogue (for example Kiev, Bari and Istina in Paris) and we wish here to support their work. We commission the Socius for Apostolic Life and the Socius for Intellectual Life regularly to take care that relationships and collaboration are established between these centres.
85. (*Exhortatio*) In many regions of the world, the Church is confronted with growth in new religious movements. We exhort the brothers, in fidelity to the founding tradition of our Order, to have pastoral and intellectual concern for meeting and dialogue with them.

*Involving Oneself in the Universal Mission of the Order*

86. Each Brother by his religious profession is involved in the whole mission of the Order. This is why this General Chapter has insisted many times, in the name of this mission, on establishing collaborations between Provinces while respecting subsidiarity, on the necessity for Provinces to make brothers available for projects other than their own, and on the urgency of opening new foundations or of consolidating entities which are still weak. These collaborations should be carried out as far as possible within the Dominican Family, in particular with Dominican Volunteers International and the International Dominican Youth Movement. This is why:
87. (*Commissio*) Many entities or projects in the Order need to be strengthened and supported (for example, the General Vicariate of Russia and the Ukraine, the General Vicariate of the Baltic Countries, certain entities in Africa, in Asia or in Europe). We commission the Socius for Apostolic Life to write a report to all the Provinces, before Easter 2008, indicating the places where the Dominican presence needs to be strengthened, the concrete needs, the degree of urgency, as well as possible modes of collaboration. On this basis, we commission each Provincial Council to consider how the Province can hear these appeals and respond to them, alone or in collaboration (for example within one region).
88. (*Exhortatio*) We rejoice in the work accomplished with a view to a mission in mainland China by the brothers of the General Vicariate of The Queen of China and the Province of Our Lady of the Rosary, we exhort the brothers to pursue their projects and to establish a timetable for meetings to exchange ideas.
89. (*Exhortatio*) Noting the opening of new possibilities of mission, we exhort the other Provinces, in collaboration with these two entities, to prepare brothers who could join them for this

mission in China. Following on Pope Benedict XVI's Letter of the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2007, we invite the brothers to join in the prayer he proposes for every 24<sup>th</sup> May (par. 19 in the Letter).

90. (*Exhortatio*) We exhort brothers of the Asia Pacific region to continue in the collaborative projects which they have put in place. We also exhort all the brothers of the Order, to consider the challenge which our mission in Asia represents today and to make themselves available for it.
91. (*Exhortatio*) Among the projects evoked in no. 40, the Chapter has been attentive to the frailty of the presence of the Order in Cuba. We exhort the Master of the Order, in dialogue with the Province of Andalusia to call on one or more other Provinces to strengthen the mission of the Order in Cuba, and particularly to assure the continuation of the work accomplished by the centre "fr. Bartolomé de las Casas".
92. (*Commendatio*) Also, within the context of the remembrance of the arrival of the brothers at Hispaniola, we recommend to the Prior Provincial of Toulouse, if necessary, to call upon the collaboration of other Provinces to support the efforts undertaken by his Province for the vitality of the Order's mission in Haiti.
93. (*Petitio*) We petition the Provinces of Central America, of Mexico and of the West of the USA to continue to develop missionary collaboration within the Dominican Family in the Maya region, to strengthen inculturation of the Church and the Order. We petition them also to continue the Dominican Family project at the border between the United States and Mexico, with a view to defending migrants and engaging in theological and interdisciplinary research on the phenomenon of migration.
94. (*Exhortatio*) We exhort the Master of the Order to establish a community of brothers in Equatorial Guinea, relying on the collaboration of the Provinces of Spain and Colombia.

95. (*Exhortatio*) We exhort the Province of Saint Thomas Aquinas in Italy with the other Italian Provinces to re-found the presence of the brothers in Romania and to do everything possible so that this project may be realised between now and the next General Chapter, calling, if necessary, on other collaborations, in particular within IEOP.
96. (*Petitio*) The tradition of the Order associates us with the prayer and the apostolate of the Rosary, this latter being already well developed by many Provinces. We petition the General Promoter of the Rosary to encourage the exchange of experiences among them in this area of our preaching and to enable the whole Order to profit from them.

*Conclusion*

97. Thus the Chapter of Bogotá wishes to mark out a path where each brother is invited to contribute to the vitality of preaching in the world of our time.
98. (*Petitio*) We petition the Socius for Apostolic Life and the Socius for Intellectual Life, after consulting the Priors Provincials, and with the Commission on Preaching, to evaluate what has been achieved in this direction. We also petition the Priors Provincial, during their visitations, to stimulate the communities to enter into the renewal which is here proposed.

APPENDIX

U.N. MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – which range from halving extreme poverty to halting the spread of HIV / AIDS and providing universal primary education, all by the target date of 2015 – form a blueprint agreed to by all the world’s countries and all the world’s leading development institutions. They have galvanized unprecedented efforts to meet the needs of the world’s poorest.

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
2. Achieve universal primary education
3. Promote gender equality and empower women
4. Reduce child mortality
5. Improve maternal health
6. Combat HIV & AIDS, malaria and other diseases
7. Ensure environmental sustainability
8. Develop a global partnership for development

## CHAPTER III

### THE INTELLECTUAL MISSION OF THE ORDER

#### PROLOGUE

99. Study should be an intrinsic part of the life of each member of the Dominican Family. We do not study just so as to have something to say, but because the Word of God transforms our understanding of God, the world and each other. *Metanoia* is a new understanding. A lawyer asked Jesus who was his neighbour. Jesus' reply, the parable of the Good Samaritan, invited him to ask another question: 'Who was neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?' (Luke 10.36). If our preaching does not transform people's minds as well as their hearts, it will fall into either moralism or sentimentality.
100. Study is part of our pilgrimage towards the contemplation of the One in whom we shall find our beatitude. The prologue to the chapter on the intellectual mission of the Order in the Acts of the General Chapter of Providence, *Misericordia Veritatis* (cf. ACG 2001, 104 – 135), offers a profound exploration of how the whole of our Dominican life, our preaching, our contemplation and the pursuit of justice, is grounded in our life of study. This document should remain a reference point for the Order's understanding of its mission. Its insights do not need to be repeated here.
101. Our preaching is therefore inseparable from a passion for the truth, especially in a world in which, as Pope John Paul II demonstrates in *Veritatis Splendor*, the very possibility of arriving at the truth is questioned. The General Chapter of Krakow, in

*De Vita Intellectuali et Praedicatione* (cf. ACG 2004, 128-131) has offered the Order a penetrating analysis of this challenge. We are faced with “the double-challenge posed by relativism (radical pluralism and the ‘post-modern’ distrust of reason) and fundamentalism. The former contests human reason’s capacity to attain absolute, definitive and universal truths. The latter treats practical truths as absolute and denies reason the natural exercise of its critical powers.” (ACG 2004,128)

102. This double challenge marks our contemporary world: the retreat from facing fundamental questions about human existence in the West, and the spread of violence born of religious fundamentalism throughout the world. It is as men and women of dialogue that we can transcend the twin temptations of relativism and fundamentalism. The dialogue with other religions and especially with Islam must remain a fundamental priority for the Order, as underlined by the Commission for Dialogue (Inter-religious) established by the Master of the Order.
103. Our witness to the fullness of truth in Jesus Christ means that we have confidence in the revelation that we have received in the Word of God. We must also have the humility to accept the truth wherever it is to be found, even among those who have another faith or none, since all truth is of Christ. We are the heirs to a rich intellectual tradition especially that of St Thomas Aquinas, which is to be studied, loved and transmitted. But we will be truly the heirs of St Thomas if we have a passion for the truth that drives beyond the security of received answers; that is why we strive to draw near to the mystery of God’s truth which is beyond all words. We must therefore dare to engage in debate with all those who seek wisdom and understanding. We must have the courage to be drawn out of our depth so that, like St Thomas, we need to beg God for insight. Dominic wished us to be an Order of beggars, not just for our bread but for wisdom.

104. This passion for the truth marks our role in the heart of the Church too. We are the sons and daughters of St Dominic *in medio ecclesiae*. Our commitment to the unity of the truth in Christ is mirrored in our care for the unity of the Order and of the Church. The charism of the Order of Preachers requires that we remain one, preaching 'one body and one Spirit, just as you were all called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all through all and in all.' (Eph 4.5)
105. St Catherine of Siena offers us an enduring witness to a Dominican care for the unity of the Church. It is especially our prophetic task today, in a Church which is often marked by ideological divisions. This prophetic task is grounded in our confidence in the unity of truth in Christ. The Master of the Order named the Commission 'Truth in Love' to help the Order face the theological tensions which may enrich as well as wound our lives.
106. But this convergence of all truth in Christ lies beyond the grasp of any theology. The Church's continued pilgrimage towards the one who is the truth has always included moments of tension, from the clash between Peter and Paul at Antioch until today, as we struggle to understand how we may reconcile the tradition with new insights. Sometimes this has led our brethren into tensions with the highest authorities of the Church. Theological exploration may initially look like disloyalty to the tradition. We are loyal to our role within the Church by encouraging our brothers and sisters in their pursuit of truth, being unafraid both to offer them our support and encouragement and also fraternal criticism. The Order should be a model of responsible, critical and fraternal debate for the Church.
107. If we are to fulfil this mission within the Church, then the Order needs a life of study which is vigorous. As every Chapter has

repeated for years, we need to form young brethren to the highest degree in every intellectual discipline. The repeated exhortations of Chapters have been largely ineffective. There are multiple pressures on Provinces to respond to other needs, although the intellectual life is fundamental to all of our mission. Provinces have often proved reluctant to respond to the Master of the Order's requests for brethren to teach in the institutions directly under his jurisdiction. The Order looks to these institutions to become centres of excellence without providing the necessary support, especially the Angelicum. The repetition of words which have no effect undermines the value of the words we speak. (*Relatio MO 163*)

108. How are we therefore to move forward? This General Chapter, as the supreme authority of the Order, proposes that the time has come to move to more practical measures if our mission is to be sustained. The Order needs to have a strategy for its intellectual mission, which will help it respond to the priorities of our time, articulate the relationship between the institutions under the jurisdiction of the Master and Provincial institutions of study and research, and see that our intellectual life is sustained and developed in every region of the Order.
109. The General Chapter of Krakow offered a helpful analysis of the role of the Regent of Studies (cf. ACG 2004, 114-160). The effective development of the intellectual life at a Provincial level needs further analysis of the role of the Prior Provincial in collaboration with the Regent and the Moderators of the Provincial centres of study (*Relatio MO 71*).
110. This is a moment of hope in the life of the Order. Many of the divisions of previous years have been largely left behind. We have the grace to have vocations in most entities of the Order. We must seize this moment with courage.

I. STRATEGY FOR THE INTELLECTUAL MISSION OF THE ORDER

*Why do we need a strategy for the intellectual mission of the Order?*

111. **Mission.** This is a moment in which our intellectual tradition has much to give. The Church looks to us to engage with the major issues of our time. Such a strategy would help us to respond to expectations, whether at the local or universal level, and strengthen our institutions, especially the most fragile. The new technologies of communication, put at the service of our preaching and study, could be a great help.
112. **Strategy.** The Order already has a *Ratio Studiorum Generalis* and each Province its *Ratio Studiorum Particularis*. A strategy will help the Master and the Provinces in the choices that must be made, and in the dynamism that needs to be created, and placed at the service of the intellectual mission of the Order.
113. **Formation.** The Order is blessed with numerous vocations in quite a few countries. Often where there are many vocations, Dominican students are not offered an adequate Dominican intellectual formation. We must respond to this need.
114. **Priorities.** Sometimes there are tensions between the priorities of the Provinces, in the development of their own centres of study and the needs of the institutions under the jurisdiction of the Master of the Order. Such a strategy would clarify our expectation of such institutions, their role in the universal mission of the Order, and their relationship with Provincial institutions.
115. **Collaboration.** It would facilitate the collaboration between institutions within the regions of the Order, or sharing the same language or devoted to the same specialisation.

*How can we develop such a strategy?*

116. First we need an analysis of the present situation of the intellectual life and mission of the Order. If necessary one could use specialized assistance. What are our resources? What study centres do we have? What are their characteristics? Which brethren do we have qualified in what disciplines?
117. [*Commissio*] We commission the Socius for Intellectual Life to work with the Provinces to gather the necessary data, (to be presented at the future Congress of Regents, cf. n. 119) in a way that clarifies our present situation.
118. [*Petitio*] There are already regular meetings of Regents in most regions of the Order. We petition that these meetings report on the strengths and weaknesses of the intellectual life in their regions to the Socius for intellectual life.
119. [*Commissio*] We commission the Socius for the Intellectual Life to organise a Congress of the Regents of Study for the whole Order within two years, to reflect upon the intellectual life of the Order and its relationship with the development of our mission in the light of the data presented by nn. 120 and 121.
120. [*Commissio*] We commission the Permanent Commission for the promotion of studies to analyse the results of this Congress and to present a report to the next General Chapter, with proposals as to the development of our intellectual life, priorities and challenges, in the light of the following criteria: *Linguistic*: the strength of the Order in the main languages of our mission. *Geographic*: the presence and strength or weakness of institutions in the various regions of the world to serve the mission of the Order and the formation of our students. *Centres of excellence*: To identify centres of excellence which need continued support and development. *The resources*: Our resources are limited. The Order, at both local and global levels, needs criteria to choose priorities, taking into account the availability of the brothers and economic constraints.

*Who is responsible for implementing the strategy?*

121. The strategy should help the authorities of the Order – the Prior Provincial and his Council, the Provincial Chapter, the Master and the General Council, the General Chapter – to take effective decisions for the coherent development of the intellectual mission of the Order.

II. THE ROLE OF THE PRIOR PROVINCIAL  
IN THE INTELLECTUAL MISSION OF THE ORDER

122. Saint Dominic, “*Evangelium s. Matthei et Epistolas s. Pauli semper secum ferebat, fratres duxit ad scholas et misit in maiores civitates ‘ut studerent, et praedicarent et conventum facerent’*” (LCO 76). This icon can inspire each brother, especially those who exercise authority and, therefore, the Prior Provincial. Today, it is a question especially of promoting study and the necessary conditions for study (LCO 87). St. Dominic invites each Prior Provincial to value study and to practise it, otherwise he will not be able to recognise the signs of the times (LCO 339, 1°). Our tradition also invites us to practice the *quaestio* as an intellectual discipline, beginning with the agenda of the Provincial Council. Furthermore, St Dominic, choosing to study Matthew and Paul— at once different and complimentary—is the inspiring icon for the Prior Provincial’s task: to permit brothers with different theological orientations to listen to each other, to dialogue, and to integrate themselves into the life of the Province.
123. The Prior Provincial is not alone in the promotion of study; he has institutional collaborators: The Commission for the Intellectual life, comprising the Moderators of the different centres of study (LCO 92-bis), the Regent (LCO 93, § I), the Provincial Promoter for On-going Formation (LCO 89, § III). Good collaboration between the Regent of Studies and the Prior Provincial is essential. All these collaborators work *sub auctoritate*

of the Prior Provincial. This formula and other similar ones - for example the *moderatorium* "*subditur priori provinciali*" (LCO 237, §II) - do not mean, first of all, imposition or control, but the duty to "make grow", in this case to make study grow among the brothers. Moreover, it points to a constant effort of wisdom to direct the activity of the institutions towards their goal: the understanding and communication of the Gospel leading ultimately to the vision of God. 124 The Prior Provincial has numerous duties with regards to centres of institutional study (cf. LCO 231). We emphasise the duty to confer the *munus docendi* (LCO 231, 4°) and especially to prepare suitable professors for the intellectual formation of the brothers (LCO 231, 3°). The Prior Provincial also intervenes decisively in the brothers' choice of specialisation after their institutional studies.

125. With regard to the preparation of professors, preceding Chapters have noted the following complaints: reluctance to identify and encourage young brothers who have an aptitude for higher studies (ACG 2001, Providence, 126), little initiative for the formation of new professors in the centres of study (ACG 2001, Providence, 135, 142b; ACG 2004, Krakow, 147), a tendency to easily withdraw brethren from studies and research for which they have been prepared (ACG 2004, Krakow, 152). In fact, it should be noted that in recent years many young brothers have joined our centres of study and institutions under the jurisdiction of the Master of the Order. It is particularly incumbent on the Prior Provincial to encourage this effort for the benefit of each Province and the whole Order.
126. It is also the responsibility of the Prior Provincial to promote the life of study beyond initial formation or complimentary study. It is on his governance that the brothers' possibility of finding themselves granted a period of more intense study depends (LCO 85 II). It is also the Prior Provincial who permits a brother, even during initial formation, to attend university

- (LCO 243). It is an act of discernment and courage not let oneself be guided uniquely by the necessities of the moment.
127. The Prior provincial should also show himself to be a man of discernment and dialogue when it falls to him to give permission to publish a book (LCO 139- bis, § I), when there is a doubt (LCO 139-bis, § II-IV) or when a brother is accused of distancing himself from *sentire cum Ecclesia* (LCO 80; cf. also 86 § III; 93, § I, 7°) in publishing the results of his research.
128. It is the Regent who must, as President of the Commission for Intellectual Life, promote and co-ordinate the whole intellectual life of the Province (LCO, 93, § I,1°). The duty of the Prior Provincial consists above all in supporting the brothers responsible for studies in the Province. It is up to the Prior provincial to encourage and maintain ties at three levels in the life of the Order: between the Priors of the Province, with other Provinces (LCO 89, §I, 3; cf. ACG 2001, Providence, 144, 147; ACG 2004, Krakow, 136), and with the Master of the Order (LCO 89, §1,2°). When the Prior Provincial carries out this task, he supports a strategy in the service of the intellectual mission of the Order.

### III. INSTITUTIONS UNDER THE JURISDICTION OF THE MASTER OF THE ORDER

129. If “man does not live by bread alone,” our centres of study and research do not live only by budgets and structures. They need the confidence of the Order in the brothers who dedicate themselves there, and the confidence of all in the richness of our tradition. They also need credibility, which presupposes recognised competence and regular evaluation. They must also clearly identify with the charism and mission of the Order, without neglecting our community life, our prayer life, and our preaching.
130. Given that the Order cannot do everything everywhere, it is indispensable that each centre of study and each institution

under the jurisdiction of the Master of the Order subscribe to the strategy for the intellectual mission that the Order wishes to define and put into practice. It is in this spirit that we speak out at once on present needs and orientations towards the future.

*The Priory of Saints Dominic and Sixtus – PUST (Angelicum) in Rome*

131. Having heard the Rector of the PUST and studied his report, as well as the strategic plan, which has been elaborated and is on the way to realisation:
- We encourage the brothers who, in precarious material conditions, devote themselves to teaching.
  - We recognise the value and the scope of the internal Strategic Plan of PUST, and we support the continuation of the efforts necessary to put it into practice.
  - We acknowledge the evaluation which will be undertaken within the context of the Bologna process.
  - We appreciate the clarity of the accounts submitted to the Curia of the Order.
  - We are grateful for the support of PUST gives to many centres of study of the Order, in particular by affiliation.
  - We congratulate the Faculties of Philosophy and Theology of PUST for having organised the Colloquium on Relativism and Fundamentalism recommended by the General Chapter of Krakow (ACG 2004, 141), as well as the publication of the Acts of the Colloquium.
  - We take note that there was a Conventual Chapter *ad modum capituli provincialis* in accordance with the decision of the General Chapter of Krakow (cf. ACG 2004, 167).
132. The decisions to be made at present, and the strategy to put them into practice in the near future, should take into account the following:

- the decline of priestly and religious vocations and of the number of theology students, especially in Europe.
- the multiplication of Universities and Faculties in Rome as well as in the regions of Italy and, as a result, the competition for students between institutions and a decline in the number of students in the Italian language section of PUST. The students in the English language section are more numerous.
- The precariousness of the living conditions of the professors at an economic level (purchase of books, electronic equipment, the necessity of a secretariat for academic authorities).
- lack of a place for living and formation for young brothers doing complementary studies in Rome, at PUST or in other entities.

*Urgent Situations*

133. [*Commissio*] We commission the Syndic of the Order to study with the Rector of PUST and the Prior of the Priory how to improve the working conditions of the professors.
134. [*Commissio*] We commission the Syndic of the Order to study the financing of the urgent restoration of the buildings of the Angelicum.

*Short-term strategies*

135. [*Petitio*] We petition that a Conventual Chapter *ad modum Capituli Provincialis* be held every three years (cf. *Relatio MO* 86a). With a view to a better integration of PUST into the mission of the order:
136. [*Commissio*] We commission the Socius for the Intellectual Life and the Rector of PUST to study the possibility of collaboration between our centres of study, which are specialised in the

study of Saint Thomas, and PUST, in particular through the organisation of international colloquia.

137. [*Commissio*] We commission the Rector of PUST and the academic authorities to begin a collaboration between centres of formation, faculties, institutes or universities of the regions of Italy with PUST.
138. [*Commissio*] We commission the Rector to prepare once a year a report for the meeting of the Directory on the execution of the Strategic Plan of PUST.
139. [*Commissio*] We commission the Master of the Order and the Socius for the Intellectual Life, in dialogue with the Prior Provincial of the Roman Province of St Catherine of Siena, to study the setting up of a community able to welcome young Dominicans studying in Rome.

*The Albertinum in Fribourg and the Faculty of Theology*

140. In spite of the diminution of religious and priestly vocations, the Faculty of Theology of Fribourg remains the most important (around 400 students) and the most international in Switzerland. The following points must be kept in mind:
  - Exceptionally good working conditions for professors teaching at the University of Fribourg (salary, libraries, community life at the Albertinum and the community of St Hyacinth of the Swiss Province).
  - The Albertinum and the priory of St Hyacinth offer student bursaries.
  - the titles conferred by the University are civil degrees and not only canonical.
  - the tripartite convention between the Grand Chancellor, the Conference of Swiss Bishops and the State of Fribourg was renewed in 2004. This convention binds the Order and remains

in effect until 2015. The question of continued teaching of the Order at the University of Fribourg does not arise before 2013 (notice of an eventual termination of contract).

141. [*Commissio*] We commission the Socius for the Intellectual Life to study with the Priors Provincial and the Regents of Studies the possibility of proposing candidates for the two chairs which will be vacated: History of the Church, and Exegesis of the New Testament in the French speaking section.

*The Priory of St. Etienne proto-martyr –  
The Ecole biblique in Jerusalem*

142. The Ecole biblique in Jerusalem faces a difficult political situation in the Middle East. Moreover, vocations to Biblical scholarship are becoming rarer in the Order and in the Church. The mission of the École biblique is more important than ever and the support of the Order is indispensable.
143. The present situation of the École is characterised by: a renewal of the professorial body; the presence of research students from the whole world; collaboration with other centres of research and teaching from within the Order or from outside; the scientific profile of the School, recognised for its publications and a scientific project (the Bible and its Traditions), in which several brothers from the École and from the Order collaborate, along with other Exegetes at the international level; the welcome given to students to share in the life of the priory; a healthy financial situation.

*Urgent Situations*

144. The École biblique, founded by Father Lagrange in 1890, was recognised by the *Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* of Paris in 1920 as a French archaeological School. On this basis the École receives an annual grant from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Even if the École biblique were not to have its own archaeological digs in the future, the competence of a brother able to make links between archaeology and biblical texts is indispensable. This is an important issue in present Biblical research.

145. [*Commissio*] So we commission the Socius for the Intellectual Life and the Priors Provincial of the Provinces of Toulouse and France to look for a brother interested in Scripture and Archaeology.
146. [*Commissio*] We commission the Priors Provincial and Regents of Studies of the Order not only to send brothers to study at the École biblique, but also to identify one or other brother (French speaking or not) interested in specializing in the domains of Middle East Literature and of Oriental Studies. The École can give them all the aid necessary for their formation in Europe, the United States or Israel.

*Saint Augustine of Hippo House, the Ethiopian Catholic University of Saint Thomas Aquinas in Addis Ababa.*

147. The Chapter of Krakow encouraged the community of the new house, Saint Augustine of Hippo, in Addis Ababa to pursue efforts to establish a Catholic University (ACG, 2004, 202). This mission is led by several brothers from the Province of the Philippines. Three years later, the Chapter takes note of the following: the imminent opening of the University with five faculties, for the time being in □ Nazareth High School; the collaboration between several branches of the Dominican Family; the beginning of construction on the university grounds; the reduced number of brothers in the St. Augustine of Hippo community.
148. [*Commissio*] We commission the Master of the Order to reinforce the community and to name a brother as Project Director. The latter will be directly responsible to the Italian Episcopal Conference for the development of the project and for giving an account of the funds made available.

*The Leonine Commission and the Historical Institute*

149. The Chapter along with the Master of the Order recognises that the Leonine Commission and the Historical Institute of the Order are accomplishing very specialised tasks of high quality (cf. *Relatio MO 75*). These institutions contribute to our intellectual credibility.
150. [*Petitio*] We petition those responsible for these Institutions to study how to make available the best of this research to the Dominican Family.
151. [*Petitio*] We petition the Priors Provincial to encourage suitable brothers to dedicate themselves to these two specific tasks: the critical edition of the works of St Thomas Aquinas; research and publication concerning the history of the Order (cf. *Relatio MO 75*).
152. [*Petitio*] We petition the Master of the Order to ask the Holy See for economic assistance to support the work and publications of the Leonine Commission. It was the Holy See that confided this mission to the Order.

*Publications*

153. [*Commissio*] We commission the Syndic of the Order and the Socius for the Intellectual Life to contact the Provinces in order to arrange to send the Dominican publications which are stored in S. Sabina in Rome to each entity of the Order.
154. [*Petitio*] We petition those responsible for IDI and the *Analecta* to make their publications available by Internet to all the communities of brothers and sisters of the Order. They will thus be available to a greater number and at a lower cost.

## CHAPTER IV

### PASSION FOR THE DOMINICAN LIFE

#### LIFE OF THE BRETHREN

155. We give thanks to God for the brethren who continue to live faithfully through the joys and sorrows of life. As we remember the life of St. Dominic and dialogue together, we have come to appreciate more fully the richness of our fraternal life as presented in our Constitutions and the Acts of previous General Chapters, especially that of Krakow (213-259). We have decided to offer this reflection in order to encourage all of us in our passion for our Dominican life and to strengthen the authentic living of the fraternal life. We believe it contains the urgent issues for the revitalization of our community life and hope it will be a resource for our personal meditation, community chapters and meetings. Our prayer for all of us is that God may continue to fan into flame our passion for the Dominican life and the preaching mission.

#### *What changes our life?*

156. In 1203, our tradition tells us that two men, Bishop Diego of Osma and St. Dominic began an unexpected journey at the request of another, the king of Castile, to complete a simple task which led to the unexpected. It enkindled in St. Dominic an unquenchable passion: preaching and the foundation of the Order of Preachers.
157. On one night during the journey a new awareness arose in the mind and heart of St. Dominic. Upon arrival at an inn, St.

Dominic met the innkeeper who believed in the Albigensian teaching which shaped his life. They entered into dialogue with each other spending the night sharing their faith, their personal stories, their points of connection and their differences. We can imagine how they learned from each other. How St. Dominic, formed by the fruits of his contemplation, became aware of the goodness of the innkeeper through their dialogue which surely was passionate because it stemmed from a conviction of belief of both men.

158. As we remember this well-known event, we are challenged to examine and to appreciate the meaning and the vitality of our fraternal life in the present and for the future. It recalls the necessary elements for a fruitful community life: sharing faith in Jesus Christ; telling one another our stories so we may grow in mutual understanding; listening; self-awareness; seeing another's perspective; and an openness to change.
159. Significant in this story is how both St. Dominic and the innkeeper were changed. The innkeeper returned to the fullness of faith in Jesus Christ. St. Dominic did not return to Osma to resume his life as a Canon Regular and subprior. Transformed by this encounter, he now joined a preaching mission and became known as brother Dominic. This event was one of many that changed his life (e.g. the sign at Fanjeaux, the gathering of the first women into a contemplative community and the founding of an Order).
160. The beginnings of our Order are marked in different ways. One thing is certain: St. Dominic had a passion for God who was calling him to something new and challenging in which dialogue would play a significant role. This passion instilled in St. Dominic a single-minded focus to gather others to preach with him for the salvation of all. He foresaw that the fruits of the holy preaching would be realized when the brethren joyfully lived in one mind and one heart, ever ready to be itinerant for the

sake of the Gospel and their brothers and sisters. God continues to call us to the newness and challenges of the fraternal life which we embrace with joy and passion.

1. COMMON LIFE AND MISSION  
PASSION FOR COLLABORATION

161. A chapter reflects the communitarian nature of the Order. As the report of the Master (92) states: “The practice of common life prepares for and gives energy to preaching and at the same time is shaped and made productive by it (LCO 1, IV)”. Therefore the hub of Dominican life and the soil from which it springs is community. Dominican tradition confirms the importance and necessity of community supporting the mission of preaching: “In the Order the practice of common life is considered essential for sustaining preaching as well as supporting the personal life of each brother. A good quality of common life sustains and makes credible the mission of the community” (*Relatio MO 89*) We now consider some aspects which are relevant for a fruitful balance between mission and common life.

*A. Belonging and mission*

162. Saint Dominic experienced in the south of France, at the beginning of his apostolic life, how difficult and less successful preaching is without the support of a community. Our communities are composed of people of different backgrounds, cultures, interests, dreams and hopes, but there is one thing which makes us all equal: we have been called and have made a choice to follow Jesus Christ according to the charism of Saint Dominic. Since that moment, we are a community of brothers who can say: “this is our community”, “this is our vicariate”, “this is our province” and “this is our Order”. Our identity consists of a clear sense of belonging which we experience as a wonderful gift.

163. A community exists in the service of mission, in a continuous outgoing movement towards others. Its reason for existence is to be outgoing towards people in their particular situations, to speak with them about God and His Kingdom. If it loses this direction, it ceases to be true to itself and to bear witness. It is necessary then that the community, encouraged by the prior and making use of house chapters and meetings, find enthusiasm for the fullness of common life and commitment to the proclamation of God's Kingdom.

*B. Community project*

164. On numerous occasions we ask ourselves: "How do we maintain the tension between common life and mission?" The community project is a tool for turning this tension into something positive (cf. ACG 1992 Mexico, 39; ACG 1995 Caleruega, 44; ACG 1998 Bologna, 127-132; ACG 2001 Providence, 272-275). A project owned by everybody means that it is the community which preaches and bears witness (cf. LCO 311). This project involves much more than programming timetables and tasks and is a means of empowering our relationships, of sincere communication and of committing everyone to the mission of the community. It remains very necessary that each community elaborate and evaluate its community project annually as a useful channel for improving common life. Beside including pastoral work, community liturgy and financial affairs, the project ought to include the aims and means by which the community proposes to become a place of discipleship, meeting, celebration and house of preaching (ACG 2004 Krakow, 219-226). The community project should also integrate the priorities of the province and the Order. Canonical visitations provide appropriate opportunities for reviewing the mission of a community in relation to the project drawn up by the community itself (cf. ACG 1992 Mexico, 40).

*C. Collaborators in mission*

166. The entire community collaborates in mission. All its members share responsibility. Therefore, in tune with what was indicated in Bologna (ACG 1998, 135-137) and in Krakow (ACG 2004, 250-251, 257-258), the Commission for the study of the clerical character of the Order and the role of co-operator brothers in it - whom we sincerely thank for their thorough work - reminds us that "all the members of the Order, priests and co-operator brothers, are all first and foremost brothers of Saint Dominic who together seek to live as a community of brothers in the service of preaching" (Report of the Commission, p. 2). For this reason, Dominic wished to be called "frater Dominicus" (Montpellier 1206; cf Jordan of Saxony, *Libellus* 2; cf Pedro Ferrando, Narracion 14). When we profess in the Order, we all become brothers in religious life. We are all collaborators in the one mission even though we may have different apostolates. Thus we emphasise anew that the ministry of preaching is entrusted first of all to the entire community and in this ministry are included all the different ways in which the non-ordained brothers share in the mission of the Order. This does not imply that we no longer consider the Order to be 'clerical' (cf. LCO 1, VI), but it excludes every form of clericalism: there are different ways of living the Dominican vocation, each of which is fine, important and worthy of being fostered. Therefore provincial promoters of vocations, including openness to the possibility of collaboration between provinces, ought to promote and present the different forms of living the Dominican vocation: be it as ordained or non-ordained brothers. In this way we recognise the value of the presence of non-ordained brothers in provincial and general chapters. We would appreciate the Master's taking further steps so that these considerations may take effect in the different entities of the Order.

*D. Challenges*

166. Very often communities while attending to many tasks, find themselves faced with difficulties and can lose the rhythm of contemplative life, making community life difficult. This reveals itself when we say: “we have difficulty in communicating”, “the community is of little help to us”, “my community is such and such a group”, “we are few in number and getting old”, “my family needs my attention and my help”, “I have my professional work ...” Here too the community must seek solutions, creating space for time with God and with one another, using opportunities for sincere exchanges of experiences, moments of prayer to strengthen bonds with one another and occasions for sharing times of recreation.
166. During the chapter, we heard some reports telling of brothers who live in places of war, violence and lack of freedom. We have been impressed by the way these brothers support each other and remain faithful to their mission. These accounts have helped us overcome an excessively narrow vision. Quite often we believe that our own particular situation is full of grave difficulties and problems. When we open our eyes and our hearts to brothers who live in such difficult circumstances, it helps us to focus on what is essential and awakens our sense of solidarity. We have been called to recognise and to help one another as brothers. Most certainly we will draw strength from contemplation to overcome the difficulties which present themselves. In the Order, each community is called to be a “house of preaching” because it lives what it preaches.

2. COMMON LIFE AND FRATERNITY  
PASSION FOR COMMUNITY

*A. Communion and communication*

168. Community life is the result of an ongoing process and a lengthy discipleship, in order to respond adequately to the call which the Lord has made to us to live as brothers. We ought to be continually learning to “build community”. At times it happens that there is a lack of communication between us, isolation and individualism which are a cause for concern. In some instances, the minimum for promoting community dialogue as suggested by our constitutions (cf. LCO - 7; 307, 314 etc.) is not fulfilled; at other times, while the law is put into practice, communication and the participation of everyone are still not achieved. Such prolonged situations damage not only the quality of community life but also the brothers themselves. Therefore we encourage communities large or small, to foster good quality communication among their members. Above all, it is a question of anthropology which defines the human being and what makes us human. Communication at different levels (of ideas, feelings, faith...) creates consensus, communion and unanimity. Community meetings which go beyond a communication that is merely superficial and functional and dedicate the time necessary for dialogue with one another about the principal matters affecting the community’s life and mission, are an indispensable means for promoting communication.
169. Communication which is both frank and fraternal will help us recover mutual confidence in the basic goodness of each brother and in the good will guiding everyone. Sacred preaching flows from a community which is transformed daily by its fraternal life. There is always the temptation to avoid difficult conversations dealing with our emotional life and facing up to our human

condition and our weaknesses. By cultivating fraternal life we will be able to overcome the difficulties of communication between the generations and the risks of individualism which hinder involvement in community projects. On the other hand, nothing can take the place of interpersonal dialogue. We ought to be attentive so that the new means of communication (e-mail, internet, mobile phone ...) do not become substitutes for indispensable interpersonal relationships.

170. Times of relaxation and festive celebrations help to build up fraternity as well as informal meetings to share cultural activities, trips ... and moments of simple entertainment and shared joy (cf. ACG 2004 Krakow, 244 and 247).
171. The community aspect of religious life can never be reduced to its psychological or moral dimensions. Only the practice of the theological virtue of love - which for Saint Thomas is a form of friendship (S. Th. 11-11, q. 23, a. 1) - will finally help us overcome divisions and differences, maintaining continuous interest in and commitment to the wellbeing of one another.
172. Communication ought to be extended also to brothers of neighbouring communities. When brothers who live close-by have the opportunity to meet, it tends to be a favourable occasion for brotherly sharing and for a greater enrichment of the mission. Also, experience teaches us the enormous benefits resulting from the effort to warmly welcome and invite others to share moments of prayer, table fellowship and conversation, especially other brothers, Dominican family, relatives and others who form part of the Order (cf. ACG 2004 Krakow, 226). This openness to the Dominican family and to the laity in particular, helps us to take effective steps towards sharing a common mission (cf. ACG 2001 Providence, 423). The eight centenary of the foundation of Prouille and the meeting of lay fraternities, both occurring in 2007, have been occasions for a greater coming together, communication and collaboration.

*B. The gift of growing old in community*

173. Increased life expectancy offers new possibilities to Dominican life: a brother may now reach old age while still having a considerable number of years ahead of him in which he can contribute much to community life and to different apostolates. In fact, in some provinces the number of older friars has increased noticeably and many of them continue to be very active in preaching and enrich their communities with their presence, their gifts and their services to their brothers. The presence in communities of brothers with limitations due to indifferent health or old age makes it quite clear that one is to be valued not so much for what one can or cannot do, but for what one is and for one's presence in community. Many brothers give us a great lesson by their witness in this stage of life.
174. Increasingly, old age curtails possibilities for apostolic work and community life. This situation challenges us to learn how to grow old while continuing to live fraternally in community. Growing old in community is an art, demanding preparation, considerable effort, discipline and the practice of the relevant virtues, of which the following are to be noted: willingness to accept help, not becoming isolated or withdrawn, making the effort to mix with younger generations, keeping up to date and looking to the future with hope.
175. Although old age and sickness cannot be equated, old age is a time when health begins to weaken. The appearance of new illnesses linked with increased life expectancy ought to make us more sensitive to the need for caring for our physical and psychological health and our responsibility to help our older brothers when their health wanes. Each province ought to make the effort to find the best means in accordance with its resources to accompany and take care as best it can of its older and infirm brothers. These brothers must always be made feel

that they are part of their community. From the beginnings of the Order, attention and care of the sick and elderly is presented as a task of the entire community. Humbert of Romans wrote: “there is no greater mercy than that which is given to the sick”, and that the elderly and infirm ought to be treated “with great tenderness” (Opera de Vita Regulari 1, 205; II, 304).

### 3. CONSECRATED LIFE PASSION FOR DISCIPLESHIP

#### *A. Co-responsibility*

176. Today, there is a global mistrust of authority as practised in many governments and institutions which complicates the exercise of authority. In addition, the negative effects of individualism creates a tension between the person and the common good. Consensus is no longer an option in a polarized society where debates strike at the weakness of a person rather than an honest search for the truth. Our Dominican life is not excluded from the current attitudes of our times. Hence, it is important that our lives are governed by charity which is the end of the vow of obedience (cf. LCO 19). The goal of our government is to arrive at sufficient consensus among the brethren. Therefore, we encourage all of us to renew our profession and to examine how it concretely conforms us to Christ (cf. LCO 18).
177. The challenge for all of us is to follow the example of St. Dominic who submitted himself to the decisions of the General Chapter. It is by honouring and accepting our legislation which binds under charity that we find our path to holiness and happiness. This spirituality of the Constitutions calls us to a mutual responsibility or co-responsibility. We are all accountable for the proper functioning of our communities and our Dominican life. Unfortunately, too often accountability

is seen as a diminishment of personal autonomy when, in fact, it is the recognition that we are mutually responsible for our life and for each other.

178. The unity of our life is rooted in obedience (cf. LCO 17, II) which is a multifaceted dialogue of discernment that always seeks cooperation among the brothers for the good of our life and mission (cf. LCO 20 III, IV). At the same time, this one vow challenges us to “overcome ourselves in our heart” (LCO 19). We accept in obedience what at first we are unwilling to accept. Later we learn that such an acceptance bears much fruit in us and for others. At such moments we recall our first love (cf. *Relatio* 8) and passion for the Dominican life. Since we have freely professed obedience, the real test of our accountability comes when we are asked to do something different than our own plan.
179. It is essential that the Prior fosters willing service (cf. LCO 20, III) as he exercises leadership in the community by animating, encouraging and empowering the brothers to live the life that they have professed and to be accountable for the decisions they have made (cf. LCO 311). Furthermore, as the Master states in his *Relatio* (cf. 95), the Prior not only coordinates the life of the community but also governs and directs the community according to the laws of the Order.
180. All of us have been formed from the very beginning of formation to be primarily responsible for growth in our vocation in free cooperation with grace (cf. LCO 156). Therefore, no one has the right to dispense himself from the obligations of our legislation without due consultation and permission from the relevant authority (ACG 2004 Krakow 239). Neither should the argument of following one’s conscience be misused as an argument to avoid responsibility. Providence reminds us that we “cannot raise ourselves up as autonomous centres of activity, and, at the same time, belong to the Order. We are interdependent by necessity and by vocation.” (ACG 2001 Providence 279)

*B. Affective Life*

181. Some aspects of today's culture that are present in advertisements, movies, television programs, etc., are contrary to the Gospel and human dignity. The reality of the trafficking of women, child pornography and sexual abuse all tragically corrode the fundamental principle of the Gospel: the inherent human dignity in each person as created in the image of God. Despite this reality, we want to reaffirm the fact that we love and are loved. However, human love is limited and only finds fulfilment in a higher love which is a relationship with God. God's love for us is the very reason why we entered religious life. Therefore, we freely and joyfully embrace chaste loving as an expression of our passion for God and for human friendships.
182. Our communities are places of communion and acceptance (cf. LCO 4, 1). This is especially true for our brothers who suffer from any kind of distress (cf. LCO 12, 13). Each of us, in our own journey of life, has to come to terms with the moments of crisis that always seek compassion, understanding, forgiveness and not judgments (cf. LCO 3, II). In this regard, we are all the same. We face the same challenges for balance in our relationships where we discover intimacy and develop friendships, knowing that no other human being will ever answer all our needs.
183. The fraternal life is made a reality only if each of us genuinely encounters the other, as St. Dominic did with the innkeeper. There is a lot of fear when we want to talk about our affective life; nonetheless, we should not avoid these conversations in which we listen to one another, share our life and face our humanity with all of its complexity. Knowing and understanding the stories of our brothers will help us to be more supportive and allow us to grow in affectivity. This mutual understanding gives us the opportunity to be compassionate and to create an opportunity in which our

brother will be able to express himself truly and freely. This takes time, patience, and a sincere concern for him.

184. Unfortunately, in our experience, there are times when brothers slowly withdraw from community unnoticed. When we are asked – “Where is your brother?” – do we have an answer? Engaging with one another and being accountable to each other is an essential part of our human growth and transformation. We are changed by living the fraternal life with those God has brought together in a particular moment and place. For such fraternal life, it is our experience that we need to renew a sense of trust and confidentiality among us. Sharing our life includes talking about the mistakes we make and the boundaries we might have overstepped. Without a connection among us that is appropriately intimate, we diminish an atmosphere of trust in which we can encourage our brothers in times of crisis where we all experience the power of grace in our weaknesses. In this we acknowledge our responsibility for ourselves, our brothers and others and seek healing and forgiveness.

### *C. Sharing of Goods*

185. From the early beginnings of the Order, St. Dominic intimately linked the credibility of our preaching with a life of voluntary poverty in which we imitate the “apostles who, without gold, silver or money, proclaimed the kingdom of God” (LCO 30). For him, the needs of others took precedence over the books he needed for study. By his example we recognize that the sharing of our goods with others and among ourselves liberates us from the accumulation of things that encumbers our apostolic itinerancy (cf. LCO 31, 2).
186. We entered the Order abandoning everything we had in order to hold all things in common. Over time, have we slowly reclaimed what we had once renounced? As a brother advances

from one stage of formation to another and from one assignment or ministry to another our personal belongings gradually pile up. Was it the case that when we first came to the Order we only had a suitcase? Later we needed a car to move, then a van, and after some time a truck was not big enough. How can we, as individuals, communities and provinces, own properties and goods for the sake of ministry without being a source of scandal to the very same people on whom we depend? Poverty implies detachment (letting go). Those who need less can truly and passionately share what is most precious to us: the Gospel which we are called to preach (Acts 3, 6).

187. It is through God's providence, expressed in what people generously give to us and in what our own brothers work hard for, that we have much more than the average person in the world. In the context of a materialistic world and a culture of profit-making and consumerism, where the unjust economic system creates so much inequality; where millions of people go hungry each day and lack medical care while some live in abundance; where our lifestyle endangers the whole planet; our response to all these is: simplicity of life and solidarity with the poor. Some of our own families may be counted among those who are in need. Since all things are held in common family support should involve the decision of the community or the Province and not the individual brother alone. So, how do we balance the needs of the families of our brothers without creating a material dependency on the community? If they develop a certain dependence on our material support, do we not blur the values of the kingdom of God which we stand for and that which we are expected to primarily offer?
188. Our communities are the sources of our security and a sign of our concrete solidarity with others. All are called to contribute and to share joyfully in the common goods of the community or Provinces which have been the legacy of generations of hard

work. Special care should be given to the maintenance of communal property. Therefore, in justice we should be transparent before our community about the income we receive and we should freely surrender it. A brother, who either withholds his income or refuses to work, is in fact stealing from the community. Furthermore, we should also justly treat those who collaborate with us, our employees and lay staff.

189. Within a Province, communities vary in their economic situation. In solidarity we, as communities and Provinces, are responsible for the material needs of the Order. Moreover, since our vow is a public act, we are accountable not only to the Order but to the larger community – the faithful who support us. This accountability embraces our use of the resources of our planet which belong to the whole of humanity.

#### 4. CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE

##### PASSION FOR THE GOD OF JESUS CHRIST AND HUMANITY

190. In our tradition, St. Dominic was a passionate preacher and a man of prayer. “Frequently Dominic would turn to his companion on the road and say, ‘You go ahead, let us think of the Saviour’, and fall behind to be alone. We must find a similar space for ourselves. It is, more important than apostolic activity” (Damian Byrne, Letter ‘The Common Life, I. Prayer). Like St. Dominic, we need to pray unceasingly, either speaking to God or about God, and learn the art of living in God’s presence where our prayer ‘fortifies our fraternal bonds and strengthens community’ (Krakow 222). In the context of our busy lives and a noisy world, we absolutely need silence and prayer. It is the responsibility of the community to provide a suitable place and an appropriate timetable for contemplation which is the heart of our whole life. We are a family that is called to be together in order to praise, to bless and to preach as we dialogue with people from different religions who value the life of sincere prayer.

191. In contemplation we ourselves are invited to conversion and transformation of heart. How do I reconcile with my brother in the community whom I have offended, before preaching forgiveness to others? How do we as a community of brothers live what we preach? To what extent do we contemplate the words of our own preaching? Our preaching is the ultimate testimony to the quality of our prayer which integrates all the elements of our life. Providence (211) highlighted that “the essential subject of our contemplation is Jesus of Nazareth, the incarnate Word” with whom we are to have an intimate relationship. Furthermore, contemplation affects our preaching when it comes from the depth of our experience and our ministry to the people of our times, especially the suffering, the poor, and the marginalised. When these are not the case, our preaching becomes a ‘clanging cymbal’ and a ‘noisy gong’.
192. Our Constitutions challenge us by noting that the unanimity of our lives “ought to be a living example of universal reconciliation in Christ which we proclaim by our preaching” (LCO 2, II). The lack of reconciliation in our own communities causes scandal and harms the credibility of our preaching that flows from our contemplation. Thus we reaffirm Caleruega (43,2) which encourages us to find opportunities for reconciliation by creating liturgical spaces where we can listen and dialogue with one another.

#### CONCLUSION

193. We began this reflection with the story of St. Dominic and the innkeeper. The venue for this opportunity of change was not a pulpit but an inn where there was time for profound dialogue and reflection. Although there are many venues for preaching, for us Dominicans the first is our fraternal life (cf. LCO 2) where we have the extraordinary opportunity to encounter, to accept, and to encourage one another in charity and mercy in a way that changes our life.

194. We have reflected on a number of events and actions that do change who we are. Nonetheless, we come to the simple yet undeniable reality that the fundamental question in our life is not "What changes our life?" but "WHO changes our life?"
195. Encountering God, one another, those we meet in the apostolate, the stranger and, indeed, ourselves, fosters a change within us. As we leave this Chapter, we have come to a better understanding of one another. The process of dialogue has made us richer than when we came. Perhaps, this is the fundamental point of this reflection. We have gathered at the inn according to the structures of our life and shared our passion for Christ and the Dominican life. We cannot return to our communities to resume our life as usual if we wish to truly follow in the footsteps of St. Dominic who did not return to Osma. Something is different. We are different.

## CHAPTER V

### FORMATION

#### *Letter to a Formator*

Dear Brother: You, who are dedicated to the formation and the care of vocations, have been especially present in the heart of this General Chapter. We are most grateful for the work you take in hand, a work for which it can sometimes be difficult to find brothers to undertake. Your sacrifice and daily mission reminds the whole Order of the importance of living our fundamental charism and the responsibility we have for our own formation, for our vocations and from the formation that we received when we first entered the Dominican Order (cf. L.C.O. 156; 165). In keeping with the spiritual and regular lives (cf. L.C.O. 159), every day your example asks each and every one of us whether we live our lives in a way that leads to the fullness of Dominican life and ministry (cf. L.C.O. 154).

197. There are so many things that we would like to say to you, not least of all, we would like to invite both you and us to re-acquaint ourselves with the rich documentation of the Order on vocations and formation; as found in our laws, in the Acts of General Chapters and in the letters of the Masters of the Order, to Chapters, and to all the particular entities of the Order; the qualities which are as important as other qualities that are part of being a Dominican.
198. Eight hundred years ago at Prouille our father Saint Dominic placed contemplation as the 'corner stone' and solid rock on which he would found the Order in the monastery with the first nuns. For us, every monastery is a perpetual reminder of

the source from which our apostolic life as preachers springs. This presents a big challenge in nurturing a vocation and forming a brother as a Dominican: the contemplation of the Word and wedding it to the contemplation of the local or global reality in which our people live today.

199. In our Order formation acts as its own spirituality, it is through this spirituality that we offer the possibility of a deep spiritual experience to the brothers who come to us. This demands that we initiate them into a life of personal and liturgical prayer, waking within them the desire to take the Word unto themselves. In this you accompany them on the spiritual adventure of following Christ more closely and helping them to understand God's plan in their lives. Those in formation hope that those who have spent more years in the Order will inculcate within them a fidelity to the following of Christ Jesus and a love of Mary after the fashion of Saint Dominic. They also hope for witness to our compassion in a suffering world. Our example will help them to identify with the charism of the Order and increase their sense of belonging to it. In this way they can commit themselves more fully to the mission, responsibly taking it as an important part of their own lives. If we do not do this, the very opposite might well occur!
200. As a preacher in the work of formation, you have the great mission of being a witness, you are more than a master (teacher?), in the way that your life gives witness to your loyalty to faith, the gravity of your spiritual life, the correctness of your practices, your equality in the treatment of all people, your ability to receive people, your listening and the simplicity of your fraternal life. This mission is also the duty of the formation community and any of us when we are charged with responsibility for formation. We encourage you to remain patient in the individual progress of every brother, and that you would also be more capable of motivational leadership, to encourage them to meet

new challenges and commitments, in a climate of freedom, and without which obedience and a healthy discipline is weakened.

201. Formation for fraternal life is vitally important in developing the human, spiritual and intellectual qualities and the promotion of healthy relations between those in formation, and could make of itself a force and a newness for the Order now and towards the future and that, at the same time, become a creative sign of contradiction in a society dedicated to consumerism. We consider it vital for the future of the Order, that brothers are formed from the beginning with the universal mission of the Order in mind and not only the needs of the entity.
202. What young people are coming to the Order today? What are our challenges in formation? How do we make ourselves more responsible for formation? How do we give support for ongoing formation throughout our whole lives? These are questions that we have asked at this General Chapter and we would like to share a word with you and the entire Order in facing these questions.

#### I. WHAT TYPE OF YOUNG PEOPLE ARE COMING TO OUR ORDER?

203. They are the same young people that our society produces: young people with great skills and great limitations. Many of them come from a world stripped of transcendental values, from societies that are often hostile or indifferent to faith (ACG 2001 Providence 352), from broken homes or from relationships that lack any real sense. Of course they also bring values that are affirmative of life as well; their great spirit of volunteering, their struggle for human rights and their concern for the environment. Even though these young people carry a broken ruptured world with them when they enter the Order they also bring joy, fortitude and signs of grace that remain present in the world today.

204. The contemporary young person is more spiritual than we often think. They have high ideals but they do not always know how to live up to them. Many of them seek a personal experience of God or of the Sacred in a way that is not of the past. They are curious and they have a thirst for knowing, they are generous and selfless in helping the poor, the landless, immigrants, the marginalised and anybody else in need. In fact, many of them are already committed to Christ and his message.
205. If we speak of analysing our society today, we would see that some young people are searching for something new and might see the religious life as a possible way of attaining it:
1. They seek a stable life, clarity, a world free of ambiguity, qualities that cannot be found in a climate of constant change. A climate of divorces, broken relationships, unemployment and, in many countries, poverty.
  2. They are thirsting for a God that cannot be found in a secularised and materialist society.
  3. They seek a fraternal life that cannot be found in situations where, all too often, individualism, competitiveness and personal gain are encouraged.

## II. THE CHALLENGES OF FORMATION

206. The new vocations that the Order receives are gifts from the Lord and we should take them as such, therefore it falls to us to accept them as they are and to transmit to them all of the richness of following Christ after the fashion of Saint Dominic, “by loving everybody, everybody loved him” (cf. Jordan of Saxony, *Libellus* n. 107; Rodrigo of Cerrato, *Life of St. Dominic* n. 44; Constantino of Orvieto, n. 62). Accepting them into the Order is not just a challenge for them but is a challenge for us too. The Chapter at Bogotá wished to highlight certain challenges which these new vocations, in the various stages of formation, present for the entire Order.

207. Some challenges:

- a) Formation takes place in a climate of change, of short commitments, which holds back personal maturity and does not present an image of a good life without falling into mistrust, worry, sadness or pessimism. It is pointless to attempt to ignore this and treat it as if none of it could overcome us. But this new climate in which we are called to preach is a society that still has evangelical values.
- b) We should be ready to give reason to the hopes we have (1Pe 3:15), that would be a witness to our lives of preaching. When Jesus taught us how to deal with difficult times which he also lived through, he left us three fundamental values: prayer, the cross as a sign of salvation and fraternal life in community. These three values are ways to enter joyful communion with the Father, and to experience the joy of serving our brothers.
- c) This situation demands that we renew our spirit of contemplation for the mission of the Order, for preaching in a contemplative climate, within the spirit of incarnation (cf. ACG 2001 Providence 353). We need a new evangelical spirit, new attitudes to our service to the world and new methods of preaching. The contemplative dimension, which is an axis of the entire Order and is a value to recover in our formation, makes us mature in our vocation and internalise the most pressing needs of all men and women today.
- d) There are some of our new vocations that demand we seek new ways of passing on the authentic tradition of the Order in the area of formation. We need to be capable of open self-criticism, not simply of our externals, but also of that which leads us to regular observance and the mission of the Order. The changing climate demands that we do not entrench ourselves in the past for fear of losing our security.

- e) We are also receiving candidates who are older in age and more experienced in life. Some of these come with professional qualification and experience. It is important to be mindful of the particulars of these men's particular situations.
  - f) Just as our brothers in formation need to learn how to speak with people who have different points of view so too must we, as brothers in the Order, enter into dialogue with the younger men in formation, to create together a situation where new understandings of our tradition can arise: forms of relationships, expression, language and openness to the services that the Order asks of us, making it grow and bringing us to evangelical freedom, in an obedience that is not born of fear, a law that does not bind under fault, a responsible government that is participative and consensual. Just as in the days of our holy father Saint Dominic, we are challenged today to recognise the movement of the Spirit through our history and in our culture and the corresponding call to be preachers of the Gospel. Like Dominic we need to be bold enough to invent new responses and to be present in the future that is developing around us. The evangelical councils remain a real asset in evangelisation, being as they are a style of life that gives true witness in the proclamation of the Gospel (cf. *Evangelii Nutiandi* 21).
208. [*Commissio*] We recommend that the councils of formation of *the* different entities of the Order take these and other challenges into account in their plans for formation and that they be attentive to the perceived cultural changes of the present time.
209. [*Commissio*] We recommend that Councils of Formation in each entity reflect creatively on the following questions and discuss them at their regular meetings: How do we prepare ourselves for the universal mission and the priorities of the Order? (cf. ACG 1989 Oakland 68; ACG 1998 Bologna 103; ACG 2004 Krakow 268)) What in fact are the "frontiers of our preaching"?

Where does one find “catechumens”? (*Relatio MO IV,119*). How do we form ourselves to prepare for commitment until death? How do we prepare ourselves for the contemplative life? (cf. ACG 1998 Bologna 86.2; ACG 2004 Krakow 267). How do we form ourselves for the freedom to live life in a community? (cf. ACG 1998 Bologna 86,5; 87,2) How do we prepare so as to become members of the Dominican family? How do we form ourselves in human maturity? (cf. ACG 1998 Bologna 86.1). How do we give a Dominican formation to those brothers who study in colleges that do not belong to the Order?

210. [*Exhortatio*] We exhort formation communities to have communal reflections where they can discuss how to better nurture the love that drew us to belong in this Order, even more so when society attracts us with ‘other loves’.
211. [*Commendatio*] We recommend that our entities include the prophetic dimension of the Gospel, bound directly to Jesus, so that above all that it would affect communion between the Word and the example of our life, in the footsteps of the preaching of fr. Antonio de Montesinos and his community 1511, in America, within their plans for formation.
212. [*Ordinatio*] We ordain that the Priors Provincial, Vice-Proprials and Vicars General, together with their Councils of Formation, consider LCO 217-220, on the formation and ministry of the co-operator brothers and that they ensure that the RFP and the RSP reflect the individual character of their vocation and ministry within the identity that they share with the clerical brothers.
213. [*Commendatio*] We recommend that the Provincial Director of Vocations encourages vocations as co-operator brothers to the Order, and, that he be given the necessary resources to fulfil this duty. Wherever possible it would be desirable that a co-operator brother be appointed as assistant to the Vocations Director.

III. THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR FORMATION

214. All the entities of our Order have echoed the commendations of various General Chapters. They can be heard in the Acts of their Chapters, in the RFP and in the respective statutes. We all know that every brother is primarily responsible for his own formation (LCO 156); but we also know the importance of the stages in the formation process. As the General Chapter at Mexico said: “this is a matter that is the responsibility of the Order” (ACG 1992 Mexico, n. 27.2).
215. This General Chapter at Bogotá wishes to emphasise and highlight the importance of the formation community where postulants, novices and students are formed and also those brothers directly involved in formation.
216. *The Formation Community.* The Prior Provincial, Vice-Provincial or Vicar General along with his respective Council, should make diligent endeavour to assemble a truly formative community. Uniformity should not be diligently sought in these communities; it is sufficient that they are varied. This experience of the qualities and limitations will enrich the brothers in formation. Differences of age should not be seen as important and it would be good to have friars working in varied ministries, pastoral, intellectual, on the frontiers... Friars that have these qualities: respectful, open to dialogue; mentally sound, who know how to listen and are seeped in Dominican spirituality.
217. *Those Responsible for Formation.* It is important that those in charge of the different stages of formation should themselves be good examples of human, spiritual and Dominican qualities. They should help those in formation to discover the inner meaning of their Dominican identity. In order that they might carry out their tasks they need the support of the Provinces and these should also offer them the necessary opportunities to prepare themselves for their task (Krakow, 269). Also, formators

should not neglect, in their own lives or the lives of the brothers in formation, the daily demands of conventual life and of the ministry that await our youngest brethren from the time of their first assignation.

218. [*Petitio*] We petition Provinces, Vice-Provinces and Vicariates, which have formators and economic resources, that they would be supportive of those who, having vocations, lack the personnel and resources needed to bring the work of formation to fruition.
219. [*Petitio*] We petition all the entities of the Order within a country or region, that they continue to organise, or organise, formation courses to renew the formators in the fields of humanities, theology, religious life and Dominican spirituality.

#### IV. ON-GOING FORMATION

220. Recognising that formation is a process that never ends and continues to shape our lives as Dominicans, every brother should cultivate genuine personal maturity, practice of prayer, fidelity to the vows and to common life just as continual study is necessary for effective preaching and ministry. Formation does not end for a Dominican, for he is always developing, it plays a part in every time of our lives and it embraces all the elements of our vocation. For this reason it is essential that the Order encourages permanent formation for all the brothers.
221. [*Petitio*] We petition the Priors Provincial, Vice-Provinceals and Vicars General along with the Councils of Formation, to devise a programme for recently-ordained brothers, in order to help them in those important moments of transition when they dedicate themselves to the ministry. This might include an annual meeting at provincial or regional level for brothers who have recently commenced full-time ministry. Or maybe a brother could act as a mentor directing and accompanying those who were ordained recently.

222. [*Petitio*] We petition the Priors Provincial, Vice-Proprietary and Vicars General along with the Promoters of Ongoing Formation, and the Councils of Formation of every entity, that they would develop strategies that would encourage permanent formation for the brothers of that entity. These could include regular meetings under the chairmanship of the prior or local superior, with the help of the conventual lector, where the brothers in the community can reflect on the challenges of the mission, the importance of prayer, or of the common life, contemplation, the role of study or the meaning of our vows.
223. [*Commendatio*] We recommend that the Priors Provincial, Vice-Proprietary and Vicars General along with the Promoters of Ongoing Formation, establish a plan for permanent formation that gives a profound attention to questions on real maturity, sexuality and the vow of chastity. This plan should also promote the skills that are needed in this area that are part of contemporary pastoral practice in the Church. They should address awareness between familiarity and professional ethics, the knowledge of professional and ministerial limits that are essential for effective ministry today.

## CHAPTER VI

### GOVERNMENT

#### PROLOGUE

224. In our Order government is neither a special science nor an arcane mystery in which selected experts share and from which others are excluded. It is not for some to legislate and others to obey. It is a ministry to which all of the brethren are called in that at profession each brother receives voice and vote. Every friar thus accepts responsibility for the promotion of the mission and a share in affecting that corporate conversion which lies at the heart of our call to the proclamation of the Gospel. Just as the preaching of the Word is designed to extend the bounds of communion in the divine mercy, so our participation in government is intended to deepen the bonds of fraternal communion in that same mercy. In our common exercise of government we make plain what we are: a community of brothers who are also servants of the Word, entirely given over to the preaching of Christ. Just as our sharing in the exercise of government is expressed in an 'organic and proportionate way' (LCO I # VII) so the concerns of government touch proportionately every aspect of our religious life as we attempt to live in fidelity to the Gospel command 'to make disciples of all nations'. Government is not a separate compartment of our community life free from any engagement with the liturgical, sacramental, contemplative, apostolic or economic aspects of our common discipleship; rather it operates as a kind of transversal theme uniting all of these in the Order's constant attempts to renew itself in response to the providential challenges set by the spirit of the age.

*Regarding better communication with the Curia and Provinces*

225. In order to improve communication between the Priors Provincial and the Master of the Order and his Council, we remind the Priors Provincial and Socii of the Master of the Order of LCO 428.
226. [*Commendatio*] We **recommend** that the present practice of inviting some Priors Provincial to meet with the Master of the Order and the members of his Council be extended to all Priors Provincial at least once during a Prior Provincial's term of office.

*Regarding the circulation and reception of the ACTS of the General Chapter*

227. [*Exhortatio*] We **exhort** Priors Provincial and their Councils to find creative ways not only of disseminating the ACTS of the General Chapters but of making their contents known in the convents and houses of their Provinces, Vice Provinces and Vicariates.

*Regarding collaboration*

228. [*Exhortatio*] We **exhort** Priors Provincial and their Councils to foster collaboration in the mission of the Order by undertaking a realistic assessment of the services and resources they may offer to other entities of the Order, as well as the needs that they themselves experience. Having established this inventory of needs and resources, it is to be made known through the Master of the Order, in regional meetings, or between Priors Provincial or moderators of institutions, so that the mission of the Order may benefit from such an exchange.
229. [*Commendatio*] We **recommend** that since collaboration profits by transparency, the terms of such engagements between

Provinces should be agreed upon in writing by the Priors Provincial and their Councils. The Master of the Order should be informed of such an agreement and may act as the guarantor.

*Regarding questions of Justice and Peace*

230. [*Exhortatio*] We recognize the contribution in the works of justice and peace of the General Promoter, the Permanent Delegate of the Order at the UN Council on Human Rights in Geneva, our NGOs, the Provincial Promoters, and the Regional Promoters in those Regions where such offices have been found useful and appropriate. In addition we **exhort** all the friars to find new and creative ways to promote justice and peace.

*Regarding the strengthening of weaker entities and the encouragement of common projects*

231. [*Ordinatio*] We **ordain** that the Master of the Order continue the process concerning the Caribbean outlined in ACG 2004 Krakow 293.
232. [*Ordinatio*] We **ordain** the Master of the Order and the Priors Provincial and Vicars Provincial in Bolivia to continue the process of collaboration initiated at Krakow with a view to the unification of the two entities (LCO 256-bis).
233. [*Commendatio*] We **recommend** that the Master of the Order continue the dialogue and planning between the two Vicariates in Venezuela so that the two entities can co-operate more closely in the common mission.
234. [*Commendatio*] We **recommend** that the Master of the Order, the Socius for the Apostolic Life and the respective Superiors review regularly our fragile entities, in order to determine and foster their viability.

*Regarding the mission at 'the frontiers'*

235. [*Exhortatio*] We **exhort** our entities to be vigilant in assessing demands which are presented to evangelization at the "frontiers" (ACG 1986 Avila, Chapter II, 'Mission without Frontiers').
236. We are conscious that present commitments may inhibit a positive response to such challenges; nevertheless we encourage Provinces, Vice Provinces and Vicariates to be open and generous without being afraid of the risks such a response may present.
237. Such projects may be engaged in for a specific time and need not necessarily be of long duration. In this way we may also promote the itinerant aspect of our mendicant life.

*On the co-operation between Major Superiors and local Superiors*

238. [*Exhortatio*] We **exhort** Priors Provincial, Vice Provincials, and Vicars General to convene meetings of Priors and Superiors at least once a year to share common concerns and information.
239. Bearing in mind the nature of our government, and the different levels at which authority operates, we remind all of the brethren of the continuing value of the principle of subsidiarity (LCO 22).

*On the text of the LCO*

240. [*Ordinatio*] We **ordain** the Master of the Order to provide within one year from this Chapter a revised printed edition of the Latin LCO which as soon as it is completed should be made available on the Order's website.
241. [*Ordinatio*] We further **ordain** that future modifications to the LCO appear promptly on the Order's website.
242. [*Ordinatio*] With a view to a thorough editing of the LCO, we **ordain** that the Master of the Order appoint a commission to

report by the next General Chapter on the feasibility of such an edition, and the principles and the criteria which are to guide it. This commission is to provide the Master of the Order with a progress report within two years. The commission's first task would be to classify the various kinds of possible changes and to suggest ways to implement them. The report, which will be sent to all capitulars six months before the next General Chapter, must include:

1. Suggestions of technical changes to be done as soon as possible.
2. Identification of more important changes that are needed (such as assignments, vicariates, etc.) and ways to consider and implement them. The commission should then consider how such changes are to be made; i.e. whether they should be presented all at once to a General Chapter or in stages to different General Chapters.

*On the General Chapters of the Order and the Master of the Order*

243. We acknowledge that questions concerning the intervals between successive General Chapters and the duration of the Master of the Order's term of office are inter-linked. In the light of this [*Commendatio*] we **recommend** that the preparatory commission for the next General Chapter:

- 1a. Considers shortening the length of each General Chapter and finding new ways to prepare for them; e.g. by establishing preparatory commissions to elaborate first drafts of documents and by analysing the contents of reports prepared for the forthcoming General Chapter.
- 1b. Examines ways in which the General Chapters might serve better the life and mission of the Order and that it investigates whether more time should be given to plenary discussions of fundamental issues, leading to a few clear and effective

decisions, rather than to the preparation, presentation, amendment, and voting of large numbers of propositions, which are often ineffective. We therefore ask the preparatory commission to consider changes to the norms of procedure to be presented for the approval of capitulars prior to the Chapters.

- 1c. Examines proposals calling for the reduction of the number of participants at each General Chapter by raising the minimum number of brethren required for a Vicariate to be represented by its own delegate; and proposals addressing the representation of the houses under the immediate jurisdiction of the Master of the Order. Such proposals are to be presented to the next General Chapter (cf. *Relatio MO* 198 a & b).
  2. Given the need to reduce effectively the burden of work imposed on the Master of the Order [*Commendatio*] we **recommend** that he find appropriate ways of achieving this. These might include changing the ways in which visitations are conducted.
244. [*Ordinatio*] We **ordain** that the directories of the Dominican Laity, national or Provincial, should be approved by the Provincial with his Council in the Province(s) in which these entities are established.

## CHAPTER VII

### ECONOMIC LIFE

#### PROLOGUE

*“Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake?” (Matt 7: 9-10)*

245. Asking, giving and receiving define us as human persons and Christians made in the image of our generous and gracious God. In our religious life when we ask we should be able to trust that what will be given will be good for us.

*Fear, Humility and Gift*

246. Sometimes we are afraid to ask and at other times we are reluctant to give. All of us have to learn to receive. Some ask all the time. Some give generously whenever asked. Some take a long time to realize all that they have received.

*Clarity and Transparency*

247. Obtaining clarity and transparency in our economic lives ultimately depends on the kind of trust that a son ought to be able to have when he asks his father for things. Legislation does not replace that trust but gives form to it.

*For the Mission*

248. Accountability is not its own end but is justified by the purposes it serves. We ask, we give and we receive account of one another for the sake of our common mission.

*For Solidarity, Sharing and Caring*

249. In the economic life this rendering account can seem like only one more exercise in number-crunching and information processing; but what is given freely is, in reality, received as gift. When everyone gives account fairly and honestly, a climate of trust is created that makes us more aware, more concerned and more generous to others; more transparent and more true to ourselves.

*God's Mercy and Yours*

250. We begin our lives as Dominicans asking for God's mercy and the mercy of each other and we never stop asking for that and for so many other things. In time we learn not only to keep asking, but to give and to receive from God and from one another. It is from within this network of asking, giving and receiving that communities become a holy preaching, Word made flesh, in their day-in and day-out existence.

GIVING ACCOUNT

251. [*Declaratio*] We **declare** that in accordance with LCO 569, the Syndic of the Order, Fr. José Bernardo Vallejo Molina OP, presented a report on his administration since his appointment. This report has been approved.
252. [*Declaratio*] We **declare** that in accordance with LCO 569, the Syndic of the Order, Fr. José Bernardo Vallejo OP, presented the accounts of the General Curia for the financial years 2004-2006. These accounts have been approved.
253. [*Declaratio*] We **declare** that in accordance with LCO 572, the Syndic of the Order, Fr. José Bernardo Vallejo Molina OP, presented the personal accounts of the Master of the Order. These accounts have been approved.

254. [*Declaratio*] We **declare** that the Syndic of the Order, Fr. José Bernardo Vallejo Molina OP, presented the following accounts: Angelicum Fund, Solidarity Fund, Saint Dominic Fund, Francisco de Vitoria Fund. These accounts have been approved.
255. [*Declaratio*] We **declare** that in accordance with LCO 571, the convents and institutes under the immediate jurisdiction of the Master of the Order duly submitted to the Master, accounts approved by their respective councils. These accounts have been thoroughly studied and approved by the Master of the Order and the General Council.
256. [*Ordinatio*] We **ordain** that Priors Provincial, Vice Provincials and Vicars General ensure that there are economic Statutes for all entities under their jurisdiction where these are not already part of general or administrative Statutes (cf. LCO 552).
257. [*Exhortatio*] We **exhort** entities of the Order to avail themselves of the economic and accounting expertise offered by the Syndic of the Order and other members of the Economic Council of the Order.
258. We **commend**, in the interest of greater cooperation and transparency in accounting and finances, the practice, where and when necessary, of economic visitations by the Syndic of the Order and other members of the Economic Council of the Order.
259. [*Ordinatio*] We **ordain** that, recalling the Ordination of Avila 175 requiring that the brethren in formation receive training in administrative and economic matters in order that they might more capably assume such responsibilities within the Order, provision for such training be included in the *Ratio Formationis Particularis* of each entity.
260. [*Ordinatio*] We **ordain** that the following replace LCO 567 I & II: Priors Provincial, Vice Provincials, Vicars General and heads of institutions under the immediate jurisdiction of the Master of the Order, assisted by their Syndics, are responsible for

sending to the Master of the Order by 31 August each year the following two documents:

- 1° The Annual Economic Report. This is a comprehensive presentation of the economic situation of the entity. It shall include details of income, expenses, assets, liabilities, and annual budgets as well as major projects undertaken or planned. If the entity has different houses or institutes, this report shall give details of the economic situation of each one. The format of this report may vary according to local custom but must include all of the information requested above. A sample format is available from the Syndic of the Order.
- 2° The Contributions (tax-deduction) Questionnaire. This is used to calculate the annual contributions from the entities of the Order. On the basis of this questionnaire entities claim their allowable deductions for formation expenses and donations to other entities of the Order. The questionnaire shall be sent out each year by the Syndic of the Order and its format shall be the same for every entity.

#### ORDER CONTRIBUTIONS

261. [*Ordinatio*] We **ordain** that the following text replace ACG 2004 Krakow 322, 323, 324, 325, and 326: Each Province, Vice Province and General Vicariate will be assessed an annual contribution according to its income in the following manner:

1. The income of Provinces, Vice Provinces and General Vicariates is converted from their respective local currencies into euros.
2. The income is adjusted by deducting formation expenses and donations to Dominican entities (other than their own).
3. The level of deduction for formation expenses is determined in the following manner:

- a. The total number of friars in formation in the Order is determined. The 50<sup>th</sup> percentile or the 'median' is identified.
  - b. Provinces, Vice Provinces and General Vicariates are ranked in order of income (in euros).
  - c. Provinces, Vice Provinces and General Vicariates are listed according to income, together with (i) the number of friars in formation and (ii) the per capita cost of formation.
  - d. Beginning with the Provinces, Vice Provinces and General Vicariates with the least income, the number of friars in formation is counted until the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile or 'median' indicated in 3 (a) above is determined.
  - e. The per capita formation cost corresponding to this 'median friar in formation' is the median per capita formation cost.
  - f. The total amount that can be deducted by Provinces, Vice Provinces and General Vicariates is calculated by multiplying the number of friars in formation with either the actual per capita formation cost or the median per capita formation cost, whichever is lower.
4. The income of Provinces, Vice Provinces and General Vicariates is adjusted by deducting the allowable formation costs and donations to other Dominican entities (other than their own).
  5. The adjusted incomes of all the Provinces, Vice Provinces and General Vicariates are added up to obtain a total adjusted income for the whole Order.
  6. A calculation is made of the ratio of each Province, Vice Province or General Vicariate's adjusted income relative to the total adjusted income of the Order.
  7. The annual contribution of a Province, Vice Province or General Vicariate is equal to this ratio multiplied by the portion of the General Curia's budget to be paid by all the Provinces, Vice Provinces and General Vicariates taken together.

8. No Province, Vice Province or General Vicariate is required to pay more than 10 percent of that portion of the General Curia's budget provided by the annual contributions of the entities of the Order. No Province, Vice Province or General Vicariate will pay less than the set minimum contribution.
262. [*Ordinatio*] We **ordain** that no Province, Vice Province, or General Vicariate will pay less than €3000 in contributions annually.
263. [*Ordinatio*] We **ordain** that convents and other institutes under the immediate jurisdiction of the Master of the Order continue to be taxed at a rate of 6 percent of gross income.
264. [*Ordinatio*] We **ordain** that not less than 85 percent of the annual budget of the General Curia be provided by the annual contributions of the entities of the Order.
265. [*Ordinatio*] We **ordain** that in recognition of the rising costs of healthcare in every region of the world and with particular concern for ensuring proper care for our sick and elderly brethren, the Economic Council of the Order prepare a report to be submitted to the Master of the Order on the feasibility of allowing deductions from contributions for certain health and medical costs of the friars.
266. [*Ordinatio*] We **ordain** the Master of the Order to implement, even before the next General Chapter, a scheme of deductions from contributions for certain health and medical costs of the friars, if the Master of the Order and the General Council deem it feasible and without undue impact on the Order's finances.

#### SOLIDARITY

267. [*Exhortatio*] We **exhort** the entities of the Order to support and replenish the Solidarity Fund and the St. Dominic Fund.
268. [*Ordinatio*] We **ordain** that donations from entities of the Order

to the St. Dominic Fund shall be considered endowment and that only interests shall be distributed until such time as the Fund has attained €5 million in capital. 269 [*Commendatio*] We **recommend** that the Master of the Order, with the support of the Syndic of the Order and the President of IDF, establish a special fund designed exclusively to support the formation of our brothers belonging to our more fragile entities.

270. [*Exhortatio*] We **exhort** the entities of the Order to continue to respond generously to individual appeals from other entities of the Order, particularly from those with long-standing association, and to be generous also to new projects and missions with a view to sponsoring entities that have less financial resources or immediately greater needs.
271. [*Ordinatio*] We **ordain** the entities of the Order to report to the Syndic of the Order all gifts that they have given to, or received from, other entities of the Order.
272. [*Exhortatio*] We **exhort** the *Socii* of the Master of the Order for the different regions to ensure that Priors Provincial, Vice Provincials and Vicars General know about the different solidarity funds in the Order and the process of petitioning for them.
273. [*Commendatio*] We **recommend** that the Syndic of the Order make an annual report on solidarity funds to the Priors Provincial, Vice Provincials and Vicars General.
274. [*Commendatio*] We **recommend** to entities in receipt of solidarity funds, either from the General Curia or from other entities of the Order, to make efforts to solicit matching funds from other sources.

#### PROJECTS OF THE ORDER

##### *Angelicum*

275. [*Ordinatio*] We **ordain** the cancellation of the debt on the advances made to the Angelicum for the restoration of Angelicum Largo 1A, up to €700,000 .

276. [*Ordinatio*] We **ordain** the Syndic of the Order to include in the budget of the General Curia an annual subsidy of €40,000 for the Convent of St. Dominic and St. Sixto to be used exclusively for the personal needs (e.g., computers, clothes, books) of the brethren who have teaching or administrative responsibilities at the Angelicum, in order to improve the conditions for study and research.
277. [*Ordinatio*] We **ordain** the Syndic of the Order to transfer the money held by the General Curia in the Angelicum Library Fund to the IDF where it is to be invested and administered on behalf of the Angelicum.
278. [*Ordinatio*] We **ordain** that all fund raising activity for the benefit of the Angelicum shall be coordinated through the IDF and that donations received through such activity shall be administered by the same.

*Leonine Commission*

279. [*Ordinatio*] We **ordain** the Syndic of the Order, the Prior Provincial of the Province of France, the Prior and Syndic of the convent of Saint-Jacques, Paris, and the President of the Leonine Commission to review the annual budget for the Commission with a view to reducing costs.

*International Dominican Foundation*

280. [*Exhortatio*] We **exhort** all entities of the Order to support the work of the International Dominican Foundation, especially by allowing access to their territories and providing hospitality for those working on behalf of the IDF and its projects.
281. [*Ordinatio*] We **ordain** the Syndic of the Order to include in the budget of the General Curia a subsidy for the office and other operating expenses of the IDF up to a maximum of €75,000 annually, not to exceed fifty percent of the annual IDF budget.

282. [*Commendatio*] We **recommend**, recalling Providence 389 that new projects supported by the IDF must be submitted to the Master of the Order and General Council, that:
1. only proposals accompanied by full financial and feasibility studies be considered.
  2. priority be given to the following:
    - a. proposals for projects from regions which have not previously received support from the IDF
    - b. proposals for projects under the immediate jurisdiction of the Master of the Order
    - c. proposals for projects that assist whole regions and involve Order inter- entity collaboration
    - d. proposals for projects which focus on education
283. [*Exhortatio*] We **exhort** those responsible for projects supported by the IDF to collaborate with one another in promoting the projects and in fundraising activities, under the coordination of the IDF president.
284. We **commend** and give grateful thanks to Fr. Val McInnes OP, outgoing IDF President, for his years of dedicated service and for the great help his fund raising work has provided to the IDF projects.

*800<sup>th</sup> Jubilee of the Order*

285. In light of the 800<sup>th</sup> Jubilee of the Order, [*Commendatio*] we **recommend** that the Master of the Order, after obtaining the advice of the Syndic of the Order and the Ordinary Economic Council, cancel the debt of entities of the friars that are economically unable to repay the curia for loans/advances received. The Syndic of the Order and the Ordinary Economic Council are to give the Master of the Order their rationale for their recommendations and what amount should be cancelled.

CHAPTER COSTS

286. [*Declaratio*] We **declare** that the cost of the General Chapter is to be shared equitably, reflecting the portion in which each entity contributes annually to the ordinary budget of the Order but where no single capitular pays more than 3 percent of the total Chapter costs. Transportation costs are divided equally and administrative costs proportionately. Each capitular pays the actual *per diem* costs.

APPRECIATION

287. We give thanks to the Syndic of the Order, Fr. José Bernardo Vallejo Molina OP for his tremendous contribution to improving the economic administration of the Order.

## CHAPTER VIII

### CONSTITUTIONS AND ORDINATIONS

#### PREFACE

288. For a clearer presentation of the changes made in LCO by the Chapter, we have followed the same method as was used in the Acts of the former General Chapters of Rome (307), Avila (188), Oakland (208), Mexico (248) Caleruega (Chapter IX, page 90), Bologna (240), Providence (Chapter X, page 149) and Krakow (352). The numerical order of LCO is followed. At each number a specific sign shows whether the text has been approved for the first, second or third time:

- \* \* \* a confirmed constitution (three chapters)
- \* \* an approved constitution (two chapters)
- \* an introduced constitution (one chapter)

(Note: if the approval or introduction of a constitution has been made with “an ordination”, it is indicated with the sign [O])

◇◇ an Ordination voted on for the second time, abrogating a previous ordination.

◇ an Ordination accepted for the first time

[A] abrogated text

New texts are printed in *italics*

Since the correct interpretation of changes made demands a knowledge of the preceding text and its history, references to previous chapters are given with the following abbreviations:

- A – Avila, 1996
- O – Oakland, 1989
- M – Mexico, 1992
- C – Caleruega, 1995
- B – Bologna, 1998
- P – Providence, 2001
- K – Krakow, 2004

This chapter has changed some texts ‘technically’ without changing the substance of the law. The abbreviated word “Techn” will signify changes made either to our laws to conform to CIC, or to harmonise the text with other LCO, or for editorial changes in the text.

According to the norm of LCO 285 § 1 some ordinations made at the General Chapter of Mexico (1992) have been approved at this chapter and have been definitively inserted in the *Liber Constitutionum et Ordinationum*. These ordinations are indicated with the words “Insert.def”, namely LCO 45bis, 88 § 1 2°, 90 § II, 167 § III, 322 § 1, 352 § 1 3°, 391 4° and 5°, and 561.

289. (Insert. def) (Techn) (M 45)

45bis. Ord. – If a brother lives unlawfully outside his convent beyond one year, the prior provincial with his council shall decide the appropriate procedures according to CIC 696, 697 and 699.

290. (Insert. def.) (Techn) (M251, C 165)

88 Ord. – It is principally the duty of the conventual prior:

- 1° to arrange that at suitable intervals, conferences and community discussions take place with professors or other experts from the Order or from elsewhere. Doctrinal questions should provide the subject matter, particularly those relevant to the brothers’ ministry.
- 2° with the conventual lector and librarian to ensure that the library is provided with the necessary books and that an adequate amount of money is spent annually for its improvement.

§II There shall be a conventual lector of studies to assist the superior in Fostering the intellectual life of the community, unless the superior himself undertakes this task.

291. (Insert. def.) (Techn) (M253, C 166)

90 Ord. § II – In discharging all these duties the Master of the Order shall be helped by a socius for the intellectual life, as well as by a permanent commission for the promotion of studies in the Order.

292. \* [O]

93 – Const. § III. The Regent is proposed by the provincial chapter and appointed by the Master of the Order until the following chapter. He may be proposed for a second term immediately, but not for a third.

293. (Techn)

114 Ord. § III – In administering the affairs of the missions the Master of the Order is to be assisted by the socius for the apostolate.

294. (Insert. def) (M. 260, C 171)

167 Ord. § III – For this purpose, the province may establish a time of pre-novitiate as the first step on the journey towards the religious life. The aim of this is to prepare the aspirant for the novitiate especially through catechetical instruction and provide an experience of living community life. It also gives the Order an opportunity to discern the aspirant's suitability for Dominican life.

295. \* \* \* (P 483, K 358)

217 Const. § I – After the novitiate, the co-operator brothers shall spend three full years in a convent designated for their formation under the care of their own master, who may be a solemnly professed co-operator brother, and who will guide their spiritual and human formation. The regent or

some other suitable brother, appointed by the prior provincial with his council, shall be responsible for their intellectual and professional formation. [ A ] § II

296. (Techn)

247 Ord. § III – Superiors shall question each of those due for ordination in order to satisfy themselves that they freely and deliberately want to be ordained as religious (cf. CIC 1036).

297.

311 Ord. § I – It is also for the chapter:

1° to organise community life in so far as our laws permit in matters which in the judgement of the provincial chapter are to be determined by the convent;

2° to deal with matters to do with the apostolate and the temporal administration of the convent which the chairman regards as particularly important, without prejudice to the rights of the prior provincial.

§ II – In order that the common life may be at the service of the apostolate, and is enriched by the work of the brothers, every convent should develop its own programme or project of apostolic life. The programme, having been prepared and revised by all, must be approved by the prior provincial. In this way individual activity which is not permitted by the community nor by the prior provincial will be eliminated.

§ III – The provincial chapter shall decide what matters are to be determined by a decisive vote in the conventual chapter.

298. (Insert. def) (M 279, C 175)

322 Ord. § I – A subprior is to be appointed by the prior within three months after he accepts the office of prior, according to n. 310, 2°. If he is not appointed within this period, the right of appointing him reverts to the prior provincial. He

can be reappointed to a second term immediately but not for a third term without the consent of the prior provincial.

299.

341 Ord. – The prior provincial:

1° at the end of a visitation, shall convey to the brothers his observations and ordinations in writing;

◇ [ A ] 2°

2° during the three months before leaving office, he shall send a report on the state of the province to the Master of the Order, ensuring that it reaches him before the new election. In this he shall report both on the brothers, whether “they are preserving in peace, assiduous in study, fervent in preaching and faithful in regular observance, and on the relationships between the province and convents and the ecclesiastical authorities.

300.

◇ 348 Ord. § I – When the prior provincial ceases to hold office in accordance with n. 344, § I, the vicar of the province, as laid down in the statute of the province, will be: either the prior of the convent where the next provincial chapter is to be held or, if that convent does not have a prior at that time, the prior of the convent where the last chapter was held and so on, retrospectively; or that prior who is senior by profession in the province; or the prior provincial himself who has just left office.

301. (Insert. def.) (M 283, C 178)

352 Ord. - The Voters at a provincial chapter are:

§I- 1° regional priors;

2° vicars provincial elected in accordance with n. 389;

3° conventual priors: if the prior cannot attend on account of sickness or another grave reason accepted by the prior provincial, the subprior may take his place.

- 4° socii of priors going to the chapter in accordance with n. 490;
- 5° delegates of the brothers in accordance with nn. 497 – 501;
- 6° *a delegate of a non-prioral house with at least four brothers with active voting rights in the territory of any nation where there is no other house of the same province (B 263, P 492);*
- 7° a prior provincial who immediately before the chapter completed his term of office in that province.

**Note:** The text of § I, 6° was changed at the Bologna chapter and was confirmed at the Providence chapter. Nevertheless it has been inserted into LCO by this chapter.

302. (Techn)

372 Const. § III – If at any time the votes are tied, the president shall break the tie with his vote.

303. (C 147.1 and 147.2; B 220)

387 Const. § I – In each province there shall be a bursar who shall have charge of the goods of the province in accordance with the norms established for administration.

\* [ O ]

§ II – The brother who will have fulfilled this office may be proposed immediately for a second term, but not a third.

304. (Techn)

385 Ord. § II, 1° - The regional prior is elected for four years by the voters assigned in the vicariate and is confirmed by the prior provincial with the consent of his council;

305. (Insert. def.) (M 292, C 181)

391 Ord. The following may be used to foster collaboration among the provinces of a region or nation:

- 1° regular meetings.
- 2° inter-provincial conferences.

3° nation or regional promoters.

4° a common novitiate or studentate or common centres, according to the norms to be approved by the Master of the Order;

5° an agreement entered into with the consent of the Master of the Order for the erection of inter-provincial convents and for making assignations from one province to another.

6° *an agreement between two provincial chapters or priors provincial for making direct assignations from one province to a house of the other province, with due respect for nn. 270 §1 and II, 497 § I and 600, the Master of the Order, however, having been notified.*

**Note:** The text of 6° was changed at the Providence chapter and was confirmed at the Krakow chapter. Nevertheless it has been inserted into LCO by this chapter.

306. \* \* \* (P 498, K 376)

407 Const. – The following are assembled and have votes in a general elective chapter:

1° - 6° as in LCO

7° a delegate from each province which has between twenty and one hundred brothers assigned in vicariates or houses of the province outside the boundaries of the province, shall be elected from among the brothers and by them according to the provincial statute: furthermore, from each province which has between 101 and 200 brothers assigned in vicariates, a second delegate shall be elected, and so on.

307. \* \* \* (P 499, K 377)

409-bis. Const – Each province which has at least twenty brothers assigned in vicariates or houses of the province

outside the boundaries of the province has the right to send to a general chapter of diffinitors or priors provincial one delegate elected from and by those brothers according to the statute of the province (see Appendix 16). The latter selection shall be made in such a way by the Master of the Order with his council that half of the provinces shall be represented in one chapter and the other half in the next.

308. (Techn)

452 Ord. – The following is the procedure for the election of superiors:

8° the ballots are counted by the tellers. If their number does not exceed the number of voters, they are then to be opened; otherwise they shall be destroyed, and the electors shall fill in a new ballot-paper.

10° the tellers compare their tabulations and after they have found them in agreement, the ballot papers shall be destroyed.

309. (Techn)

468 Ord. – Before confirming an election, the prior provincial is obliged to seek the consent:

1° of the Master of the Order.

2° of the prior provincial of the province of assignation if the one elected or postulated is assigned in another province (cf. 270 § I); and also of the prior provincial of the province of affiliation, if he is assigned outside the province of his affiliation.

310. \* \* \* (P 508, K 383)

497 Const. § I – Without prejudice to n. 491 § II, and with the exception of those who in accordance with n. 352 § I and § III are already represented, the following elect a delegate to a provincial chapter, provided they enjoy active voice (cf. n. 440 and 441):

- 1° brothers directly assigned to houses of the province;
- 2° unless the provincial statute stipulate otherwise, brothers directly assigned to houses or convents under the immediate jurisdiction of the Master of the Order, always excepting those who belong to the general council;
- 3° brothers indirectly assigned outside the province, provided they are not superiors;
- 4° brothers assigned to convents for which an agreement has been reached in accordance with n. 391, 4° - 6°, provided they are not conventual priors.

311. (Insert. def.) (M 321, C 193)

561 Ord. – No brother may have a personal account in a bank except with the permission of his superior. In this case another brother designated by the superior must also have the right to withdraw money.

312. ◇ (cf. n° *Commission for Economic Life*)

567 Ord. - Priors Provincial, Vice Provincials, Vicars General and heads of institutions under the immediate jurisdiction of the Master of the Order, assisted by their Syndics, are responsible for sending to the Master of the Order by 31 August each year the following two documents:

1. The Annual Economic Report. This is a comprehensive presentation of the economic situation of the entity. It shall include details of income, expenses, assets, liabilities, and annual budgets as well as major projects undertaken or planned. If the entity has different houses or institutes, this report shall give details of the economic situation of each one. The format of this report may vary according to local custom but must include all of the information requested above. A sample format is available from the Syndic of the Order.

2. The Contributions (tax-deduction) Questionnaire. This is used to calculate the annual contributions from the entities of the Order. On the basis of this questionnaire entities claim their allowable deductions for formation expenses and donations to other entities of the Order. The questionnaire shall be sent out each year by the Syndic of the Order and its format shall be the same for every entity.

#### APPRECIATION

316. The General Chapter of Provincials, held in the convent of St Dominic, Bogotá, of the Province of St Louis Bertrand, Columbia, wishes to thank each and every one of those who worked to prepare the Chapter and bring it to a successful conclusion, and specifically:
- The province of Colombia for its kind hospitality and for arranging everything so well
  - The community of the convent of St Dominic, Bogotá, which hosted the Chapter so fraternally
  - The brothers and sisters who gave their services so carefully and diligently to the Chapter – the members of the secretariat, those assigned to do simultaneous interpretation and the translation of texts, those who arranged the liturgical celebrations, those who wrote up the minutes, and all those others who, each in their own way, were of general help to the Chapter.

#### LOCATION OF THE NEXT GENERAL CHAPTER

317. We order the Master of the Order to have the provinces and entities of the Order send him a view on where the next General Chapter should be held, so that their views will be communicated to him before October 13 of this year. Then, all things having been carefully considered, he with his council will decide the place at which the next General Chapter is to be held.

SUFFRAGES FOR THE LIVING

318. For Pope Benedict XVI, Supreme Pastor of the Church and most benevolent benefactor of our Order, each province shall celebrate one Mass.

For fr. Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, Master of the Order, each province shall celebrate one Mass.

For the entire Episcopal Order, for the socii of the Master of the Order, for the Procurator General of the Order, for our benefactors and for the well-being of our entire Order of Preachers, each province shall celebrate one Mass.

SUFFRAGES FOR THE DEAD

319. For the souls of Pope Paul VI, Pope John Paul I and Pope John Paul II, recently deceased Supreme Pontiffs, each province shall celebrate one Mass.

For the soul of fr. Damian Byrne, the most recently deceased Master of the Order, and fr. Dominique Renouard, vicar of the Master of the Order, who died during this chapter, each province shall celebrate one Mass.

For the souls of the brothers and sisters of the Order who have died since the last general chapter; on this occasion only each province shall celebrate one Mass.

When these prescribed suffrages, for either the living or the dead are to be fulfilled, they should be announced publicly and in sufficient time, so that the brethren of the convent where the suffrages are to be fulfilled can participate in the Mass celebrated for this intention.

*These are the Acts of the General Chapter of Provincials, celebrated in Bogotá, Columbia, in the Convent of St. Dominic from the 18<sup>th</sup> day of the month of July until the 8<sup>th</sup> day of the month of August 2007. To the original text and to the printed copies of these Acts sealed with the seal of the Master of the Order the same esteem should be shown.*

*We command the superiors of every province, convent and house to have the same Acts read and published as soon as possible in every convent and house subject to them, and to ensure that they are carefully observed by all. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*

*Given at Bogotá, in the convent of St. Dominic, on the Solemnity of Our Holy Father Dominic, on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of the month of August in the year 2007.*

Seal

Fr. Carlos A. AZPIROZ COSTA, OP  
Master of the Order

fr. Martin Joseph GLEESON, OP  
Province of St. Martin de Porres in the USA

fr. Félix FERNÁNDEZ RODRÍGUEZ, OP  
General Vicariate St. Laurence the Martyr in Chile

fr. Roger GAISE, OP  
General Vicariate Democratic Republic of Congo

fr. Orlando RUEDA ACEVEDO, OP  
Secretary General of the Chapter

fr. Carlos Ariel BETANCOURT OSPINA, OP  
Vice-Secretary

fr. Giovanni H. GUARNIZO VALENZUELA, OP  
Vice-Secretary

## APPENDIX

### RELATIO DE STATU ORDINIS GENERAL CHAPTER OF PRIOR PROVINCIALS BOGOTÁ 2007

#### INTRODUCTION

1. According to its almost eight century old system of government, the Order meets again in General Chapter, the supreme authority in the Order, to discuss and define what concerns the good of the whole Order.<sup>6</sup>
2. This original succession of different types of General Chapters (elective, of diffinitors, of provincials) has been called by a well known author “**Dominican pluricameralism**”<sup>7</sup>.
3. This is a **Chapter of Prior Provincials**.<sup>8</sup> Thus it brings together Prior Provincials, Vice Provincials and Vicars General, together with some Vicars Provincial, Regional Priors and delegates of the Houses which are under the immediate jurisdiction of the Master of the Order (Cf. *LCO* 409). The assembly of voters in the General Chapter of Prior Provincials is composed – almost totally – by friars who have been elected and confirmed to exercise offices of government at the Provincial or Vicariate levels.
4. Taking into account this reality the tone of this document will, perhaps, be different from the one presented on the occasion of the General Chapter of Diffinitors which met in Krakow in 2004. Besides, it is true, after three years, the joys and hopes,

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<sup>6</sup>. Cf. *LCO* 405

<sup>7</sup>. Cf. Léo Moulin, *Le pluricaméralisme dans l’Ordre des Frères Prêcheurs*, in *Res Publica* (1960) 50-66.

<sup>8</sup>. Cf. *LCO* 409

sadness and anguishes of the friars, communities and provinces of the Order can be understood with greater realism and depth.

5. During several plenary sessions of the General Chapter, we have prepared the basis of this text. These pages are to be read in a subsidiary way together with the respective reports of the different Socii (for Apostolic Life, for Intellectual Life and the Regional Socii), General Promoters and other officials of the Curia. Those who read attentively all those reports together with this synthesis will be able to draw their own conclusions and verify that there are themes which are stressed in a particular way. The key for reading this *Relatio* and the reports of the above mentioned officials could be LCO 1 §IV and §VII – which so wisely describes our community and government.
6. It corresponds to the Capitulars, in a particular way, to verify if what the previous General Chapter of Diffinitors ordered recommended or suggested has been fulfilled or not. For this reason, document has been sent which presents in detail how the affairs treated and defined in Krakow three years ago<sup>9</sup> were carried out. The competence of the General Chapter and the matters to be dealt with cannot be reduced to what can be described in these pages. The Chapter has the liberty to choose the arguments to be discussed. Nevertheless, I think that some questions need to be studied and the Chapter will be able to offer some orientations to the Order. I mention three in particular:

*Entrepreneurial speed or CONTEMPLATIVE RHYTHM?*

7. We live in a world which seems to move at great speed and which privileges the entrepreneurial rhythm and effectiveness. Luke's description of the **“election of the Twelve”** offers

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<sup>9</sup> It will be important to take into account the following reports: The Documents sent to the Capitulars – *Continuation of the decisions of Krakow (C.1)*; *Report on ACG 2004 (Krakow) nn. 257-258 [“Clerical Order” –Co-operator Brothers”] (C. 3)*; *Report on ACG 2004 (Krakow) n. 96 [Mission in Mass Media- Film, Video] (C. 4)*.

certain details which are proper to him: “*In those days he (Jesus) went onto the mountain to pray and spent the whole night in prayer to God. When day came, he summoned his disciples and chose twelve of them whom he also called ‘apostles’*” (Luke 6, 12-13). Our vocation is the fruit of the contemplative life of Jesus, fruit of his prayer to the Father.

Beginning on December 3, 2006 and until Epiphany 2008, the Order is celebrating the **800 years of the foundation of its first contemplative community**, the Monastery Santa Maria de Prouilhe. Within this framework, the celebration of a General Chapter is providential. It is important to reflect once more on the value of **contemplation** in the life of the Order and about the nuns’ place at the heart of the Holy Preaching.

The General Chapter of 2001 (Providence) has offered very profound reflections on the subject.<sup>10</sup> Perhaps the Chapter of Bogotá would also want to say a word of gratitude, acknowledgement and encouragement to our contemplative sisters in view of the future. Providence wanted Dominican preaching to be nourished and enriched in some way by the contemplative life of our sisters. This responds to a logical, theological and – let us also say – chronological order. Should not any desire of renewal of our life and mission begin also from these roots?

*Complicity, submission or FRATERNAL COLLABORATION?*

8. Sometimes, in our world at war, we see that the powerful ask the collaboration of the others to support their plans. However, it seems that they rather demand complicity and submission (which is not the same thing).

In the “**appointing of the Twelve**” as reported by Mark, there

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<sup>10</sup>. Cf. ACG 2001 (Providence): Caput IV – *De vita contemplativa*; Caput V – *De monialibus*; Caput VI – *Devocatione et formatione* (nn. 354-368).

are also some details which we only find in that text. “*He went up the mountain and summoned those whom he wanted and they came to him. He appointed twelve that they might be with him and he might send them forth to preach...*” (Mark 3, 13-14). The Son of God sent for our salvation instituted the Twelve to **collaborate** with him in his mission.

Within a few years we will also celebrate the **8th centenary of the confirmation of the Order**. Wanting to be faithful to our first love, it is urgent for us to renew ourselves in the full sense of the Dominican mission. The world in which we live as we look forward to 2016 is not the same which Saint Dominic knew. Nevertheless, we do find some important analogies. In this sense, the General Chapter should reflect on the **priorities of the Order** (faithful to the sense of the analogy, so dear to us, they will not be exclusive nor excluding).<sup>11</sup> At the same time, the globalised world places before us a truly fundamental option which is in full harmony with the original intuition of Saint Dominic: the Order conceived as **a mission, a preaching without frontiers**.<sup>12</sup>

From this perspective it is essential to understand more profoundly the urgent need of **fraternal collaboration** among the provinces; among the different provinces and the Order; among all the branches of the Dominican Family, to assure our life and our mission beyond the limits of each entity and of each branch.

*Connected or COMMUNICATED?*

9. It is usually said that the one who has or possesses the information is the one who commands. Conflicts and wars many times are organized on the basis of “reserved

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<sup>11</sup> Cf. ACG 1977 (Quezon City) n. 15; ACG 1980 (Walberberg) n. 17 b; ACG 1983 (Rome) n. 28; ACG 1986 (Ávila) nn. 22 and 28; ACG 1989 (Oakland) nn. 68-69; ACG 1992 (México) n. 51; ACG 1995 (Caleruega) nn. 20-39.

<sup>12</sup> Cf. ACG 1986 (Ávila) n. 22: cf. ACG (Bologna) n. 33; cf. ACG 2001 (Providence) *Caput II*.

information”; economic, political or party achievements seem to be assured through “lobbies” or “press agents”.

It seems that in John’s Gospel there is no “**call of the Twelve**”. Nevertheless, in the account of the Last Supper, Jesus calls his disciples friends: “*You are my friends if you do what I command you. I shall no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business; I call you friends because I have made known to you everything I have learnt from my Father*” (John 15, 14-15). Jesus, the Christ, communicates to his own all the intimacy he had with the Father.

To assure the understanding of our common mission, it will be necessary to reflect on **communication**. I refer to communication in the more profound sense. God has communicated to us his desire of salvation in Jesus Christ. The Order *in medio Ecclesiae* desires to communicate to all – men and women – this Good News. The Chapter can reflect on this. How do we communicate with the world? How do we sound the joys and hopes, sadness and anguishes of men and women whom we wish to serve? How do we receive and communicate the teaching of the Church, what our Bishops tell us, of whom we were made co-operators?<sup>13</sup> How do we receive the considerations of the Regional or national Conferences of Religious, etc.? It is a question of assuring that we listen to – this is the root of our perception of obedience – and communicate the message. We will do it in accordance with our Dominican “way of being”, with our soul, life, intelligence and heart. We do not intend simply to be “speakers” of the word. In the image and likeness of Dominic have been entrusted with the office of the Word!<sup>14</sup>

From another perspective – *ad intra* of the Order – we can also ask ourselves about the way of communication among ourselves; between Provincials and the Master; between Provincials and

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<sup>13</sup>. Cf. LCO 1§ V.

<sup>14</sup>. Saint Catherine of Siena, *Dialogue* n. 158.

the friars in their Provinces. There is no doubt that, thanks to the tools we have available such as E-Mail, internet, etc., “connections” (nearly all of us are well “**connected**”) have developed in a surprising way. Nevertheless, are we really “communicated”, or do we communicate with one another?

10. Having received the comments and suggestions from the Capitulars concerning the themes to be discussed in the Chapter, together with the General Council we organized the working commissions.<sup>15</sup> Trying to be practical and in order to facilitate the work of these commissions, I present the *Relatio* according to their main task. However, the *Relatio* is one, and therefore the division by themes does not mean that each section, all by itself, exhausts the argument. In the chapter which treats of the **MISSION** there are also many points to be considered concerning our **INTELLECTUAL LIFE** and **GOVERNMENT**. In speaking about **FRATERNAL LIFE IN COMMUNITY**, there are some points for reflection on **FORMATION**, etc. It is evident that all the themes are connected in a particular way with the section (and the commission of the Chapter) reserved to *LCO*.
11. Remembering, in a special way, Pope John Paul II (+ 02-04-05) I have chosen as titles of each section of this report, the first words of some of his best known Magisterial texts,<sup>16</sup> namely:
  - I. *Redemptoris Missio* – Mission and preaching
  - II. *Fides et Ratio* – Intellectual Life and Studies
  - III. *Vita Consecrata* - Fraternal Life in common
  - IV. *Pastores dabo vobis* - Vocations and Formation
  - V. *Pastor Bonus* - Government
  - VI. *Laborem exercens* - Economy
  - VII. *Ut unum sint* – Constitutions

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<sup>15</sup>. Cf. *LCO* 415.

<sup>16</sup>. Let it be well understood that the content of each section is not univocally adjusted to the theme of the Papal document, the title of which is used. I simply wanted to recall with filial affection his Pontificate and his teaching.

I – REDEMPTORIS MISSIO

MISSION AND PREACHING<sup>17</sup> ONE ORDER AND NOT A  
COLLECTION OF PROVINCES

12. An author who is dedicated to the historical study of our Constitutions wrote: “*Saint Dominic wanted to found an Order and not a collection of houses. He has bequeathed us a democratic body, centralized and very well organized with broad and generous universal horizons.*”<sup>18</sup>
13. Following this same vital logic and at the beginning of a new General Chapter we can also affirm that the Order of Preachers is not a “collection of Provinces” just as each Province is not simply a “collection of houses or convents”.
14. Each friar by his profession, each community, each Province – or similar entities – participates in the universal mission of the Order.<sup>19</sup> In this sense: “*The Dominican is universal. He belongs to a community, to a Province, but much more to the whole Order; and he exercises the cura animarum wherever he preaches.*”<sup>20</sup> This is why our cloister, in a certain way, is the world!
15. From this perspective, the foundation of a mission outside one’s own territory, or the collaboration with other entities, is also a clear manifestation of this universal mission. The last General Chapter of 2004 which met in Krakow exhorted all the Provinces to take initiatives to establish new missions outside of their geographical or cultural surroundings, observing always LCO 261 § III. This is why it ordered the Socius for Apostolic Life to discuss with the Provinces which had no mission outside their own territory the place where they could start one all by themselves or in collaboration with another entity.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>. Cf. Especially the Documents sent to the Capitulars: *Report of the Socius for Apostolic Life (A. 3)*.

<sup>18</sup>. G. R. Galbraith, *The Constitution of the Dominican Order – 1216 to 1360* (Manchester 1925) 30.

<sup>19</sup>. Cf. *Relatio de Statu Ordinis*, ACG 2001 (Providence) n. 4.3.1.

<sup>20</sup>. Ernest Barket, *The Dominican Order and convocation* (Oxford 1913) 11. We could translate it “he endeavours to obtain the salvation of souls wherever he preaches”.

<sup>21</sup>. Cf. ACG 2004 (Krakow) n. 83.

*Some projects of collaboration since the last General Chapter (Krakow).*<sup>22</sup>

16. In **Latin America** among others, we mention:
  - a. The Province of Saint Catherine of Siena in Ecuador has invited the Province of Saint Martin de Porres in the U.S.A. to take over the house of Guayaquil.
  - b. The Province of Colombia continues to collaborate with that of Ecuador by sending Friars – especially – to strengthen formation.
  - c. There is an agreement between the Province of Aragon (Regional Vicariate of South America) and the Province of Ireland by which some Irish brothers collaborate with the mission of that Vicariate in Uruguay.
  - d. **A region dedicated to indigenous pastoral ministry**, shared between the Provinces of Mexico and Central America, has been established under one coordinator. This zone includes the mission of “Chiapas-Ocosingo” (territory of the Province of Mexico) and the mission called “*the Verapaces*” – Alta and Baja Verapaz – (territory of the Province of Central America). I think that, because of its particular characteristics, this mission needs the generosity of other entities and of brothers who offer themselves with enthusiasm.
17. In **North America**:
  - a. One of the result of a meeting between Sisters and Friars of North America (Canada, United States and Mexico), Central and South America, in December 2005, was the desire to collaborate in a project dedicated especially to work with

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<sup>22</sup> I point out the initiatives after 2004, without intending to present an exhaustive list. The General Chapter of 1995 (Caleruega) pointed out new realities in which collaboration resulted – just like today – the key of our mission [Cf. ACG 1995 (Caleruega) Caput IV *De novis locis pro Ordinis Praesentia*]. The General Chapter of 1998 (Bologna) presented a list of projects of collaboration [Cf. ACG 1998 (Bologna) nn. 180-182].

immigrants in Ciudad Juarez (Province of Mexico, on the **frontier with the United States**). In principle, some brothers from the Province of the "*Holy Name*" in the United States, will collaborate.

- b. The Province of Colombia and that of Canada have signed an agreement of collaboration. Some Friars of the Province of St. Louis Bertrand of Colombia already live and work in **Canada**.

18. In **Europe**:

- a. The Provinces of Ireland and Poland have established an agreement for the pastoral care of the Polish in Dublin. Several brothers from Poland are already working in Ireland.
- b. It is necessary to strengthen Dominican presence in Eastern Europe. Even if the Polish Province already has a Provincial Vicariate in Belarus, there are several brothers living and working in the General Vicariates of the Baltic countries, of Russia and Ukraine and Hungary. We really appreciate this missionary generosity. However, it is still necessary to prepare other brothers for a mission that embraces many countries which have very different problems, languages and cultures.
- c. During my visit to the Province of Germany, I have seen the great challenge we face regarding evangelisation in the territory of "Eastern Germany". Our convent in Leipzig tries to be a response (more so keeping in mind its location with regard to Poland and the Czech Republic). I think it would be very important to open it for collaboration with other entities.
- d. Following an invitation made several years ago by the Dominican Sisters of the Presentation, we have formally asked the three Italian Provinces to begin a foundation in Rumania. The Province of Saint Thomas Aquinas in Italy accepted this responsibility. Even though they have started to consider the different possibilities, they have as yet been unable to start something concrete.

**19. In Africa:**

- a. The Province of India has sent some brothers to the General Vicariate of South Africa with the intention of assuring in the future, the presence of the Order in **Zimbabwe and Zambia** where our Sisters, the *Dominican Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus* generously carry out their apostolate and they call us to collaborate.
- b. The House of Saint Augustine of Hippo – under the jurisdiction of the Master of the Order – in **Addis-Ababa, Ethiopia**, continues to carry out its main task: the creation of a Catholic University. It is a mission carried out by several Friars of the Province of the Philippines. It demands patience and tact to gradually take over the different educational and formative institutions in the country which will constitute the network from which the University will be founded. In conformity with the inspiration of the Chapter of Krakow the *Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine of Siena* (from the Philippines) were invited to collaborate in this project; some lay people also form part of the team.<sup>23</sup> Given the fruitful presence of many religious from India (Franciscan Capuchins) perhaps our Province of India could collaborate in this project by sending some Friars.
- c. The Province of Colombia has offered to set up a foundation in **Equatorial Guinea**, where the *Dominican Sisters of Christian Doctrine* (Mexico) are already present. The Province of Spain is also interested in collaborating in this project.

**20. In Asia:**

- a. The Province of the Philippines has founded a house in **Indonesia**. Different types of apostolate have been proposed: teaching in the Seminary of Pontianak, Kalimantan, and the establishment of a Centre for Dialogue in Jakarta in collaboration with the Archdiocese. There is also an

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<sup>23</sup> Cf. ACG 2004 (Krakow) n. 104; Cf. ACG 2001 (Providence) n. 427. Cf. Documents sent to the Capitulars –Report of the house of Addis Ababa (B. 14).

agreement between the Islamic University of Jakarta and the University of Saint Thomas of Manila for the exchange of professors. We hope that the Province of the Philippines will be able to send other brothers – not necessarily Indonesians – in order to assure the future of this presence. The Province of the Philippines is also making great efforts to strengthen the presence of the Order in **Sri Lanka**.

- b. From this same perspective, I point out the desire of the Province of Vietnam to begin a presence of the friars in **Thailand, Laos and Cambodia**. We are anxiously waiting to receive the Acts of their Provincial Chapter. The *Missionary Sisters of Saint Dominic* have founded communities and they have asked us to collaborate with them.
  - c. **China** continues to be a priority for the Order. The General Vicariate “Queen of China” and the province of Our Lady of the Rosary continue with their work. We still need specific vocations for that mission.<sup>24</sup>
21. Given the small number of friars present in **Aruba and Curaçao** - and keeping in mind their advanced age – the Province of the Netherlands has expressly asked the Master of the Order for help to support and to continue the mission. The priority task is the formation of the laity. Should we, necessarily, abandon that mission? The Dutch Province has always been very generous with the Order and now it needs and is asking for help. Some Provinces have been asked formally to take over this project, but as yet we have received no positive responses.
22. I especially ask the General Chapter – the highest authority of the Order – to renew the call to these and other missions, even identifying clearly the Provinces which should be asked to do this work, offering – if possible – clear ordinations. This would facilitate greatly the task of the Master of the Order avoiding useless delays and presenting a clear and positive framework.

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<sup>24</sup>. God willing, during the Chapter more details can be offered.

*One Order, one Mission*

23. During these last years (even before the General Chapter of 1998 – Bologna – with the Commission *De Missione Ordinis*) we have tried to relate the spheres of our apostolic mission with the intellectual mission. At that Chapter, the Commission mentioned above presented a report entitled “**Free for the Mission**”.<sup>25</sup>
24. From this, the need to coordinate some projects of the Socius for Apostolic Life with the Socius for Intellectual Life emerged. In fact, the last two General Chapters (2001 and 2004) asked or recommended both Socii to promote some projects together.
25. The study and reflection concerning the **Charism of Preaching** shared by Dominican Friars and Sisters has continued in the light of what was suggested by the Chapter of Krakow.<sup>26</sup> A great amount of material was sent to the General Curia in response to the first questionnaire sent to the whole Order. A “Summary” was prepared based on all this documentation. An International Commission<sup>27</sup> was then set up which met in February 2007. The work of the Commission will be “to evaluate the responses, to continue this reflection and to suggest new steps to be taken”.<sup>28</sup>
26. The **International Commission for Inter-religious Dialogue** has also been set up again giving special attention to Islam.<sup>29</sup> The commission has already held three meetings and organized the latest session of “*Journées Romaines Dominicaines*” in August 2005. Its task is to study the implications of dialogue in our theology and ministry and to prepare Friars and Sisters for this task.

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<sup>25</sup>. The text was presented at the General Chapter by Fr. Antoine Lion in the name of the Commission *De Missione Ordinis*. Cf. ACG 1998 (Bologna) *Appendix V*.

<sup>26</sup>. Cf. ACG 1998 (Bologna) nn. 34, 6th and 42; ACG 2001 (Providence) nn. 435-436; Cf. ACG 2004 (Krakow) nn.108-112.

<sup>27</sup>. The *Commission of Preaching* was established on July 22, 2006.

<sup>28</sup>. ACG 2004 (Krakow) n. 112. Cf. Documents sent to Capitulars – *Report of the Commission of Preaching (C. 2)*.

<sup>29</sup>. The Commission was established on February 12, 2004 (*Prot. 50/04/148 Comm. Missione OP*).

27. The presence of the Order in the sphere of Internet (the net) is broad and of great creativity, above all, in the subsidies for preaching. The General Chapter of Krakow (2004) ordered that a **General Promoter of Internet**<sup>30</sup> be appointed. Together with the Council we wanted to study this matter in detail. Several experts were consulted inside and outside the Order. Then a specific commission tried to clarify all the aspects related to it, since it was necessary to know, in the most precise way possible, the description of the office and its competence, the diverse areas of work and the different matters it implied (communication, *Web* page of the Order, connection with the Web pages of the Provinces and other entities of the Dominican Family, aspects linked to the management – government and administration – and the General Secretariat of the Order, our mission as preachers, etc.). Finally, a Promoter for Internet has been appointed, Bro. Scott Steinkerchner (Province *Saint Albert the Great* - USA). Bro. Scott has presented his project to the General Council and sent to the Chapter his report so that a weighted and balanced decision could be taken.<sup>31</sup>
28. According to what was ordered by the General Chapter of Krakow, Bro. Prakash Lohale (Province of India) was instituted **Co-Promoter of Justice and Peace** (*full – time*).<sup>32</sup> The Promotion of Justice and Peace in the Order is a task shared with *Dominican Sisters International*. For this reason *DSI* has appointed Sister Toni Harris (*Sinsinawa Sisters of the Most Holy Rosary*) as Co-Promoter. One of the tasks they have especially proposed to do is that of formation, getting the new generations of Dominicans – men and women – interested in the challenges proper to Justice and Peace, as a sphere which is proper to Dominican preaching since its foundation.

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<sup>30</sup>. Cf. ACG 2004 (Krakow) n. 98

<sup>31</sup>. Documents sent to the Capitulars - *Report of the Promoter of Internet* (B. 7).

<sup>32</sup>. Cf. ACG 2004 (Krakow) n. 91

29. After several years of fruitful work in our office in Geneva before the United Nations, Bro. Philippe LeBlanc, will hand over the job to his successor. We recall with joy and enthusiasm his witness about **the work of the Order before the United Nations** during the General Chapter of Krakow. The gratitude of the Order is extended to him for his silent, professional and effective ministry. I remember, during my visit to Geneva – in March 2003 – how much our work in the United Nations was praised by the then Representative of the Holy See before the Organization of the United Nations in Geneva (*H.E. Mgr. Diarmuid Martin* – now Archbishop of Dublin) and by Sergio Vieyra de Mello at that time High Commissioner of the UN for Human Rights in Geneva, who died in the attack against the offices of the United Nations in Baghdad, in the middle of the year 2003).
30. The project to create a space in which to develop a **Dominican Volunteer Movement** is a reality.<sup>33</sup> Sister Veronica Rafferty (*Dominican Sisters, Cabra*) has given an important impulse to **DVI (Dominican Volunteers International)**. Bro. Michel Van Aerde and then Bro. Enrique Sario collaborated as Co-Directors. Sister Rose Ann Schlitt (*Adrian Dominican Sisters*) replaced Sister Veronica and is the present Co-Directress of **DVI**. When Bro. Enrique returned to his mission in the Dominican Republic, Bro. Edward Ruane, Socius for the Provinces of the United States was appointed Co-Director. In this way a sphere of collaboration between *DSI (Dominican Sisters International)* and the Friars of the Order is confirmed and assured. Our gratitude goes to all the Brothers and Sisters mentioned above.
31. The last General Chapters have insisted on the importance of the **Dominican International Youth Movement (MJDI – IDYM)**<sup>34</sup>. I was able to participate in one of the sessions of their

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<sup>33</sup> Cf. ACG 1998 (Bologna) nn. 166-170; ACG 2001 (Providence) nn. 450-451; ACG 2004 (Krakow) n. 105.

last Assembly (August 5, 2006, in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic). In it they again proposed Bro. Enrique Sariego (Province of Spain – Vicariate of the Dominican Republic) as Executive Secretary. Though their office and headquarters are in Santa Sabina (Rome), and taking into consideration the real possibilities for communication offered by the internet, *IDYM* did not in any way object to Bro. Enrique carrying out his work from the Dominican Republic. I trust that in time, this can be another task carried out in collaboration with *DSI*.

32. With the celebration of their **5th General Assembly**, our Dominican Sisters gathered together as *Dominican Sisters International (DSI)*, have taken another step forward to assure the life and mission of this very important manifestation of collaboration within the Order. Our gratitude goes to Sister Margaret Ormond (*Dominican Sisters St. Mary of the Springs – Columbus, Ohio*) who, during the last nine years, has been the International Coordinator of *DSI* with wisdom, fraternal (sisterly) spirit and the gift to promote an effective and affective collaboration. Our most cordial welcome to Sister Fabiola Velásquez Maya (former Prioress General of the *Soeurs de la Charité Dominicaines de la Présentation*) who succeeds Sister Margaret in this work.<sup>35</sup>
33. During these last years the **Lay Fraternities of the Order** have taken important steps in their organization at the regional, continental and international level. These institutional aspects are necessary in our Dominican life in order to assure spaces of coordination and discernment, and to promote the life of the Fraternities inspired – as they usually insist – by the four pillars: prayer, study, community and preaching.
34. In this same line the *International Council for Lay Dominican Fraternities (ICLDF)* functions through its regular meetings and in constant communication with the General Promoter. As

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<sup>34</sup>. Cf. ACG 1998 (Bologna) nn. 160-165; ACG 2001 (Providence) nn. 447-449; ACG 2004 (Krakow) n. 105.

<sup>35</sup>. Cf. *IDI* n° 453 (June 2007)

a sign of the vitality of the Fraternities – after the Congress of Montreal in 1985 – the **International Congress** met (in Pilar, Argentina from 17 to 24 of last March). I was able to participate in this Congress and I was impressed by the quality of the discussions among the representatives from almost 60 different countries. The different commissions studied very varied themes: prayer and preaching; study and formation; government, Rule and Statutes; organization and structure; economy and finances; the place of the lay fraternities in the Order and in the Church. The Statutes which regulate the International Council as well as the International Congress<sup>36</sup> were approved. Since 1999, when Bro. Gerald Lee Stookey (Province of *Saint Albert the Great, USA*) was named, he has worked intensely in this field, especially to guarantee the functioning of these structures. To him our gratitude and appreciation. His successor, Bro. David Kammler (Germany), is already working with enthusiasm in order to communicate to the whole Order the fruits of this Congress.

35. The **International Commission of the Nuns** also met regularly. The Jubilee Year is offering very beautiful signs of vitality and love for the Order. Beginning in 2003 I wanted to preach several retreats to the contemplative nuns organised according to countries or regions, in order to know more closely their life and mission in the heart of the Church and of the Order.<sup>37</sup> The visits to the monasteries have also helped me to know the reality of the communities. The meeting the General Promoter for the nuns, the Socius for the Iberian Peninsula and myself had at the end of last March in Caleruega with the three Federal Prioresses in Spain, together with their Councils and the three Religious Assistants is worth mentioning briefly.<sup>38</sup> Very

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<sup>36</sup>. Cf. Documents sent to the Capitulars – Report of the General Promoter for the Laity (B. 4).

<sup>37</sup>. The retreats preached were the following: for the nuns of Spain (2003); for the nuns in Italy (2004); for the nuns of Mexico (2005); three different retreats in 2006: for the nuns of the United States, of Latin America (Cono Sur) and of Latin America (Bolivarian zone); finally for the nuns of France (foreseen for 2007).

interesting initiatives were discussed wishing to take upon themselves the situation of the communities (given the scarcity of vocations, the communities with few nuns and many of them elderly). Efforts are being made to encourage the communities in Italy to take similar steps. Many of them are in precarious conditions. But this task is not an easy one.

A reason for great joy has been the approval by the Holy See of two new **Federations of nuns**: “*Association under the title of St. Mary” of Monasteries in Japan*” (04.11.2005) formed by the four monasteries of Japan and the “*Association of the monasteries of nuns of the Order of Preachers in the United States of America*” (27.05.2006) made up of various communities (we hope that gradually, other monasteries will join this beautiful initiative).<sup>39</sup>

I entrust very especially to the Prior Provincials the pastoral care of our nuns (*cura monialium*), promoting among the Friars the spirit of fraternal collaboration with the contemplative communities, and taking care of their different needs.

*History and perspectives for a greater collaboration in the mission of the Order*

38. Many Chapters have already insisted on the importance of **collaboration** between Provinces and similar entities. All the time this is gaining importance. We have asked ourselves: what hinders this collaboration? Sometimes we lack resources (this is the case of Provinces which have vocations but which cannot take upon themselves new apostolic horizons: Vietnam, India, Pakistan, Vicariates of Africa, etc.) In other cases there are economic resources but brothers are lacking! What are we to do? Evidently, it is urgent to share resources among the

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<sup>38</sup>. Cf. *IDI* n° 453 (June 2007)

<sup>39</sup>. Cf. Documents sent to the Capitulars – Report of the General Promoter for the contemplative nuns (B.1)

Provinces. Some Provinces do not have new vocations but they could help others who have them. We have already contacted the Provinces of the Netherlands, Flanders and Ireland (which have been and continue to be very generous) to coordinate and to collaborate in a more effective way in the planning of possible economic and financial help to entities which usually ask for it. Paraphrasing Saint Paul, I hope that other Provinces will distinguish themselves in generosity. *“I say this not by way of command, but to test the genuineness of your love by your concern for others. (2 Corinthians 8, 7-8)”*. For this, it will be necessary to have much imagination and also to indicate priorities in the light of the mission of the Order.

39. The Order is living times full of hope if we manage to accept them as such. There are signs which, if taken separately, can frighten us or can make it difficult for us to accept them. On the other hand, the phenomenon itself of globalisation and the constant invitations which the Church is addressing to us invite us to humanize globalisation and to globalise the preaching.
40. In the first half of the 19th century, given the effects of the different revolutions (many of them of a clear anticlerical content) one could already notice that there was a movement of decrease in the novitiates (what today we understand and distinguish as “Novitiates” and “Studentates”). When the Provinces were suppressed because of various civil laws of “exclaustration”, the friars who were more committed to the “restoration” pointed out that affiliation should be made to the Province and no longer to the communities. There was a common feeling in favour of uniting formation and in this way strengthen the life of the province. Such historical circumstances – true signs of the times – had to be accepted. The Order could not become paralysed in a passive attitude or complain because of the situation and remain licking its wounds.

41. This movement was connected with the spirit of what, at that time, was called “observance” desirous to promote a more fruitful common life at the expense of private life. In the General Chapter of 1895 (Avila) we find the transition to the affiliation to the Provinces already somehow consecrated.<sup>40</sup>
42. Pope Saint Pius X in a letter to Blessed Hyacinth-M. Cormier, with apostolic authority decreed: *“The affiliation of the Friars will no longer be made to a specific convent but to Provinces. In fact, although there were already some Provinces that followed this new praxis, until then each convent had the right to affiliate its own friars, to have its own Novitiate and Studentate. Given the circumstances it became necessary to join efforts, energy and even economic resources to centralize – at the level of the Provinces – the affiliation, formation and in a certain way the economy (by paying the taxes to the Province). In this way, the custom already present of associating the Brothers to the Provinces acquired the force of law and, it obtained the force and nature of constitution proper to the Order. Each one of the members then should be assigned as a son, not as it was done in former times, to a particular convent but, on the contrary, to the Province. This seems to be more appropriate (apt) for the present conditions of the times and because it favours very much the lived experience of common life and because it also seems more useful for the distribution of income and expenses among the houses of formation, missions and other convents which need a greater financial support; we prescribe with our authority that this custom of affiliating the Friars to the*

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<sup>40</sup>. In the *Constitutions of the OP (COP)* 1886 n. 481 we read: *“Declaramus quod in Ordine nostro (exceptis Provinciis in quibus affiliatio ad solam Provinciam obtinuit) quilibet Frater debet pertinere ad unum Conventum, qui dicitur suus, cujus filius appellatur...”*

After the restoration of Piedmont at the beginning of the 19th century other entities started taking upon themselves the habit of affiliating the Friars to the Provinces and no longer to the convents. In the so-called Jandel Constitutions, even in the Provinces where affiliation to the Province already existed, the Prior of the convent, with the consent of the Chapter, could admit to the reception of the habit [COP 1872 nn. 279-280]. We could say that the authority of the Provincials has increased with the introduction of the system of the affiliation to the Province. The movement favourable to this affiliation is connected with the movements of the perfect common life, for example in the restored Province of Piedmont, at the beginning of the past century [Cf. A. Walz, *Compendium historiae Ordinis Praedicatorum* (Rome 1948) 547 in fine] In the General Chapter of 1895, an important step was taken toward universalisation of the affiliation to the Province [Cf. ACG 1885 (Leuven) p. 49/1; ACG 1891 (Lyon) p. 39/VII and ACG 1895 (Avila) p. 88/VII].

*Province have the force of constitution proper to the Order, notwithstanding anything to the contrary”.*<sup>41</sup>

43. The friars taking part in the Chapter, in response to the Sovereign Pontiff accepted and openly declared the affiliation to the Province (no longer to the convent).<sup>42</sup>
44. This decision was a sign in favour of the renewal of the Order in a very particular context and in really very difficult circumstances. At the beginning of the 20th century the Order had the lowest number of religious (without counting the time of foundation and the beginning of the Order when the number of Friars increased almost constantly) .<sup>43</sup> This process which we could call of “provincialisation” (absolutely necessary to assure the life and the mission of the Order) little by little presents us with new challenges.
45. **The process of globalisation** coming from very different levels (economic, social, political, etc.) is a reality. The General Chapter of 2001 meeting in Providence, analysed this phenomenon and has discerned very clearly its consequences and challenges for the mission of the Order: a global mission.<sup>44</sup> Globalisation daily places before us all that is happening in the world. This can help us to feel as our own the needs of others or – on the contrary – to close ourselves up more and more in our own “worlds”. This is why the need to highlight the “local” or the “national”, our “own” appears sometimes with extraordinary force. Many times, this does not help us to live the sense of belonging to the same Order, its life and mission. A mission which is no other than that of Jesus, the only and true Master, and that of the Apostles.

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<sup>41</sup>. Letter *Cum primum* (4.08.1913), to the Master of the Order, Fray Jacinto M. Cormier on the occasion of the General Chapter to meet in Venlo, Netherlands [Cf. AAS 5 1913] 390, VIII].

<sup>42</sup>. The General Chapter met in Venlo (Netherlands) from August 28 to September 5, 1913. Cf. ACG 1913 (Venlo), p. 21.

<sup>43</sup>. Beginning in 1913 the Friars with the taking of the habit (today with the beginning of the Novitiate which can or not coincide with the taking of the habit) are affiliated to the Province and no longer to the convents as it had been done up until that time. The COP 1932 followed this principle (n. 16); also the LCO in n. 267.

<sup>44</sup>. Cf. ACG 2001 (Providence) Caput II – De provocationibus hodiernis ad missionem Ordinis.

46. **The growing “indifferenciation”**, which reduces religious life to a minimum and vague common denominator, causes the beauty and the fecundity of the multiplicity of charisms given by the Spirit<sup>45</sup> to disappear. From here springs the legitimate and positive desire to discover our own Dominican identity.
47. Nevertheless – in this vocational search – we run the risk of choosing some characteristics of the Order and of its history as if it was only a make-up. We can even stress some aspects leaving aside others which are perhaps less attractive or more arduous, according to our needs or whims (personal or communitarian), as if we were *shopping* in a super-market.
48. Even if on the level of intentions the desire of the Friars and of the Provinces to collaborate in the mission of the Order is clear, when the time comes for its “execution” it becomes difficult. It is not easy to offer brothers, to carry out projects, to work together. It is not easy, some times, to find brothers and Provinces ready to offer them for some projects of the Order. It is true; every Friar – wherever he is – is in communion with the Order and its mission. But I refer especially to projects which, without being exclusive nor excluding, are a priority. Nearly all of them have materialized in communities under the jurisdiction of the Master. I refer, especially to the *Angelicum* in Rome, the *Albertinum* in Fribourg and the Biblical School in Jerusalem (in the field of the intellectual life); to the *Convitto* of Saint Thomas Aquinas and to the College of Penitentiaries – Convent of Saint Mary Major in Rome. I have already referred to the Project of Addis-Ababa in Ethiopia. To these I must add the **Leonine Commission** (which resides in Paris), the **Historical Institute** (located in the *Angelicum*), and the Director of our office before the United Nations in Geneva.

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<sup>45</sup>. Cf. Congregatio pro Institutis Vitae Consacrae et Societatibus vitae apostolicae, Document “Congregavit nos in unum Christi amor” – Fraternal Life in community (02.02.1994) n. 46

49. In order to assure this presence and their mission **we need well prepared friars and a very profound sense of the Order** which justifies going beyond the frontiers of one's own country or Province. The General Chapter is called to discuss and discern these priorities so as to confirm the friars who dedicate themselves to them. Sometimes, their task is not sufficiently acknowledged, and on some occasions they find themselves tired, deprived from immediate satisfactions.
50. The **General Curia in Santa Sabina** also deserves to be mentioned. It tries to promote, especially the life and mission of the Order. At the moment of substituting (I do not say replacing) the different officials – once the friars are identified – it is not easy either for people to understand how important their task is.
51. The Synod of Bishops celebrated in October 2005, insisted on a more equitable distribution of the clergy.<sup>46</sup> From a similar point of view – since the “*ratio*” of the analysis changes according to its perspective – it would be of key importance for our future to guarantee the **redistribution of the friars within the Provinces and in the Order** to ensure the mission which has been entrusted to us. This demands, first of all, appropriate planning, clear projects and the discussion of them in the different levels (local, Provincial, regional, etc.). Otherwise, each community or each friar will limit himself to defend what belongs to him without considering the common good.
52. Ours is a mission **without any frontiers**, a mission *ad gentes* which presents us With certain urgent needs. It is of key importance to ask ourselves not only what is it that the Order needs from us but rather what society and the Church need from us. Where do we find today *les lignes de fracture de l'humanité*?<sup>47</sup> Which are the Areopagus in which we should preach?

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<sup>46.</sup> Cf. Synodus Episcoporum, XI Coetus Generalis Ordinarius, MMV. Propositio 11 in fine; Cf. **Benedict PP. XVI**, Adhortatio Apostolica Postsynodalis “**Sacramentum Caritatis**” n. 25.

53. What are we to do? How can we strengthen the entities which are becoming weaker? The answer is not easy because we also see that there is a certain lack of sense of the mission beyond the limits of Provinces that perhaps have a good number of friars.
54. Spaces for reflection are not lacking. Besides those clearly present in our *LCO*, with the passage of time other regional, continental or inter-continental structures have been created which help to think about the life and mission of the Order in broader horizons: *CIDALC, IAOP, IEOP, Asia – Pacific Leadership Conference, etc.*<sup>48</sup> Their statutes and structures are different. Some for obvious reasons meet in Assembly more frequently than others (the Provincials of Europe meet every year).
55. Within Europe there are various Committees of Prior Provincials. The **Iberian Board of Provincials (JIP)** *has been working for many years* to establish a regional plan which embraces various aspects, among them the academic and the formative. The Italian Provinces and Malta – through the “*Provincial Committee of Italy and Malta*” (*CPDIM*) - also meet periodically in order to ensure collaboration, even if they still need to take firm steps in the organization of formation and other apostolic fields in co-responsibility. The “French speaking” Prior Provincials usually meet regularly to share experiences and to coordinate tasks. The same thing happens regarding the Provincials of the United States. The latter, together with those from Canada and Mexico (North America) meet regularly.
56. The Chapter – while accepting these and other initiatives<sup>49</sup> - can offer a word of encouragement in order to urge the Provinces

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<sup>47</sup>. A well known expression of our Brother Bishop of Oran in Algeria, (+) Fray Pierre Claverie, OP. Cf. *ACG* 1998(Bologna) n. 33.

<sup>48</sup>. Conferences of Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa and Europe respectively. *CIDALC* functions through the diverse “zones”: Mesoamerican (Mexico and Central America), Caribeña (entities of The Caribbean), Bolivariana (Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Vicariates of Venezuela and Bolivia) and Cono-Sur (Brazil, Chile, Argentina and the Vicariate of South America). The Conference of Asia – Pacific integrates, in an original and subsidiary way the different branches. Cf. Documents sent to the Capitulars. *Report of the Regional Socius (A. 4-11)*.

<sup>49</sup>. The list of initiatives is indicative and not limited.

to **draw out plans on the national or regional level** beyond the frontiers of each entity. I believe that *LCO* offers possibilities of collaboration which have not as yet been exploited completely.<sup>50</sup>

57. Sometimes, the insistence on the necessary processes of collaboration may be interpreted as a veiled intention of union or fusion of Provinces. It is essential to change the hermeneutics of “collaboration”. We cannot continue to waste useful energies celebrating preventive funerals without first discovering the need to change the theological paradigm which animates us. If a certain priority is discerned, discussed, approved and confirmed in the corresponding spheres at different levels (provincial, regional or for the whole Order), what is the use of doing this if we later leave everything as it was before or we wait for the next Chapter or meeting to bring things back to their previous stage?
58. This generates a greater frustration and – above all – mistrust in the word given. At the same time, this dynamic which can distort the value of the word does not offer a clear message to those we are forming. It is one thing to suspend a project because the adequate means are lacking. Another thing is to do it simply because one does not personally agree with it (or because after the Provincial Chapter a community is opposed to it) and it is sabotaged or brought to a path that leads to death.
59. *LCO* is clear as to the necessary requirements or exigencies for the creation of a Province<sup>51</sup>, a Vice Province<sup>52</sup>, or a General Vicariate<sup>53</sup>. It also offers norms for the eventual reduction of a Province to a Vice Province, a General Vicariate<sup>54</sup> or the processes for the union of entities.<sup>55</sup> The Province is formed by at least three convents, of which at least two have 10 voting members

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<sup>50</sup>. Cf. *LCO* 390-395

<sup>51</sup>. Cf. *LCO* 253-255

<sup>52</sup>. Cf. *LCO* 257 § I

<sup>53</sup>. Cf. *LCO* 257 § II.

<sup>54</sup>. Cf. *LCO* 253 and 258 § I [cf. *ACG* 1998 (Bologna) n. 255; *ACG* 2001 (Providence) n. 484 and *ACG* 2004 (Krakow) 361].

<sup>55</sup>. Cf. *LCO* 256-bis; Cf. *ACG* 1998 (Bologna) n. 254.

and it must have at least a total number of 40 voting members. That means that in the Order the Province as such does not demand for itself a very heavy structure. Except in exceptional cases –which must be studied – the Provinces fulfil these requirements.

60. If there is the intention to simply continue as if nothing has changed in the past 20 years, the challenge which we will have to face in the next ten years will not be to close such and such a house, but rather to keep a given Province itself and its mission in existence. What then? It is urgent to have an apostolic project or a Provincial plan. It is not so much a question of withdrawal but rather to create new ways of presence. During his lifetime, Saint Dominic understood that the feudal system was beginning to collapse and he had the intuition of an Order which would be called and would be an Order of preachers, itinerant, missionary, and without frontiers. The first General Chapter of 1220 forged its centre and its unity. The second one created the intermediate organism which far from restraining the expansion and unity of the Order served to give it impulse. *“Just the same, whichever may be the point which we have reached, let us continue on the same way”* (Philippians 3, 16).
61. A renewed awareness of the needs of the mission obliges the Order to place itself at the service of men and women of our time. A plan or a program is necessary to encourage, stimulate, coordinate, supply and integrate the action of the Friars and of the entities.<sup>56</sup> It is urgent to have a plan for the mission on the territory of each entity and for collaboration with other entities which are present in the same country or region.
62. Many fronts demand this collaboration today. It suffices to have a merely indicative list: popular missions, formation,

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<sup>56</sup>. Cf. *Populorum Progressio* n. 33.

studies, magazines and publications, areas or offices for promotion which could and should organize themselves jointly (Laity, Youth, Justice and Peace, Rosary ...) etc. LCO offers suggestions for this, which the General Chapter of 1998 recommended us to use to the maximum.<sup>57</sup> Would it not be opportune for the General Chapter to take another step and order certain urgent processes of collaboration in order to ensure that the mission of the Order be more effective, responsible and in solidarity?

63. Our **preaching has to be promoted as Dominican Family**.<sup>58</sup> From this arises the need to work with other branches of the Order starting from formation itself. The danger is to oppose to the sense of belonging to the same family a certain clericalism, or the notion – still present – of a first, second and third Order. Two movements are clear in the last Chapters: the acknowledgement and the need to give impulse to a greater collaboration within the Dominican Family and the interest to clarify the scope or relationship between the concept of “**Order of Preachers**” and that of “**Dominican Family**”.<sup>59</sup> In good logic, when we want to define something we also limit it. At the same time, it is true that new groups, persons, brothers and sisters constantly appear who discover with renewed ardour a Dominican vocation, the vocation of preaching. If the horizon of the mission is unlimited, the horizon of the association of the laity in different female Dominican Congregations, the aggregation of Institutes, the desire of belonging is also broadened. This is good.
64. In today’s world we gradually notice a **certain polarization in civil society, in the Church and in the Order**. It is necessary to face themes which at the present moment afflict humanity such as war and violence in all its forms. It is only natural that

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<sup>57</sup>. Cf. LCO 390-395; cf. ACG 1998 (Bologna) nn. 186-193

<sup>58</sup>. Cf. ACG 2004 (Krakow) n. 107.

<sup>59</sup>. Cf. ACG 1998 (Bologna) nn. 147 – 148; ACG 2001 (Providence) nn. 412 – 421.

different points of view and diverse ideologies exist among us. Also, in some Philosophical and Theological themes different positions and conceptions are evident and manifest themselves. This cannot and should not paralyse us. How can we dialogue within the Order concerning all this, and avoid an easy “cataloguing” of the friars as an excuse for not doing it? There are brothers who, even though living in the same community, cannot even speak with one another because of prejudices which for a thousand reasons (but without any just cause) have become the owners of the environment. We are shrewd enough to rationalize them and to give them theological titles (and hide ourselves behind them). Eventually it is the mission of the community, of the Province or of the Order that suffers.

65. The text of *LCO 2* invites us to live unanimously in the house, having one only soul and only one heart in God as the Rule tells us (and before it, the Gospel!). This unity reaches its fullness, beyond the limits of the convent, in communion with the Province and with the Order. We cannot be promoters of dialogue outside of our communities if we are unable to create spaces within the convents where we can share our stories and from them to know better what we think, what we desire... what we believe, hope for and love!
66. With the passing of the years, and during the canonical visitations, many Friars, especially in Eastern Europe, have asked me about the situation of the Order and the ideological stands of the Friars in Latin America or their relationship with “Liberation Theology”, the “Ecclesial Basic Communities”, etc. At the same time, brothers and sisters from Latin America who have suffered greatly during real civil wars and military dictatorships seeing how their catechists or delegates of the Word were murdered, do not know the sufferings and challenges which many brothers and sisters have suffered behind the “Iron Curtain” during the years of the Soviet

empire. How can we create a space in which it would be possible to dialogue freely and serenely on these sufferings making known the contexts, so different and yet so similar / analogous, in which our life and mission unfolded?

67. At first, we imagined a reflection group, not too big, formed by Friars from these Regions so that they could share their suffering and their mission. Little by little we thought that this space should be extended so that this experience would not be reduced to a “group therapy”, in which each one would simply share his sufferings. It was important to find an objective point of support so as to be able to situate oneself before it and with it for such a dialogue. The “point of support” should be, above all, theological, specifically ecclesiological. An event unquestionable in itself could be the scope of the encounter: the reception of Vatican Council II. A small **Commission called “Truth in Love”** was then formed as an echo to the rich reflection of the General Chapter of 2001 concerning our intellectual vocation *Misericordia Veritatis*.
68. The commission contacted a good number of Brothers and Sisters to whom a Questionnaire was sent about the theme. The great majority responded to it. This material is truly very rich and is being studied by the Commission.
69. The third step will be to get together some of these Brothers and Sisters, representatives of diverse regions, exponents of different theological currents, so that they could work together and offer to the Order (and the Church) a model of dialogue in which many doubts, stands, assumptions could be clarified, without any prejudices nor accusations, and discover – precisely – truth in love.

II – FIDES ET RATIO  
INTELLECTUAL LIFE<sup>60</sup>

70. One of the most important challenges for the Order is to **understand Ecclesiology starting from our manner of being Dominicans**. As a key to its understanding, this Ecclesiology has to take into account a contextualized theology. Our preaching is also born from the dialogue with those to whom we address our words.
71. In this sense I see that the **Commission of Preaching** and the **Commission of Interreligious Dialogue** can help very much in clarifying and developing our Ecclesiology. The **Project “Truth in Love”** - just mentioned – can also help the Provinces of the Order to face the question of how to handle the conflicts that arise from ideological confrontations.
72. The words of Benedict XVI in the Angelus of last January 28, 2007, feast of Saint Thomas Aquinas, encourage us in this task: *“With farsighted wisdom Saint Thomas Aquinas succeeded in establishing a fruitful confrontation with the Arab and Hebrew thought of his time, to the point that he is considered an always up-to-date master of dialogue with the other cultures and religions”*.
73. In my visits to the Provinces I have noticed that in many cases people study, but Without a specific purpose. It is necessary to **stress study as a mission, and study for the mission**. For this reason, the great challenge in the intellectual field is how to avoid a certain **lack of connection between intellectual life and preaching**.
74. In the last years Bro. Vincent de Couesnongle, Bro. Damian Byrne and Bro. Timothy Radcliffe, Masters of the Order, in different letters and messages to the Dominican Family, pointed

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<sup>60</sup>. Cf. Documents sent to the Capitulars: *Report of the Socius for Intellectual Life (A. 2)*.

out insistently the fecundity of dialogue between the Dominican Friars of “La Española” dedicated to preaching in an eminently pastoral field and the friar theologians of Salamanca who received the concerns of the former as a real incentive for their study and reflection. The latter, in turn, offered solid and profound doctrinal elements for the prophetic preaching of those who – on the frontiers – **admonished** the conceited and oppressors; **consoled** those who were desperate and oppressed; **encouraged** those who were in doubt.<sup>61</sup>

75. Professors are prepared for teaching, but one can also observe that there is a divorce between professors today and the inheritance or tradition of the Order. For example, little is known of what is being done by the **Leonine Commission**<sup>62</sup> or by the **Historical Institute of the Order**. These Institutions carry out a very specialized task, one of a high quality. I ask the Provinces to prepare the ground in order to prepare and encourage brothers who could dedicate themselves to these two very specific tasks: the critical edition of the works of Saint Thomas Aquinas and the investigation and publication of material about the history of the Order.
- 76.- The General Chapter of 2001 (Providence) presented to the Order an updated reflection on the meaning and importance of study in the life and mission of the Order: *Misericordia veritatis*.<sup>63</sup> The General Chapter of 2004 (Krakow) taking on this text centred its work on two important points: intellectual formation at the service of the mission of the Order and the role of the **Regent of Studies** in these entities.<sup>64</sup>
77. As we are meeting now in a General Chapter of Provincials we should reflect Precisely on the **role of the Prior Provincial** in relation with the intellectual life of the Order and of his

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<sup>61.</sup> Cf. Benedict XVI, General Audience of May 23, 2007.

<sup>62.</sup> Cf. Documents sent to the Capitulars – *Report of the Leonine Commission* (B. 11).

<sup>63.</sup> Cf. ACG 2002 (Providence) Caput III – De vita intellectuali (nn. 104-201)

<sup>64.</sup> Cf. ACG 2004 (Krakow) Caput III – De vita Intellectuali et Praedicatione (nn. 128-143 and nn. 144-160).

Province, as well as the relationship he has to establish with the Regent of Studies. It is the role of the Provincial to encourage the officials of the Province, and among them the Regent of Studies. The role of the latter is well defined in LCO 93. Since he is an *ex officio* member of the Council of the Province, it is clear that the Regent must collaborate with the Prior Provincial. The Prior Provincial should establish and coordinate with the Regent, plans of action; verify if the decisions or the plans are being fulfilled or not. Among other things, it is the duty of the Provincial to verify if in all the convents and houses there is a Conventual Lector; and if he fulfils his mission, etc.

78. It belongs to the Prior Provincial to promote, together with the Regent of Studies, meetings of Lectors of the convents and houses of the Province to plan studies. In some Provinces, these meetings are held annually with great benefit.
79. The Provincial, together with the Regent, can also organize intense moments of study in the Province or foresee other spaces for reflection on our present challenges. The Order was born "*in medio Ecclesiae*". From the heart of the Church, People of God, we have to question ourselves on how to help the Church to respond to the provocations of the contemporary world.
80. An important point related with government, is to verify if what arrives from other levels is readily transmitted to the friars and officials of the Province. I think especially of the more important documents of the Magisterium of the Church and of the Order. Above all, I think of the Acts of the General Chapters (I note that the Acts are hardly read; the friars in formation hardly receive any news about them). In them we find an updating of the reflection on the life and the mission of the Order. Many friars, paradoxically, complain that they do not know many of the things that are happening in the Order. We do not communicate – as I said above – but is not communication one of the four priorities of the Order pointed out by the

General Chapter of Quezon City in 1977 and confirmed in the Chapters that followed?<sup>65</sup>

81. The **International Congress “From Avila to La Española – A point of view from the other shore”** celebrated in Avila (Spain) in September 2006 through the “Chair of Saint Thomas” is another eloquent sign of vitality and creativity in collaboration – in the field of intellectual life. In fact there were several participants from Latin America. The event was organized in an excellent way; there were high standards in the presentations, free discussions well prepared in an inter-disciplinary way with the civil society, the Dominican Laity and laypeople.
82. The support given to the **International Community of Brussels** and to the **Project Espaces** by the European Provinces continues with the assignation of new members to the community.<sup>66</sup> The theological Congress organized by *Espaces*, the third one which met in Pistoia (Italy) in September 2006, was a real success both because of the number of those participating and for the quality of the discussion.
83. Now I want to refer to the three communities of the Order under the immediate Jurisdiction of the Master which have a special intellectual mission: the Convent of Saint Dominic and Saint Sixtus – *Angelicum* in Rome<sup>67</sup>, the Convent of Saint Albert the Great *Albertinum* in Fribourg<sup>68</sup> and the Convent of Saint Stephen, the Protomartyr – **Biblical School** in Jerusalem.<sup>69</sup>
84. My gratitude goes to the friars of these convents for their dedication to study, research and teaching. It is an unseen work which requires many hours of preparation and dedication. Many of these Brothers ask me: In reality, are these Centres still

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<sup>65</sup>. Cf. ACG: Quezon City (1977) n. 15 ff; ACG Walberberg (1980) n. 17 b; ACG Rome (1983) n. 28; ACG Avila (1986) nn. 22 and 28; ACG Oakland (1989) nn. 68-69; ACG Mexico (1992) n. 51; ACG Caleruega 1995 nn. 20-39.

<sup>66</sup>. Cf. ACG 2004 (Krakow) n. 89.

<sup>67</sup>. Cf. Documents sent to the Capitulars – *Report of the PUST* (B. 13).

<sup>68</sup>. Cf. Documents sent to the Capitulars – *Report of the Albertinum* (B. 12)

<sup>69</sup>. Cf. Documents sent to the Capitulars - *Report of the Biblical School of Jerusalem* (B. 10).

a priority for the Order? I would like to confirm them in this vocation and because of this I tell them yes, that their work is a priority even if the circumstances have changed with the years.

85. In fact, throughout the years, many Dominican and non Dominican professors have been formed in these institutions. Thanks to this sowing, institutional centres of studies have been founded in many Provinces and many former students teach today in many centres, faculties and universities belonging to the Order or not. The fruit of the work carried out by these three entities cannot be measured, what has been sowed cannot be counted. In the *Relatio* prepared in 2004, I already offered some general impressions, all positive ones, and therefore, I do not think it necessary to repeat them. Nevertheless, I do want to stress the difficulties we sometimes face in order to find friars with the adequate preparation who can replace others who desire to return to their Provinces on reaching a certain age or after various years of working far from their countries of origin. Difficulties also present themselves when the Provinces of affiliation do not understand the need to offer friars to renew the life of these three communities and of their mission. I ask the Chapter to offer a word of gratitude to the friars assigned there and to their Provinces, as well as an exhortation to the whole Order in order to understand the primary importance of our academic presence in Rome, Fribourg and Jerusalem.
86. Regarding the *Angelicum*, I want to refer to the **canonical visitation** to the convent and the university. For me this has been very positive. We the visitators have been edified by the witness of many of the friars. I want to express my gratitude personally to all for their trust and simplicity in the dialogue. As the fruit of the visitation, some actions have been foreseen which certainly can encourage the professors and give them a certain respite so as to be able to apply themselves with more time and benefit to research. Together with the Syndic of the

Order we are studying how to concretise these measures. I would like to emphasize to the General Chapter two themes in particular:

a. **The convent:** According to what was ordained by the General Chapter of 2004<sup>70</sup>, the community of the Convent of Saint Dominic and Saint Sixtus has met in **conventual Chapter *ad modum Capituli Provincialis***. I think that – after some difficulties and objections about this – it has been an important step. I think that this particular way of celebrating the conventual Chapter is useful and necessary. It could be repeated profitably at least every three years (perhaps on the election of the prior?). The process used in the Provincial Chapter is more apt so that a community of 60 friars, from different nations and cultures, could express its feelings fraternally; discuss and define certain affairs, draw conclusions and ordinations. In this context at least two or three days of work are necessary if – for example – a statute must be written for the community, give guidelines for the solution of economic and administrative themes, etc. I trust that all this will be for the benefit of this dear community.

b. **The University:** There are many ecclesiastic faculties in the City, and this gives rise to much competition. In this context, the process of “**Strategic Planning**” started a few years ago is the key.<sup>71</sup> In the canonical visitation – which was also academic – they have been exhorted to continue ahead and to overcome the normal difficulties which may arise. The General Chapter can encourage the University to take steps in this direction.

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<sup>70</sup>. Cf. AGC 2004 (Cracow) n. 167

<sup>71</sup>. Cf. AGC 2004 (Cracow) n. 164

### III – VITA CONSECRATA

#### FRATERNAL LIFE IN COMMUNITY

##### *A Premise*

87. There are three aspects on common life which perhaps we do not take sufficiently into account: *its close relationship with mission, with government, with the life of faith*. When we speak about fraternal life in community, we generally point out as a priority aspects related to living together among brothers, the relationship among the friars, etc.<sup>72</sup> This is very good, but it would be opportune to go deeper in these three fundamental dimensions which distinguish or specify fraternal life in common within the Order.
88. Given the limits of this *Relatio*, I do not pretend to come down to concrete cases which the members of the Chapter know and will bring with them as joys and hopes, sadness and anguishes, challenges! I will rather stop on certain aspects which could sustain and inspire Dominican common life.

##### *Community-mission, or the conjugation of regular life with our preaching mission*

89. *“The first motivation for your coming together in community is to live unanimously in the house and to have **one only heart and one only soul in God**” (Rule of Saint Augustine, 1).* To this communion of hearts mentioned in the Rule, Saint Dominic added another dimension: the mission. In the binomial community-mission Dominic wanted to centre the essential elements of our life as Dominican friars: *“The nature of the Order as a religious society*

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<sup>72</sup> Cf. ACG 2001 (Providence) nn. 252-263; ACG 2004 (Krakow) nn. 219-236.

*derives from its mission and its fraternal communion” (LCO 1 § VI). In the Order the practice of common life is considered essential to nourish the preaching, not only to support the personal life of the Friar. A quality common life nourishes and makes credible the mission of the community.*

90. The LCO and the General Chapters contain abundant references to this.<sup>73</sup> Common life and mission are profoundly inter-related.<sup>74</sup> The attentive reader of the Constitutions of the Order will be able to perceive this **healthy tension between regular life in community and apostolic life.**
91. Young people who today call at the door of the Order value community life in a special way. Is there, perhaps, a shade of romanticism in this appreciation? This is possible. Many of our candidates come from a society where fragile and, frequently broken relationships predominate. But soon they notice that life in common which they yearn to embrace has to be built with effort and patience. They understand that common life is something essential for them to grow as persons and as religious; however in it they can get stranded if they believe that the community is only a warm nest from which they expect to receive everything, while contributing very little to help construct it. Many of the petitions to abandon the Order that we discuss in the General Council have precisely this origin.
92. A community with a mission, or a mission “*in and from*” the community? This question is important and demands a response in line with the best Dominican tradition: **community and mission involve one another.** The practise of common life prepares and impels us to preach and, in turn, is informed and made fruitful by it (LCO 1 § IV). This is the reason why since the

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<sup>73</sup> 68 LCO, 100 § I; 3 § II. To mention only the last two General Chapters: Cf. ACG 2001 (Providence) n. 264; ACG 2004 (Krakow) n. 225.

<sup>74</sup> “These elements, firmly linked among themselves, harmoniously balanced and nourishing one another, constitute in synthesis the proper life of the Order: an apostolic life in the full sense of the word, in which preaching and teaching should emanate from the abundance of the preaching” (LCO 1 § IV).

beginning of the Order our convents were called “*domus praedicationis*”, not only because from them we preach, but because fraternal life in community, in itself, is preaching. It is necessary to live in our communities what we preach. In my visitations to the Order I have seen that Provincial communities, those of the Vicariates or the local ones which have a clear idea of their mission and dedicate themselves wholeheartedly to it, live communion more intensely, mutually supporting one another, respecting and valuing what each one does.

93. Do we truly believe that mission should be nourished and impelled by a solid common life? Or, on the contrary, do we consider the exigencies of our common life as a simple appendix or, even, as an obstacle for us to a more effective preaching? Giving the decreasing number of brothers in some entities and the increase in our commitments, we run the risk of sacrificing common life in favour of a so-called greater effectiveness in the mission. If this happens, the healthy tension between common life and mission, which shows our life-style, might become a tyranny of work and of apostolic commitments on community life, on this reality that should support our mission.

*Government and Common Life*

94. To govern a community, Humbert of Romans said, is to pilot a ship: it is essential that there be a pilot. But it is also necessary that all the passengers agree to go to the same destination. If each one would want to go to a different place, they would never reach port! The key to good government of the community lies in the union of wills. This is one of the conditions for **unanimity** and a fundamental point in the Rule of Saint Augustine, which is nourished by the Acts of the Apostles (2, 42-44 and 4, 32-35). It is interesting to note that Humbert of Romans does not say that only one decides what the objective is and that all the others should bow down before this decision,

but rather that all have the same objective. However, so that the ship can happily reach its port of destination the pilot should guide the ship and he cannot abandon this role.<sup>75</sup>

95. It makes me very happy to know that in some places meetings were held to reflect on the function of the Prior. I think that today, it is necessary to recover and to stress the indispensable role given to him by our Constitutions.<sup>76</sup> We cannot think that the Prior is only a coordinator of the activities of the community. The prior is, above all, the animator who invites, stimulates, and helps the community to promote its life and mission. The Constitutions do not only give him the function to coordinate, but to **govern**, to direct the community according to the laws of the Order. On some occasions, this will imply to need to make difficult decisions for the good of the life and mission of the community. In these cases, especially, he needs the support of the brothers who, day after day, confirm him in his ministry.
96. The Prior must give opportunity to all, inviting the most timid ones to express their opinion, to show their qualities. On the other hand, he has to show those who are more articulated or who have a stronger personality that, because of this, they do not have the right to dominate over the others. In one word, he has to help them both to discover and to value their respective qualities in order to live in communion and to place them at the service of the mission.
97. Even though many today see the office of Prior as being very difficult, the experience of the canonical visitations to the Provinces indicates that there are some tools which really animate and help a community to live its mission in the Church and in the world. They are:

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<sup>75</sup>. Humbert of Romans, *Opera de vita regular*, Ed. Berthier (Romae 1888) Vol. I, pp. 71-72. Cf. Soeur Marie-Ancilla, OP, *Gouvernement et spiritualité de communion* (Actes 2) in *La Vie Spirituelle* (June 2002) 65

<sup>76</sup>. Cf. LCO 298 – 300.

- a. well prepared community meetings held regularly;<sup>77</sup>
  - b. lively and participated Liturgies;<sup>78</sup>
  - c. times of celebration and feast.<sup>79</sup>
98. The **community project** will, no doubt, help the community to put into practice the Dominican style of government and this is why it is a great help.<sup>80</sup> To forget what has been previously mentioned, will necessarily lead a community to disenchantment, to routine, to having merely personal projects at the margin of the community and – finally – to a private economy.

*Formation for common life*

99. Formation for common life is indispensable throughout our whole life, both for growth in faith and for the service of preaching. The brother who joins the Order requires attention, patience, stimulus, support and accompaniment in order to initiate himself in a life of community for the mission. Time is needed to assimilate and to internalize; it demands love and vigilance. To remain in community life for the mission demands courage, tenacity, openness, joy and faith.
100. In the Book of the Acts of the Apostles we read how on the day of Pentecost the Apostles received the Holy Spirit and began to preach and to give witness to Jesus. Many accepted the message and formed a community of believers who Lived unanimously, with one only soul and one only heart, in spite of the diversity of their origins. How was this possible? We can only think, as it really happened, that the Holy Spirit, sent by the Father through Jesus, made himself present and transformed those hearts constituting them into a community.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>77</sup>. A good synthesis has been offered in ACG 2001 (Providence) n. 274.

<sup>78</sup>. Cf. ACG 2001 (Providence) nn. 214-221

<sup>79</sup>. In the same sense cf. ACG 2004 (Krakow) nn. 223 and 224

<sup>80</sup>. Cf. ACG 1989 (Oakland) n. 39; ACG 1992 (Mexico) n. 39; ACG 1995 (Caleruega) n. 44; ACG 198 (Bologna) n. 127, 1; ACG 2001 (Providence) n. 274; ACG 2004 (Krakow) n. 224.

<sup>81</sup>. Cf. Soeur Marie-Ancilla, OP, Gouvernement et spiritualité de communion (Acts 2) in La Vie Spirituelle (June2002), 65.

101. Life in community is only possible if we look at it with the eyes of faith. We transform into life the Paschal Mystery we celebrate in the Liturgy in the daily life of the community, which, in this way, becomes a constant dying and rising with Christ. The suffering and joy which the practice of life in common implies help us to conform ourselves to Christ and to create a space in which mercy makes harmony and communion possible; and also love for one's brother, without seeking one's own interest but the common good; and pardon which strengthens the fraternal spirit; and liberty, which engenders a joyful and voluntary obedience to the Word. All of this allows the community to travel together towards the common objective: the mission of preaching the Word of God.
102. I want to say a word while thinking of our elderly brothers. They have offered themselves with generosity and unconditionally in so many different ministries. Our gratitude goes to them for being eloquent signs of fidelity to grace and to the Order.
103. Some Provinces have discerned and reflected about the older Friars – even in the Provincial Chapters – in order to assure for them the necessary attention. The solutions thought out are many and varied. I believe that the General Chapter can and should offer some guidelines for reflection which will help the Provinces and communities on this subject. The true vocational promotion is not limited to the accompaniment of those who desire to enter the Order – the majority of whom are young – , but also to foster the vocation of all the brothers who have consecrated their life in it *usque ad mortem*.

## IV – PASTORES DABO VOBIS

### VOCATIONS AND FORMATION

#### *Vocations*

104. The last General Chapter of Krakow tells us that the Order continues to be blessed with vocations even if the distribution is imbalanced.<sup>82</sup> There are vocations in Latin America and Africa, some in North America and less in Europe. Definitely, thank God, our Charism continues to call young people. Vocations are a gift from the Lord, but we as an Order need to promote and nourish these vocations and not only wait for them to come to us.
105. Why do some Provinces have vocations and others hardly any? Above all, it is Necessary to insist that every vocation is a mystery. God's call is a mystery and not an award for certain options or ways of life.<sup>83</sup> Anyhow, if it is important to pray to the Lord of the harvest to send labourers, it is also necessary to reflect and discern together, to prepare the ground for possible vocations.
106. When we speak about vocations in certain places and the lack of them in others, many aspects have to be distinguished. Of course, the social context and the realities in which the Provinces live are different. There are many valid intuitions and experiences in the promotion of vocations among the Provinces. It would be important to learn from one another one's richness or poverty, when speaking about vocations. It could be a good idea to gather together our vocation promoters – at the regional, international or intercontinental level – so that they could share and reflect together on the experiences of promotion of

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<sup>82</sup>. Cf. ACG 2004 (Krakow) *Relatio* n. 47; Cf. Documents sent to the Capitulars – *Statistics of the Order D. 4*.

<sup>83</sup>. Cf. John, 3, 27; 1 Corinthians 4, 7.

vocations for the Order. Such a meeting could be the favourable occasion for sharing ways of working and materials for promoting and discerning vocations.

107. **Collaboration** in the promotion of vocations is to be praised and it constitutes an authentic manifestation of our belonging to the same Family. Fortunately, this has been done in some countries or places with very good results. This should be promoted in such a way that the friars who are present and work in the same countries or regions collaborate together in the promotion of vocations. We must intensify our efforts also so that the different branches of the Order collaborate in the promotion of vocations for all the different groups of the Dominican Family and not only for one's own (Cf. LCO 1 § IX).
108. This should be kept in mind especially in the **promotion of vocations for our contemplative Sisters**. In this sense I call the attention of the friars who, in their different apostolic works undoubtedly meet many young girls to whom, perhaps, this particular beauty and living experience of the *sequela Christi* is not presented.

#### *Formation*

109. Which are the principal challenges in matters linked to formation? Visitations reveal that the availability of prepared formators for the different stages of formation is still a pending assignment.<sup>84</sup> It is clear that the need to count on prepared formators exceeds the resources of weak or small entities. How can the Order face this?
110. The best strategy would be to train formators in their own context. This demands the political will of the Provincials to send brothers to be formed and then assign them to the work of formation. It happens many times that brothers trained for this work are assigned unexpectedly to other ministries. It

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<sup>84</sup>. Cf. ACG 1998 (Bologna) nn. 107 – 115; ACG 2001 (Providence) nn. 364-368; ACG 2004 (Krakow) n. 274.

would be important for the Province to have or develop a program for the formation of Formators.

111. In some places there are no good courses for the **formation of Formators**. This means that these courses have to be followed wherever possible, even outside one's own Province or country. Nevertheless, keeping in mind our special need to form our Formators according to our tradition and values, it is better to organize special courses within the Order at national, zonal or regional levels. The program for Brother and Sister Formators in Asia-Pacific, which takes place every three years since 1993 in Caleruega – Philippines is a good model. *CIDALC* also organized a course for formators - men and women – of Latin America and the Caribbean in Lima, Peru (July 2005); *IAOP* (Inter – Africa) also organized something similar in October 2006 in Johannesburg, South Africa. Could not we organize similar programs for other regions?
112. A solution which is already being used is to ask for Formators from other entities. This is why I urge those entities which have more brothers available for the work of formation to respond generously to these petitions. Friars who many times consider themselves already “retired” and exclude themselves from these works, even if they do not have the competence to be formators, could be assigned to houses of formation to collaborate with the Masters and accompany the friars in formation. In this sense the Provinces should understand that they have to consider it a priority and make an effort to guarantee that there are formative communities with Brothers who are apt for this. Anyhow, the question remains and it has to be faced: How can we find formators if we do not prepare them?
113. However, the best response the Order can give to the challenge of formation, is to **do it together and in collaboration**.<sup>85</sup> We

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<sup>85</sup>. In this matter, the Holy See has offered very interesting indications: Cf. *Congregatio pro Institutis Vitae Conecratae et Societatibus vitae apostolicae*, Instructio “Atenta alle condizione” on “Collaboration in formation among the Institutes”(08-12-1998).

should do this for various and very good reasons. *First*, it is the more realistic solution to optimise the use of human, structural and economic resources. We cannot multiply unnecessarily the houses of formation and we cannot have separate communities very close to one another. *Second*, in our world characterized by “plurality” and “otherness”, it would be excellent to develop our formative program through a vital experience of the other. An intercultural and international community of formation may be a true school of dialogue and life for our candidates. *Third*, this would be a concrete way for our candidates to open their hearts and minds to the internationality of the Order and to its global mission, beyond the geographic limits and ways of being of the Provinces. *Fourth*, it is the most effective way to prepare friars in view of inter-provincial collaboration. If collaboration is to be taken seriously into account, a joint program of formation is indispensable. This would also be the most effective way to initiate a process of unification of the entities where this is necessary. *Finally*, collaboration is the way to ensure our future as an Order. This should gradually become a way of life, a spirituality for us. There is no better time to initiate experientially the friars and sisters of the Order in collaboration than during their initial formation.

114. The formators take care of the candidates, but they also need to be taken care of. In meetings and conversations with formators one becomes aware that many of them feel overburdened in their work. Others experience the lack of support from their communities, and worse still, from their superiors. In some cases, they feel isolated or “alone” in their ministry. It is vital that there be a local (*LCO* 158) as well as a Provincial Council of Formation (*RSG* 155). These are subsidiary structures of support, collaboration and accompaniment for our formators. Without interfering in their work, the Provincials are in an

excellent position to manifest their interest, appreciation and support to the formators, especially providing them with the necessary Assistants and having meetings with them.

115. Our vocation and formation as Dominicans is intimately linked to our mission. The Order exists for the mission and its identity derives from the mission to preach the Good News of Jesus Christ. The awareness that and the identity of one that is being sent to the others because of the Good News of the Kingdom of God has to be the central value of our Dominican formation. **Our formation is for the mission.**

116. I have already said before that the General Chapter of 2004 which met in Krakow stated that the establishment of a mission outside its territory belongs to the identity of each Province.<sup>86</sup> From here arises the great need to form friars for the mission *ad gentes*. This has to be done systematically. During their formation, the brothers have to be identified and prepared for this mission as soon as possible. Their preparation should include both times of pastoral experiences and guided exposure in future places of mission. It also requires the systematic learning of languages and cultures. This preparation has to be integrated with basic knowledge and talents for dialogue and the art and science of communication through the learning of cultures and traditions.

117. In referring to this theme – vocation and formation in relation to the mission – I underline its special importance in the benefit of the promotion of the intellectual life of the Order. I point out especially the fields of evangelisation of cultures, dialogue with the modern world, dialogue with cultures and religions. It is urgent to identify the friars who have special aptitudes for this. Besides, a new generation of professors and researchers has to be prepared for the provincial and international centres of study of the Order.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>86.</sup> ACG 2004 (Krakow) 83

<sup>87.</sup> Cf. ACG 1989 (Oakland) n. 122; ACG 1992 (Mexico) n. 151; ACG 1998 (Bologna) n. 104; ACG 2001 (Providence) nn. 125-135, 143 and 154; ACG 2004 (Krakow) n. 147 and 151.

*Conclusion and several questions*

118. In visitations to the communities, friars usually ask me questions on the theme of vocations (especially where we do not have them). I then insist on those questions which the last three Masters of the Order asked us. They continue to be relevant today, because they demand an adequate response for our time. This is why I shall quote them together.
119. Bro. Vincent de Couesnongle OP with profound prophetic intuitions helped us to reflect: *“Who are my Cumans? A strange question but very Dominican: In the last years of his life, Saint Dominic frequently said: “When the Order is sufficiently stable, we will go to the Cumans” The Cumans – this Dominican desire which always springs again from a creative apostolate on the frontiers – can have a thousand different forms. It is much more than a given place, than a particular mission, than some concrete persons, whether they are coloured or inhabitants of marginalized neighbourhoods, rich or poor, Christian or atheists. It is above all a spirit, a force, an energy in the most intimate part of our being which always leaves us unsatisfied of what we are doing and of who we are; a desire which, by reason of its proper vitality and of the suffering which it engenders in us, could change our communities, the world and above all, ourselves”*.<sup>88</sup>
120. **Bro. Damian Byrne OP**, with his rich experience in the missions and in government, wrote in his *Relatio* for the Chapter of Mexico: *“For what do we want vocations? How are we going to form them? (...) How are we going to form ourselves so as to receive the new religious and how are we going to carry out the necessary changes in our life that will enable us to live with them in the peace of the Gospel and to bear their challenge and that of their world?”*<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>88</sup>. Airport of Orly, July 10, 1977.

<sup>89</sup>. Relatio de Statu Ordinis to the General Chapter of Mexico 1992 - Formation

121. **Bro. Timothy Radcliffe OP**, in his first letter to the Order, questioned himself and us with his usual creative imagination: *“Do we dare to accept into the Order young people who have the daring to face these new challenges with courage and initiative, knowing that they may well put in question much of what we have been and done? Would we happily accept into our own Province a man like Thomas Aquinas, who embraced a new and suspect philosophy and posed hard and searching questions? Would we welcome a brother like Bartolome de Las Casas, with his passion for social justice? Would we be pleased to have a Fra. Angelico who experimented with new ways of preaching the gospel? Would we give profession to Catherine of Siena, with all her outspokenness? Would we welcome Martin de Porres, who might disturb the peace of the community by inviting in all sorts of poor people? Would we accept Dominic? Or might we prefer candidates who will leave us in peace? And what is the result of our initial formation? Is it to produce brothers and sisters who have grown in faith and courage, who dare to try and risk more than when they came to us at first? Or do we tame them and make them safe?”*<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>90</sup>. Letter to the Order 1994: Vowed to Mission.

## V - PASTOR BONUS

### GOVERNMENT

122. Where government functions according to the Constitutions, problems that may arise are more easily solved.
123. Good **communication**, the circulation of information, is a key element in Dominican Government (this generally has to do with the visitation of the Master to the Provinces and similar entities, and with the frequent visits of the Provincial to the communities). In this way the spirit of belonging improves because it is easier for the brothers to identify themselves in one way or another with the provincial projects, accepting as their own the more difficult decisions. Otherwise we could become mere spectators of TV, cinema or sports events in the stadium – comfortably seated – encouraging or jeering those who “act”, “sing” or “play” (**govern!**) without getting personally involved in the pursuit of the common good, in the public thing (*res-publica*).
124. In the letter at the end of some of my canonical visitations I wanted to reflect on the responsibility we friars, especially those solemnly professed, have concerning the life and mission of the Order. Through our “**vow of obedience**” **we are granted “voice” and “vote”, that is to say authority.** If etymologically, the word republic means “the public thing”, it will be important to reflect on what the republican system means in the civil sphere. It is evident that we cannot, in a simplistic or forced way, identify a system of “civil” government with the regime of a religious Order. Nevertheless, there are analogous elements which will help us to ensure the means the Order has in order to guarantee its ends.

125. When the republican system is studied, usually some characteristics are pointed out which can be applied to the regime of the Order in an analogous way: regularity and eligibility of the functions of government; the publicity of the acts of government; control of the exercise or running of government.

*Chapters*

126. Do we allow our local, Vicarial or Provincial communities to move on as by inertia (“it has always be done like this”) or, on the contrary, do we take advantage of the rich dynamism provided by our Constitutions<sup>91</sup> through the regular meetings of the Chapters and Councils (local, Vicarial, Provincial and General)? Are we able to create the necessary **space** to evaluate and discern, plan and program, discuss and define all that is necessary to guarantee our mission? **Of course, this space has to be physical (place and time), logical and psychological (dialogue), and spiritual (listening, word, forgiveness).**
127. On the other hand, how can we avoid that a Chapter – local or provincial – simply cancels what the previous Chapter decided, or that it has to start again from zero, many times without taking into consideration the work done until then?
128. What are we to do so that the (conventual, vicarial and provincial) Chapters reflect more about the mission and not only about the administration of what already exists or what we possess? How can we encourage the friars to be docile to the decisions of the conventual, provincial or general Chapters so that their discernment and application is not limited to the defence of personal projects?
129. Once more, it is necessary, to reflect on the acceptance of the decisions and acts of the Chapters (local, provincial, general).

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<sup>91</sup>. Cf. ACG 2001 (Providence) n. 274

In my visitations I can see that – especially in the case of the provincial and general Chapters – these are not known. They are simply placed in the Library without being accepted and adopted as one’s own. Acts are the fruit of much work and as such they should be read and studied.

130. Other questions come to my mind regarding the Chapter Acts: Are they a point of reference for the Priors Provincial and their Councils, for the friars and the communities? Are they used in formation? Are we aware that these texts have been drawn up by brothers who were elected in our communities and Chapters? They – meeting in Chapter – have wanted to discern on the sense of our life and mission for the times in which we are living!

*Priors Provincial – Communication with the General Curia*

131. The task of the Priors Provincial, in a special way, deserves our gratitude, support and even admiration. Their task is praiseworthy and, no doubt, needs to be supported. In the *Relatio* for the Chapter of 2004 I insisted that to confirm a brother in an office does not consist only in signing the prescribed document after the election. This confirmation goes on during all the time he is in office. I can say that, from this point of view, in the General Curia we try to help in a special way the Priors Provincial (and similar authorities) by collaborating with them in order to guarantee the good government of their entities and, therefore, the life and mission of the whole Order. It is true that **we are all called to “confirm” our brothers** in their vocation, in their different duties and burdens, offices and responsibilities<sup>92</sup>. One is sometimes astonished to see that, as soon as a friar is elected for a given office, there is a certain lack of collaboration on the part of some and even passive resistance on the part of others.

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<sup>92</sup>. Cf. ACG 2004 (Krakow) n. 292; cf. *Relatio de Statu Ordinis* (2004) n. 70

132. Through the documents we receive at the General Curia or during the canonical visitations, we see that some Priors Provincial do not habitually work with their Councils except in those cases which strictly require it. It sometimes happens that, the Prior (conventual, vicarial, regional or provincial) could imagine the Council to be just a “college of notaries” called upon to record information, facts and events, or juridical, economic or administrative acts, instead of being a true organ of government.
133. We note that on some occasions, when facing some specific situation, the Prior Provincial does not consult LCO or a canonist, not even the previous Provincial (who is an ex officio member of the Provincial Council) before sending his questions or doubts to the General Curia.
134. Many situations, causes or cases should be sent to the General Curia to be studied and solved or for later presentation to the Holy See in conformity with Canon Law. In each file or dossier, rights and duties of the brothers, of the communities, of the Province, of the Order are involved.
135. There are occasions when a person or a friar asks for something. In this sense it is necessary to respect the right of the petitioner (*ius petendi*) and to take clearly into consideration what he asks for. In the way of an example: the permission to exercise the pastoral office as “*sacerdos ad militis adscriptus*”;<sup>93</sup> readmission into the Order;<sup>94</sup> request for absence from the community;<sup>95</sup> an indult for exclaustation,<sup>96</sup> dispensation from the vows,<sup>97</sup> dispensation from the obligations incurred with the ordination to the diaconate or to the priesthood,<sup>98</sup> etc. In order to offer an

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<sup>93</sup> Cf. *Ordinatio* ACG 1989 (Oakland) n. 91

<sup>94</sup> Cf. CIC c. 690 § 1 and LCO 168 § II, 2nd.

<sup>95</sup> Cf. CIC c. 665 § 1.

<sup>96</sup> Cf. CIC c. 686 § 1

<sup>97</sup> Cf. CIC cc. 690-693.

<sup>98</sup> Cf. *Congregatio pro Doctrina Fidei, De modo procedendi in examine et resolutione petitionum quae dispensationem a caelibatu respiciunt: “Per Litteras ad universos...”* (14.10.1980) in AAS 72 (1980) 1132-1135. After the *Pastor Bonus* (28.06.1988) *The Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments* was competent. Beginning on 1-08-2005 the competent Dicastery is the *Congregatio pro Clericis*.

- answer, be it positive or negative, which has been sufficiently pondered it is important to have all the necessary information.
136. There are cases in which it is the Prior Provincial who asks the Master to take some action. I refer – for example – to the petition for a canonical suppression or erection of a house or a convent;<sup>99</sup> the canonical erection of the Novitiate house;<sup>100</sup> the alienation of goods or property;<sup>101</sup> etc... Petitions for imposed exclaustation;<sup>102</sup> dismissal of a friar<sup>103</sup> or the cases of *delicta graviora* are even more delicate.<sup>104</sup> These situations in themselves demand much time of study and discernment.
137. That is why each petition has to be carefully documented. This documentation is a sign of respect for the friar, for the communities involved (local, vicarial and provincial), for everybody's rights. In many cases, one does not easily keep in mind the list of the documents needed to study the problem. On some occasions, the advice or demands of the Procurator General or of some Official of the Curia is misinterpreted thinking that it is simply a question of mere bureaucratic scruples. I insist: we cannot forget that behind each paper very delicate situations for one or more persons are at stake. If sometimes we ask to send in more documents or – for example – to send only one complete file or dossier instead of several separate documents, this does not mean that we at Santa Sabina invent new requirements or obstacles. Above all, we want to guarantee a proper process (which is part of justice).
138. The Holy See also has very precise requisites given the seriousness of certain issues.<sup>105</sup> Taking into account all these

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<sup>99</sup>. Cf. CIC cc. 609 § 1 and 616; LOC 261 § 1

<sup>100</sup>. Cf. CIC c. 647 § 1 and LCO 180 I

<sup>101</sup>. Cf. CIC c. 638 § 3 and LCO 609

<sup>102</sup>. Cf. CIC c. 686 § 3

<sup>103</sup>. Cf. CIC cc. 694 - 703

<sup>104</sup>. Cf. John Paul II, *Litterae Apostolicae Sacramentorum sanctitatis tutela* (30.04.2001) in AAS 93 (2001) 737-739 and later documents of application.

<sup>105</sup>. The more delicate cases and the competent dicasteries are: Petition of dispensation from the obligations incurred with ordination to the diaconate or priesthood (*Congregatio pro Clericis*); Confirmation of the Decree of imposed exclaustation or dismissal of a religious (*Congregatio pro Institutis Vitae Consecratae et Societatibus vitae apostolicae*) and the cases related to the *Delicta graviora* (*Congregatio pro Doctrina Fidei*).

themes and other similar ones, I have asked the Procurator General to be present at the General Chapter and to offer a talk in which to present accurately some points which I consider important for the Priors Provincial and similar authorities.<sup>106</sup> Certainly, this will facilitate the **contemplation** of many delicate situations, **collaboration** in the solution of some questions, and the necessary **communication** to ensure the common good.

*Principle of subsidiarity*

139. Another key for good Dominican government is the respect for the **principle of subsidiarity**.<sup>107</sup> This means that Priors Provincial, Vice provincials and Vicars General (and *a fortiori* Regional Priors, Provincial Vicars, and even the conventual priors) have to face or make certain decisions which belong to them because they are part of their responsibility. They also count on their Councils and other organisms of government to do this. To “flee from responsibility” unjustifiably delaying a decision can also cause an injustice.
140. In the provincial sphere we notice that – given certain circumstances – the Prior Provincial or his Council can have difficulties in taking certain measures. Then recourse is had to “Santa Sabina”. There is no doubt that, in these cases the Master or the Vicar, in my absence, can help (also through the regional Socius or other officials). Furthermore, it is our duty. Nevertheless, I notice that there are several matters in which a recourse is not

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<sup>106.</sup> Cf. ACG 1998 (Bologna) n. 196

<sup>107.</sup> This principle, especially present in the Social teaching of the Church, can be applied in an analogous way to the different levels of government in the Order (local, vicarial, provincial and general). In *Mater et Magistra* (n. 53) John XXIII refers to the action of the State, which fosters, stimulates, orders, replaces and completes and which is based on the *principle of subsidiary function*, already formulated by Pius XI in the Encyclical *Quadragesimo anno*: “Still, that most weighty principle, which cannot be set aside or changed, remains fixed and unshaken in social philosophy: Just as it is gravely wrong to take from individuals what they can accomplish by their own initiative and industry and give it to the community, so also it is an injustice and at the same time a grave evil and disturbance of right order to assign to a greater and higher association what lesser and subordinate organizations can do. For every social activity ought of its very nature to furnish help to the members of the body social, and never destroy and absorb them.” [Cf. *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 23 (1931) p. 203].

necessarily justified because at a given moment a word had already been given. It is true that certain actions can and should be revised, especially if circumstances have changed. But I want to refer, especially, to the application of decisions taken by the Provincial Chapter. If the Acts of the Provincial Chapter have been approved by the Master according to the *LCO*, this means that what the Chapter decided has been confirmed – except for a special indication to the contrary. Then why should there be recourse to Santa Sabina again? It belongs to the Prior Provincial and his Council to put into practice these decisions, interpret the Acts and in a particular case dispense from them.<sup>108</sup>

141. If recourse or consultations are not clear, especially when they come directly from some friars or from some communities without before having recourse to the Provincial authority, a word from the Curia could be interpreted as an opinion or a decision from “Santa Sabina” against or objecting to the provincial decisions. Then communication is hindered and also collaboration.
142. Certain authority has also been conferred to officials named by the local or Provincial Chapters. Therefore, our obedience is also due to them in the sphere of their competence. This should be matter for our reflection since these friars work at the service of the common good, and in one way or another, manage the “public thing”.
143. When we refer to the common good – final cause of every law and of all government – in reference to the Order, this acquires, above all, a supernatural meaning, which is that of “*committing ourselves to the proclamation of the Word of God, preaching everywhere the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ*;<sup>109</sup> “*preaching and the salvation of souls*;<sup>110</sup> *preaching the Word of God in its totality*”.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>108</sup>. Cf. *LCO* nn. 362-364

<sup>109</sup>. Cf. *LCO* 1 § I (Of the prayer for the catechumens which is said on Good Friday).

<sup>110</sup>. Cf. *LCO* 1 § II (First Constitutions, Prologue) *Supreme law in the Church as pointed out in CIC* c. 1752.

<sup>111</sup>. Cf. *LCO* 1 § III (Honorius III, Letter to all the prelates of the Church, of 04-02-1221).

*Canonical visitations*

144. **Canonical visitations** constitute a privileged moment in the life of the Order. In referring to them I once more quote the principle of subsidiarity. Sometimes everything is expected from a visitation without keeping in mind that the friars themselves in a local community (in the cases of the visitation by the Provincials) or of a Province (in the case of the visitation by the Master or his Delegates) are the principal actors of community life, of government and of mission.
145. There are usually different ways in which to position ourselves in the face of a visitation. Possibilities range from a preventive death sentence “*all are the same and they are useless, nothing changes*”, up to an unreal illusion: “*We hope that this visit will definitively solve the problem*”. On some occasions, especially if one does not agree with the results, one can say that the visitors did not understand the mentality of the Province, the social, historical or political circumstances of a country, etc.
146. This might be true. In any case, the objective of a canonical visitation is not that of understanding society, political life or the idiosyncrasy of the friars belonging to that entity (even if this is part of what one learns or gets) but rather to see if the friars live unanimously in the house and if they promote, with apostolic generosity, the aims of the Order.
147. Visitations offer, above all, the possibility to pause in order to look and listen with attention and to keep advancing along the same path (Cf. Philippians 3, 7- 16); it manifests the desire to listen to the brothers and to understand them;<sup>112</sup> it allows one to know more closely their life and mission, the projection of the local or provincial community in the life and mission of the Church, of the Order. On the other hand, through the witness of the visitors, a visitation also offers the friars the possibility

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<sup>112</sup>. Cf. LCO 20 §1

to know about different aspects of the life of the Province and of the Order beyond one's own community or territory of the province. This fecund dialogue expresses, in a significant way, the unity and universality of the Order.

148. Each community constitutes a precise and precious instrument for evangelisation. Every good instrument, certainly, needs to be tuned. The task of tuning an instrument consists in verifying-ensuring its correct functioning and sonority so that it could be used later on in the best possible way to interpret a score. To "tune" an instrument and to "interpret" a melody with it is not the same thing. In tuning an instrument the same notes are repeated over and over again, one blows into it, the same cords are played several times, the pegs are adjusted. These sounds are not always pleasant: What is really good, pleasant and perfect is the concert! Perhaps this example will help to understand the meaning of the visitation and of its concluding letter. It belongs mainly to the community that is visited (the local or provincial community) "to interpret the score of the mission of the Order". If the community itself does not take upon itself its own reality, very little can change or heal. Canonical visitations serve, above all, so that the communities may understand this.
149. Some Provinces receive the concluding letter with great docility (docility does not imply "to be in agreement" but rather "to know how to listen and to allow somebody to tell you something") and because of this they study its content and try to put into practice the suggestions and ordinations it contains. In other cases, we must also admit, visitations go by as if nothing happened... *"like yesterday, that has already gone by, like a vigil at night (...) like the grass that grows, flourishes and in the afternoon dries up and withers"* [Psalm 90 (89) 4-6].

*Relationship to the Law*

150. When should we use the Law? This is not merely a canonical or juridical question but it is also a moral one. Certain difficulties or challenges demand dialogue, listening, spiritual advice, eventually the search for alternative or intermediate solutions before, hastily, having recourse to the law.
151. What criteria make recourse to the Law necessary or unnecessary? For situations that are analogous (petition for the dispensation of simple vows; friars who abandon religious life before the time of their profession, friars who live outside of the communities for a long time, etc) some Provinces act rapidly or send all the necessary documentation immediately while others act too late – when problems arise – or simply they never act.

*General Questions*

152. A theme on which we should reflect together is what we could call “**virtual government**”. The modern means of communication permit anybody – from the comfort of his cell or from the computer centre – to write an electronic message and to send it instantly to whoever he desires. This also makes it possible for one to address oneself directly to a higher authority for any reason whatsoever, without first knocking at the door of the brother who lives next to him, that of his Prior or that of his Provincial (I am not referring to the recourses which are presented after having referred to the other intermediate instances). Obedience is one of the most beautifully treated themes in our *LCO*. There we do not only find general spiritual reflections but also practical help full of great wisdom and prudence. One of these is *LCO* 22 which is rarely applied.
153. Once again referring to the means of communication, it is evident that they allow us to promote forums of discussion which can be very positive since they offer opportunities for

preaching, dialogue and sharing.<sup>113</sup> However, without a rational, prudent and constructive use of them, they can also become means of pressure by certain groups before / after the local or provincial Chapters. They also make possible the circulation and reproduction of documents, information or dialogue held during councils or Chapters (many times outside their context and to the detriment of other persons). In short, they can be an obstacle to true communication.

154. Many a time it is amazing that a proposition or election which, according to the Constitutions, is subject to the approval, confirmation or annulment of a higher authority (the Prior Provincial or the Master of the Order, according to the subject matter) can be known in detail by all the friars of the Province, the friars of other Provinces and even the friars in formation (novices and students) before it reaches the competent authority!
155. Sometimes the admission of a young man to the Order is at stake; the admission to profession, to the ministries or to ordination (diaconate and priesthood). In all the cases mentioned above discretion and privacy of the person or of the information regarding that person are at stake. We can very easily send a message today from the Council or Chapter hall. The harm done can be serious (for example in referring to a person what another one could have said of him in a Chapter / Council).
156. The unanimous participation of all the friars assures the most fruitful apostolic cooperation and fraternal communion. This is how Humbert of Romans expresses it: *"bonum enim quod communiter approbatur cito et facile promovetur"*.<sup>114</sup>
157. This does not mean that "everybody can say everything about anything and anybody". Dominican Government points out very well which are the levels, spaces and organisms where

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<sup>113</sup>. Cf. ACG 2004 (Krakow) n. 93

<sup>114</sup>. Cf. LCO 6; quoting Humbert of Romans he consecrates in some way, the well known medieval *regula iuris* : *"Quod omnes tangit ab omnibus tractari et approbari debet"* (cf. CIC c. 119 § 3).

themes can be discussed (and establishes very well what themes could and should be discussed and defined in each of these spheres). At the same time, our tradition is based on the two-fold distinction between the discussion of the facts / acts / affairs and the persons who are responsible on the one hand and on the other between the external and the internal forums.

158. This question is important because it has to do, fundamentally, with trust and therefore, it touches directly our capitular democracy. In fact, in many cases in Dominican Government this democracy functions through the election of representatives (for example: the members of the local and provincial Councils; the Socius of the conventual Prior to be present at the Provincial Chapter; the delegates of the colleges who go to the Provincial Chapter, the Diffinitors elected for the General Chapters, etc.). This means that the trust we put in the brothers and in the word they will offer is constantly at stake.
159. If – for example – the provincial or general authority thinks that a given election has to be annulled; that such and such a decision should not be approved or confirmed; that the name of a person proposed for a certain office should not be accepted... It could happen that – without knowing the true prudential reason for a decision that in itself need not be explained – many will end up by judging the act mistakenly. In many cases it is interpreted as a punishment; in others it goes on to a virtual lynching. Government decisions are intended to ensure the common good of the Order and they can in no way be interpreted within the narrow framework of a “promotion” or “punishment” (as happens in the political, military or entrepreneurial spheres).
160. We cannot avoid that a certain government decision or a political prudence used by the competent authority be judged, evaluated or criticised. It is normal that this happens; besides, it is a sign of the interest for public things, of the good Dominican critical spirit (I insist, understood as an “evaluation”).

161. Nevertheless, intentionally or not, we could not only be interfering unjustly in the normal process of making decisions or in the process that follows a canonical election, but we can also make ourselves judges of persons and their intentions. In these cases, we do not only harm the relationship with authority by creating phantoms, but we also end up harming the person/s or ideas we intend to defend against the decision made by the authority.
162. The distinction between actions and persons, between the sphere of the internal and external forum, are keys for morals and good government and a guarantee of Dominican interior freedom. We can easily confuse these plans, damage them or scorn them. The General Chapter can offer a word about this.

*The value of a word that has been given*

163. In short, what is at stake every day and in each act of government – and all the friars are responsible for this – is the **value of the word that has been given**. In speaking about the value of the word, I refer above all, to the value of our profession. The value of the decisions, of the voting, of elections then follows. There are places precisely defined in which these decisions, voting, and elections could be evaluated; however, we cannot create a constant state of revision of each decision according to our passing whims. That is not so much a sign of “Dominican itinerancy” but rather just chatter or lack of trust in the word.
164. On many occasions, in the civil political sphere, programs of government are publicised, but only before the elections. Not to believe in the word (in one’s own and in that of others), also makes the word of the Chapters and of authority in general meaningless. This could turn one of the most important signs of the life of the local community, of the Province and of the Order – I refer to the Chapter and the Acts – into something impossible to fulfil, or it is simply ignored.

165. This becomes evident when it comes to evaluating and defining the presence of the Order in a territory and, for example, the suppression of a conventual activity or a house or convent is decided in order to favour the mission of the Province in other sectors or priorities. Sometimes everything possible is done so that four years go by and then be able to decide to the contrary. The lack of a clear process postpones the decision to the intermediate enlarged Council. This Council decides to wait for the next Provincial Chapter. On other occasions one might use the idea of the *domus filialis*<sup>115</sup> in order to avoid fulfilling the acts. The Master or his delegates are asked to say a word during canonical visitations. The concluding letter confirms the measure and urges that what has been decided be fulfilled. However, new difficulties cause all that to remain a dead letter. Sometimes, the suppression was decreed, but in fact, the situation continues as if nothing had been decided. Finally, the new Provincial Chapter arrives and one starts all over again. It is not the suppression of the house or the reputation of the Provincial Prior and his Council that are at stake! The word is at stake! What example do we give to our novices and students from whom we demand fidelity to the word?

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<sup>115</sup>. Cf. LCO 335

## VI – LABOREM EXERCENS

### ECONOMY<sup>116</sup>

#### *Clarity and Transparency in Administration*

166. The administration of economic resources should not be a burden which enslaves, but rather a tool oriented to provide the brothers with what is necessary for the exercise of the ministry of Preaching and the Apostolate. This is promoted rapidly and easily if our economy fits in the framework of a local or provincial project approved by the community.<sup>117</sup> Clarity and transparency in apostolic projects also favours an environment of trust and credibility in the way of asking and of rendering an account.
167. The administration of economic resources is not the task of the syndic exclusively but is, in the first place, the responsibility of the whole community (*LCO* 537). This is why it is not only the syndic who is called to render an account to the community but also each one and all of the friars. In order to favour clarity and transparency in the administration of what is common (once again: the “*res-publica*”) the first step is evident: to contribute to the common fund everything which we acquire by our work and activity, what we receive as donations or personal gifts, pensions of every type etc. (Cf. *LCO* 546, 1).
168. The vow of poverty is lived in the measure in which we know how to administer our resources whether they are many or few. The great challenge we have before us is to give a community

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<sup>116</sup>. In this theme it is important to take into account: The Documentation sent to the Capitulars - *Report of the Trustee of the Order (A.12)*.

<sup>117</sup>. Cf. *LCO* 6

dimension to our vow of poverty. How should we articulate our religious dimension with administration? To live in a poor and simple manner is the thermometer which verifies any discourse or reflection on this vow. Since “the vows are a triple expression of a single “Yes” to the one relationship of total consecration”<sup>118</sup> also the different elements of our Dominican life bond, harmonize, balance and fecundate one other: religious consecration – fraternal life in community – ministry of preaching – study – government – economy and administration.<sup>119</sup>

169. We friars do not usually give sufficient importance to the administrative and logistic aspects of our economic life. These manifest the trustworthiness and reasonableness of our resources. The preparation of the friars in this field is still lacking and, besides, many times we exempt ourselves from fulfilling the norms and procedures of *LCO* and the General, Provincial or local Chapters.
170. A global economy presents us with new challenges. We underline, among many others, the need to implement a system of accounting which is compatible for all the entities: Provinces (or similar entities) and Vicariates, adjusting ourselves also to the legal exigencies of each country. In this way the administration of our goods and resources will be dynamic, clear, transparent and effective.<sup>120</sup> The end is clear: always to offer a reliable information in the administration of goods and of economic resources.<sup>121</sup> This also results in the possibility to offer to the syndics more time for study, preaching and the apostolate.
171. In order to promote these things, it is necessary to count on brothers who are prepared and qualified in this matter.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> Congregatio pro Religiosis et Institutis Saecularibus, Instructio “Essential elements in the Church’s teaching as applied to Institutes dedicated to works of the Apostolate” (31-05-1983) n. 14.

<sup>119</sup> Cf. *LCO* 1 § IV

<sup>120</sup> Cf. ACG 2004 (Krakow) n. 312.

<sup>121</sup> Cf. ACG 2004 (Krakow) nn. 320 and 329; ACG 2001 (Providence) nn. 375-376; ACG 1998 (Bologna) n. 228; ACG 1995 (Caleruega) nn. 150-151.

<sup>122</sup> Cf. ACG 2004 (Krakow) n. 340 and ACG 2001 (Providence) nn. 402 – 403.

Nevertheless, we should not be afraid to ask for help from lay experts in order to implement mechanisms of technical control, follow up and registration. These tools allow us to create a “culture of “rendering” and “requesting” accounts”.<sup>123</sup> A transparent and orderly economy favours collaboration, communication and avoids misunderstandings, suspicion, private life and administration of the resources which do not really belong to us.<sup>124</sup>

*Economic Information: Questionnaire and Report to the Master of the Order*

172. In spite of the repeated requests by the Syndic of the Order some Provinces and General Vicariates still – and in some entities for several years – do not send a response to the *ECONOMIC QUESTIONNAIRE*. Some entities send it but perhaps in a way that is incomplete, vague, and does not correspond to reality. In the end, this creates inequalities when preparing the “Data Base” which, in turn, serves to fix the contribution of each entity to the Order.<sup>125</sup> What is the result? Paradoxically, the entities which have been clear and transparent in their reports end up paying higher contributions!
173. The *ECONOMIC REPORT* which the Provinces or similar entities have to send to the Master of the Order constitutes something like an X-Ray of the economic, financial and administrative state of each entity. Perhaps we are not as yet conscious of its importance.<sup>126</sup> Only 40% of the entities (21 entities on 50) have sent in this report in 2006.

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<sup>123</sup>. Cf. ACG 1989 (Oakland) n. 171

<sup>124</sup>. Cf. John 3, 27; I Corinthians 4, 7.

<sup>125</sup>. Cf. ACG 2004 (Krakow) nn. 322-327

<sup>126</sup>. Cf. LCO 567; ACG 2004 (Krakow) n. 329

*Economic Auditing and Visitations*

174. As I already mentioned above, we see that some of the economic reports which are sent to the Curia are neither clear nor reasonable. If to this we add – I repeat - that some entities for many years have not sent in any report, this is very meaningful and the conclusion is immediate: sometimes the administration and the manner of handling the accounts leave much food for thought.
175. Canonical visitations allow us to see that not rendering an account has immediate repercussions in community and apostolic life. For this reason some Provinces have asked for help and for a closer following in economic matters, accounts and administration.<sup>127</sup> This is why several economic visitations have been carried out by the Syndic of the Order (on some occasions with the collaboration of another member of the General Economic Council). These Economic visits, in a subsidiary way, are tools by which to improve collaboration and communication; they help to evaluate the current economic situation of the entity and to plan for its future concerning this matter (let us recall that from these resources formation, centres of study, the support for the mission, healthcare for the friars, help for those in greater need, etc. depend).

*Solidarity and Saint Dominic Funds*

176. The Chapter of 2004 (Krakow) made various exhortations and declarations inviting the Provinces of the Order to offer a percentage of the benefits received from the sale of real estate or in the case of big donations.<sup>128</sup> The purpose of this is to replenish *Saint Dominic*” and *“Solidarity”* Funds. Unfortunately such exhortations have not had the expected

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<sup>127</sup>. During the years 2003–2006 economic visitations have been made – asked by me or by the entities - to the Province of Ecuador (2003 and 2005); Peru (2004); General Vicariate of Puerto Rico and the two provincial Vicariates in Bolivia (of Germany and *Saint Albert the Great* respectively) in 2006; General Vicariate of the Baltic countries (2007). Other visits have been programmed. General Vicariate of Congo and Province of Mexico in 2008.

<sup>128</sup>. Cf. ACG 2004 (Krakow) nn. 337 - 339

result.<sup>129</sup> The goal is to put into practice the sharing of our goods. We should keep in mind that, thanks to these funds, many projects have been carried out in the area of missions and formation. At the same time, there are many initiatives we are unable to finance although they are very important. Neither are there funds to – at least – contribute in a subsidiary way with the financing and support of these projects.

177. We are brothers and this also shows itself when we become aware of the community of goods. To be and to be called “Order” makes evident our universal and therefore international dimension. This should impel us to join efforts in solidarity in order to ensure the same mission. Here I wish to express my gratitude to the contemplative Sisters. They always offer us examples of generosity and unselfishness.
178. I address a new appeal to the whole Order, especially to the entities that enjoy economic prosperity or abundance of goods, and ask them to contribute – with the joy one feels in giving and sharing – to carry out and support projects which belong to the whole Order and which the General Curia is unable to take upon itself with its own resources.

*Angelicum 1/A and Angelicum Fund*

179. In accordance with what has been suggested by various General Chapters,<sup>130</sup> 80% of the restoration of “*Palazzo Largo Angelicum 1/A*” has been carried out (the work had to be suspended because of lack of funds). This building has been refurbished for the deaneries, some lecture halls and offices for the administration of our Pontifical University of Saint Thomas in Rome.

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<sup>129</sup> Only four entities (Provinces of Spain, Betica and Argentina; the General Vicariate of Taiwan) have offered their contribution to these funds on the occasion of received donations or the sale of property. Other Provinces which have sold some buildings for very significant amounts (with or without the permission or authorization of the General Council and the Holy See when the Law requires it) have not done it.

<sup>130</sup> Cf. ACG 1989 (Oakland) n. 201; ACG 1992 (Mexico) n. 215; ACG 1995 (Caleruega) nn. 162-163.

180. In the Syndic's Office in the Curia there is still a remnant of the *Angelicum Fund* for the Library and for the Convent. Let this be an invitation to all the entities and their benefactors to continue to collaborate so as to replenish this fund with contributions and donations. Thank God in the last year the administration of the *PUST* has given positive results in its balance leaving a small profit in the exercise.

*Santa Sabina – General Curia*

181. In 1986-1987 approximately the works of restoration of the ancient cloister (13<sup>th</sup> century with several reforms) was started. The work was suspended around 1992-1993. Thanks to the generous management by Bro. Francisco Ricci (Legal Representative of the Curia) we were able to obtain some public subsidies which paid 90% of the restoration. The remaining sum was paid by the Curia. Work started in December 2004 was finished in May 2007. At present, with the capital of the Curia, the roofs and several terraces of the convent are being repaired (they have hardly ever had any general repairs since they were inaugurated in 1936).

*International Dominican Foundation (IDF )*

182. Wishing to promote the collection of funds for the projects of the Order, the General Chapter of Providence (2001) approved the setting up of the *International Dominican Foundation – IDF* and hiring of a professional company as adviser in the task of *Fund Raising*.<sup>131</sup> The whole responsibility and the economic cost for making this Foundation possible have been taken on only by the General Curia. During these years it has contributed important sums for the payment of the professional fees to the Counselling Company during the years 2002 – 2004, a contribution of annual subvention for the budget of the administration and other expenses

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<sup>131</sup>. ACG 2001 (Providence) n. 387; ACG 2004 (Krakow) 342-348

since the year 2003 up until the present time. Part of this capital will have to be given back to the office of the Syndic of the Order,<sup>132</sup> but all depends on the result of the donations collected.

*Publications*

183. There are several publications which are published and distributed by the General Curia: *International Dominican Information (IDI)*, *Analecta*, *Dominican History Newsletter*, *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum*, *Dissertationes Historicae*, *Monumenta Ordinis Fratrum Praedicatorum Historica*, and works published by the Leonine Commission. Definitely, all of them are of a very good quality in their content.
184. The office of the Syndic of the Order has updated the Data Base of the different Subscribers for each one of these publications, and a list has been sent to each Province and General Vicariate. Through it we were made aware of the sad reality that our publications are not sufficiently accepted in the Order, and worse still, during the last decade, many subscriptions have been cancelled, ignoring what was ordered by the General Chapters some years ago: that two copies of *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum*<sup>133</sup> and two copies of *Analecta*<sup>134</sup> be sent directly to the respective addresses of the Convents of Students and Novitiates, and that one copy of the same publications be sent to the other formal Convents.
185. These orders are still in force, and so I invite you to obey them. It is important to value and appreciate our publications and also to make them known to other institutions outside the Order.

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<sup>132</sup> ACG 2004 (Krakow) n. 343.

<sup>133</sup> ACG 1962 (Toulouse) n. 236: We order that it be sent directly to the respective addresses of the Convents of Students and Novitiates two copies, and to the other formal Convents, one copy, of the work bearing the title *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum*. Each one of the Convents will pay the cost through the Syndic of the Province to the office of administration of such a work.

<sup>134</sup> ACG 1974 (Madonna dell' Arco) n. 245: We order that the periodical publication entitled *Archivum Ordinis [Fratrum] Praedicatorum* be sent to the Convents. The cost will be paid by each one of the convents through the Syndic of the province. The same thing should be done with *Analecta O.P.* (Cf. ACG 1962 (Toulouse) n. 326). We order the Convents of Students and Novitiates to buy two copies of the publication *Archivum Ordinis [Fratrum] Praedicatorum*.

## VII – UT UNUM SINT

### LIBER CONSTITUTIONUM ET ORDINATIONUM

#### *Saint Dominic and the Legislation of the Order*

186. No writings of Saint Dominic have been preserved; he was an itinerant preacher without any secretaries or disciples to register or record his sermons! In fact, he has not transmitted to us any mystical texts, or homilies; we only have a letter written to the Dominican Monastery of nuns in Madrid (in which he clarifies some suggestions concerning its government). It is true, Saint Dominic did not leave us any writings; he founded the Order and a well-defined form of government.
187. Experts tell us that many things in the text of the Primitive Constitutions were added by Saint Dominic in his own words and handwriting. Humbert of Romans tells us what, in his turn, a friar had told him. This friar affirmed that during the second Chapter of Bologna, he heard Saint Dominic console the fainthearted friars, by telling them that the Rule does not always oblige under sin, but that if they had believed otherwise, he himself would have gone through the cloisters to cancel with his small knife all the Rules.<sup>135</sup> What great liberty has Saint Dominic given us! How important it is to preserve and increase it!
188. When Dominic died, shortly after that General Chapter (on August 6 1221), the Order already had a minimum structure solid enough to unfold its mission in the Church and in the world. As in the case of many of the frescos in the Churches of the Renaissance, it is said that the master arrived and sketched

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<sup>135</sup>. Cf. Humbert de Romans, *Opera de vita regulari*, Ed. Berthier (*Romae* 1888) vol. II, p. 46

the outlines of the work and left his disciples to put in the details. In the same way Saint Dominic worked out the framework for the idea he had of the Order. The disciples of the master – his brothers the “friars” – then had enough space for their own initiative in the details, but the outline had already been traced.

189. Once again the Order is meeting in General Chapter<sup>136</sup> and to this one belongs – among its more important competences – to legislate.<sup>137</sup> It will do it again as in the almost 800 years of history, with fidelity and creativity, liberty and common sense in order to ensure the unity of the Order and its universal mission.
190. As it was done before the General Chapter of Diffinitors in 2004 (Krakow), a small “Technical Commission” was set up to revise some points of the LCO in view of the work of the Chapter of Bogotá.<sup>138</sup> The Commission presented its proposals to the Chapter.<sup>139</sup> A special study on the theme of “assignments” in the LCO<sup>140</sup> has also been prepared for the Chapter.

*After 40 years of the General Chapter of River Forest on the way to the 8th Centenary*

191. God willing, the year 2008 will mark the 40 years since the celebration of the General Chapter of Provincials meeting in River Forest, United States, from August 30, 1968 up to October 24 of the same year. Its most appreciated fruit: the *Liber Constitutionum et Ordinationum*.

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<sup>136</sup>. The Chapter of Bogotá 2007 – if I am not mistaken – is the **287th General Chapter of the Order** (without counting the 18 chapters of the “Obedience of Avignon” and two Chapters which were annulled: 1468 in Rome and 1642 in Cornegliano).

<sup>137</sup>. Above all, it must be kept in mind which Constitutions need to be **approved** (second ballot) and **confirmed** (third ballot) if the Chapter decides to do so. The **Ordinations given in the General Chapter of 1992** (Mexico) have also to be revised, in conformity with LCO 285 §1, and also to be or not inserted definitively in the LCO. Cf. Documents sent to the Capitulars - *Report on the decisions taken in the previous General Chapters (D. 1)*.

<sup>138</sup>. Made up of the following Friars: Philippe Toxé (Province of France), Angelo Urru (Roman Province of St. Catherine), Constanz Adam (Province of Slovakia), Mark De Caluwe (Province of Flanders) Robert Ombres (England – Procurator General) and Christophe Holzer (Southern Germany and Austria – Secretary General).

<sup>139</sup>. Cf. Documentation sent to the Capitulars – *Report on the Technical Commission LCO (D. 2)*.

<sup>140</sup>. This was done by Bro Angelo Urru (Roman Province) Cf. Documentation sent to the Capitulars - *Report on Assignments (D. 9)*

192. The first edition of the *LCO* was promulgated by Bro. Aniceto Fernández on November 1, 1968. The letter of promulgation described with precision the process which from the General Chapter of Diffinitors celebrated in Bogotá beginning on July 14, 1965, culminated in River Forest. This letter expresses in an eloquent way the spirit which animated the Order to carry out the “*accomodata renovatio vitae religiosa*” promoted by Vatican Council II in conformity with the Decree *Perfectae Caritatis*<sup>141</sup> and the 2nd part of the Motu proprio *Ecclesiae Sanctae*<sup>142</sup> which is dedicated to the application of the afore mentioned document. It also describes the three moments which prepared the celebration of the General Chapter of 1968:
- a. The **QUESTIONNAIRE** sent to each religious on November 19, 1966.
  - b. The **EXTRAORDINARY CONGRESS** of Priors Provincial and experts meeting in Rome from September 2 to 28, 1967;
  - c. The work of the **CENTRAL COMMISSION** which met from November 1967 until May 1968.
193. The latest edition of the *Liber Constitutionum et Ordinationum* was promulgated by Bro. Timothy Radcliffe in September 1998. In it the changes incorporated from the General Chapter of Provincials of 1989 (Oakland) up to the General Chapter of Provincials of 1998 (Bologna) were included in the *LCO*.<sup>143</sup>
194. If the General Chapter would judge it opportune a **new official edition of *LCO*** could be published incorporating the changes made by the last three General Chapters.<sup>144</sup> This edition should

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<sup>141</sup> Approved in the Conciliar Session of 28.10.1965.

<sup>142</sup> Promulgated by Paul VI on 6.08.1966.

<sup>143</sup> The **official** editions of *LCO* beginning with the General Chapter of River Forest (1968) are the following: edition promulgated by Bro Aniceto Fernández on November 1, 1968; editions promulgated by Bro Damian Byrne on 1.01.1984 and the 15.11.1986 respectively; finally the edition promulgated by Bro Timothy Radcliffe on 10.09.1998.

<sup>144</sup> The Elective General chapter of 2001 (Providence); the General Chapter of Diffinitors of 2004 (Krakow) and the General Chapter of Provincials 2007 (Bogotá).

contain again the letter already mentioned by Bro. Aniceto Fernández promulgating the first edition of *LCO*.<sup>145</sup>

195. God willing in 2016 we will celebrate 800 years since the **confirmation of the Order** by Honorius III by means of the Bull *Religiosam Vitam* (December 22, 1216). I think that, with this in mind, a process of global revision of the *LCO* could be initiated.<sup>146</sup>
196. Would it not be convenient to begin now a **process of general revision of the LCO**? It is true, circumstances are not the same as those at the time of the Conciliar renewal. I do not think it necessary to change structures or divisions of the *LCO* (Parts, Distinctions, Sections, Chapters, Articles and Numbers). I think that the division between “Constitutions” and “Ordinations” is a wise one. Nevertheless, as 40 years have gone by since the first edition of the *LCO*, beginning with the General Chapter of Diffinitors in 1971 (Tallaght) and with the regular celebration of the next General Chapters (thirteen, including that of 1971 and the one in Bogotá in 2007) many changes have already been incorporated. I think that they should be revised the better to harmonize them.
197. For a global revision of the *LCO*, broad criteria should be identified which will guide this work. I point to some themes which – I believe – should be studied. It belongs to the Chapter of Bogotá – if it so decides – to dedicate time to some of them, for example:
- a. Has the juridical distinction between **Constitution**<sup>147</sup> and **ordination**<sup>148</sup>, consecrated in River Forest, been preserved or respected after the numerous changes incorporated in the *LCO* in the past 40 years?
  - b. Is it necessary to simplify **the system of the assignments** (to

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<sup>145</sup>. This letter was published in the editions of 1969, 1984 and 1986 (not in the edition of 1998).

<sup>146</sup>. A similar task was carried out in the General Chapter of Diffinitors in 1965, thirty three years after the promulgation of the Constitutions promulgated in the General Chapter of Le Saulchoir in 1932. Nevertheless, at the end of Vatican Council II, it was preferred to begin a deeper and integral task which was concluded in 1968 with the *LCO*.

<sup>147</sup>. Cf. *LCO* nn. 1 § IX; 275 § I,277; cf. ACG 1968 (River Forest) n. 85 – *LCO Appendix* n. 1

<sup>148</sup>. Cf. *LCO* nn. 1 § IX; 275 § I 2; ACG 1968 (River Forest) n. 85 – *LCO Appendix* n. 1 and n. 2

- the local community, the Province, etc.) in view of a greater and more fruitful collaboration?
- c. Does the juridical organization of the **Provincial and Regional Vicariates** need to be revised?
  - d. What is the meaning, aim and organization of **filial houses**?
  - e. Does the **Provincial Council foreseen in the LCO n. 375** (called “**intermediate**” or “**enlarged**” Council, etc.) fulfil its mission?
  - f. What juridical weight can be given to the **regional organizations of the Order**?
198. During the process of preparation for General Chapters, some Provinces have presented certain doubts concerning two concrete themes: a. The delegates of the friars assigned to the houses which are under the immediate jurisdiction of the Master of the Order<sup>149</sup> b. The representation of the Regional and Provincial Vicariates.<sup>150</sup>

## CONCLUSION

### *Why do we meet again in a General Chapter?*

199. Each period of the history of the Order has expressed, in its own way, the desire to be faithful in creativity and creative in fidelity. In the 14th century – especially with Saint Catherine – there was an intuition for the need of a “**reform**”. From the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the time of the revolutions and forced exclaustrations arrived, promoted by civil authorities; the key word for a new beginning was “**restoration**”. In the 20th century even before the Vatican Council II (and with greater intensity during and after it)

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<sup>149</sup>. Cf. LCO nn. 407, 8; 408, 6; 409, 6; and 409-ter.

<sup>150</sup>. Cf. LCO nn. 407, 7; 408, 5; 409, 5 and 409-bis.

there was a great impulse for the “**renovation**” of the Church and of religious life. Changes were sought from many points of view. In the 21st century, at the beginning of the third millennium there are new challenges. Nowadays some theologians speak of the need for the “**re-foundation**” of religious life. Not everybody accepts this expression. Anyhow, the words we quoted, in their own and unrepeatable contexts manifest, in one way or another, the desire to be creative “faithful to the first love” (cf. Rev. 2, 4).

200. For a Constitution to be valid it must be proposed – **incohated** - by a General Chapter, **approved** by the next Chapter and **confirmed** by a third consecutive Chapter. That Constitution will only be applicable, in principle, after this confirmation.<sup>151</sup>
201. Agreement should be reached on the text which has been proposed: the smallest change, *ampliando vel minuendo verba legis*, makes the previous approvals expire and somehow obliges us to begin the procedure again. In the same way, no *Constitutio* can be revoked, no interpretation can acquire constitutional weight without the formal agreement of three consecutive Chapters.
202. Three different chapters, three assemblies of different composition, at different moments in time but having the same rights take upon themselves legislative powers.
203. Humbert of Romans, fifth Master of the Order (1254 –1263), explains to us this original system: “*It frequently happens – he writes – that one thing seems useful at a first moment and, after a certain time, after a more mature examination, its aspect changes. Besides, there is more security in the opinion of various persons. What is examined repeatedly is better discussed; there is more time to reflect; new Diffinitors can bring in new knowledge and, in this way, the law is more serious*”.<sup>152</sup> Quoting this text Léo Moulin concludes: “*It is the principle itself of the democracy of two chambers*”.<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>151</sup>. Cf. LCO 276 § 1

204. From the 15th to the 23rd of July 1965 the General Chapter of Diffinitors met in Santa Fe de Bogota. It was the first time that a Chapter was celebrated in South America. Faithful to the conciliar spirit, their work centred mainly on the text of the Constitutions promulgated in the General Chapter of Le Saulchoir (1932).<sup>154</sup>
205. The Order is meeting again in Chapter for a second time in South America, in Bogotá, in the same convent, 42 years later. What does this mean for us?
206. During all these years many Constitutions and ordinations have been changed in the rhythmic celebration of General Chapters.<sup>155</sup> From the General Chapter of 1965 up to the Chapter of River Forest, the legislation of the Order was totally revised. Little by little the Chapters offered their reflections and indications in their effort to respond to the challenges the world and the Church presented to our life and mission in each period of time. Priorities have been indicated (1977) and frontiers (1986); to favour the mission of the Order General, Regional and Provincial Vicariates were organized (1980); the Dominican Family was promoted; the processes of collaboration were encouraged (1995), etc.
207. Three Chapters are needed to change a Constitution; to incorporate Chapter ordinations definitively into the LCO six Chapters are necessary.<sup>156</sup> Similarly, there are themes which have been incorporated definitively into our life and mission thanks to the freedom Saint Dominic and his first Friars bequeathed to us. **Juridical liberty**, expressed in the law of

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<sup>152</sup>. Humberti de Romanis, *Opera de vita regulari*, Ed. Berthier (*Romae* 1888) vol. II p. 62.

<sup>153</sup>. Lép Moulin, *Le monde vivant des religieux* (Paris 1964). The phrase was taken from the Spanish edition: *El mundo viviente de los religiosos* (Madrid 1966) 101.

<sup>154</sup>. 143 Constitutions were reduced to Ordinations; 27 Constitutions were reduced to Declarations; 67 Constitutions were completely abolished and many others were incorporated in an appendix. Besides, the Chapter asked the Master of the Order to name five permanent commissions. The path to the General Chapter of 1968 had started.

<sup>155</sup>. Since the General Chapter of 1965 to that of 2007 – both of them included – the Order has celebrated 15 **General Chapters** (6 of Diffinitors; 5 of Provincials and 4 Elective).

<sup>156</sup>. LCO 285 § I

the dispensation, was introduced in the beginning as a constitutional element; **moral liberty**, for the Order wants that its laws do not bind under pain of sin so that the brothers may accept them with mature understanding, not as slaves under the law but rather as men living in freedom under grace; **liberty of initiative** is expressed in the *ius petendi et proponendi*; **historical liberty** is expressed in the legislative or dynamic mobility itself of historical adaptation.

208. Ideally we begin a novena of years that will lead us to celebrate in 2016 the 800 years since the confirmation of the Order. The General Chapter could discuss and define, inspire and encourage us to **reform** what needs to be reformed, **restore** what has to be restored, **renew** what demands renewal, and **re-found** what needs to be re-founded in order to confirm ourselves in our life and mission as Friars Preachers.
209. In his account **Matthew** presents the **mission of the Twelve** and points out a particular piece of information: “he gave them authority over unclean spirits with power to drive them out and to cure every disease and every illness.” (Matthew 10, 1). After choosing them, He gave them instructions, among which “Do not go into pagan territory or enter a Samaritan town. Go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel...” (10, 5-6). Nevertheless, at the end of the Gospel, after his death and Resurrection, the horizon of Christ’s call was extended, without any limit at all: “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you... And I am with you always, until the end of the age” (Matthew 28, 19-20).
210. Because of this we meet again in General Chapter, faithful to the first love.

Rome, June 24, 2007

Birth of Saint John the Baptist

Bro. Carlos A. Azpiroz Costa, OP

Master of the Order

*Prot. 50/07/731 Bogota 2007 – Relatio M.O.*

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