



JUBILEE 800 1216–2016

ORDER OF PREACHERS

Sent to preach the gospel



Jubilee 800 | 7 November 2015 to 21 January 2017 | Dominican Family Update 6 | November 2016

Exploring the pillars of Dominican Life at the National Gathering in November

Prayer | Community | Study | Mission

On the weekend of 18-20 November 2016 over 70 members of the Aotearoa New Zealand Family gathered in Auckland to celebrate #Jubilee800. The gathering opened with liturgy followed by a time of sharing three words that speak of living the Dominican Charism in our world today. These words were captured on ribbon and woven together into a tapestry to represent our Dominican community gathered from around our beautiful country. We remembered those who weren't able to be with us this weekend. In this Update we share a brief summary of the opening and closing addresses and two of the pillars explored: prayer and mission. Watch for our December Update where we will share about community, study and our thoughts for the future of the Dominican Family in Aotearoa New Zealand. In the meantime know that we have loaded photos and notes from some of the sessions on our website (<https://www.dominicans.org.nz/>) and Facebook page (www.facebook.com/groups/dominicansaotearoa/).

OPENING ADDRESS - MARGARET BUTLER OP

In her opening address Margaret Butler OP put the questions: *How might communication connect with our charism? How might communication guide us as a key word in our ministry?*

Margaret took us on a journey exploring just what communication means to us as Dominicans in the messiness of life. Do we see communication as a two-way process or do we attempt to communicate on our own, forgetting about the other? Is our preferred communication style in a larger group or a small group where we share our ordinariness and get to know a few at a much deeper level? Do we stand up for our own community in the way that Antonio de Montesino stood up for his community?

We reflected on how communication calls for listening as well as speaking. It involves all our senses – seeing, feeling, touching, hearing, intuition, a sixth sense ... the list goes on. How is Mother Earth calling us to communicate? We are challenged to listen carefully to the world around us. To listen with our eyes. We need to have the passion of Montesino to identify what we are passionate about and what we are called to challenge. We need to use all our



senses to communicate with earth. We care for earth not just for humans but for the whole planet. We need to listen to what earth has for us.

Many of our insights and interpretations come from our culture. Our challenge is communication with people of other cultures and to the first people of this land. We must commit to communication at an international level and an inter-generational level. We need to communicate locally. Do we communicate with the real people who make up our local community?

Succession is one of our big challenges – this raises the inter-generational connection. Schools have celebrated Jubilee 800 exceptionally well. How are we as the Dominican Family going to keep in touch with this generation? Are we ready to be transformed by the younger people? How do we listen neutrally?

We don't have a common ministry. Our strength as Dominicans is the variety of ministries that we have – the ways that we have of spreading the truth and regathering in unity. Find your area and follow it with passion. We are challenged to help one another to see how our activities are part of mission. Communicate carefully, creatively and with great trust. Dominic preached where-ever whenever – in the Inn, in the convent, on the road. There are many ways to preach. One of the exciting challenges for us is to explore and recognise the many ways of preaching that are right in front of us ... Catholic Women's League, writing books, inter-faith dialogue, National Council of Women, treaty work, poetry, art or working with young people.

God is mission and the mission has a church. The mission has the Dominicans. We are there to serve the mission. If the mission has the Dominicans then the Dominicans need to keep returning to their roots. We can learn from Dominic.

On Saturday we explored the four pillars: prayer, community, study and mission. In this Update we share about prayer and mission. In our December update we will share about community and study.



PRAYER | LED BY OTAGO/SOUTHLAND

The first presentation of the day came from the South. Their pillar was prayer. The group began by escorting in their prayer symbol: an albatross made by Sharon Mitchell. Not only is the albatross symbol of our 'southern lands', it is also a symbol of prayer – 'with its long enduring flight, the lightness with which it rides the air, and its faithful return home.'

The second part of the presentation concerned the slow recitation of 15 words which were a distillation of work done in the group on the foundations of Dominican Spirituality. We listened in silence.

Finally, the group used the *Nine Ways of Prayer of St Dominic*. We are told that Dominic gave his days to people and his nights to prayer. The early brethren eavesdropped on his night prayer. What they observed has come down to us as the 'Nine ways of prayer.' The group shared their response to these nine ways and what they might mean today. Each way was given a new and modern name, and while two readers read out this new name and a short modern reinterpretation of each way, one of the group mimed that "way". The third way, the way of discipline and repentance, caught the attention of many in the group for its sensitive reinterpretation of the physical discipline. Another 'way', the seventh, entitled 'Prayer – like an arrow – opening to receive' was also welcomed.



At the end, we were invited to meditate in silence for ten minutes. The soft notes of a bell that called us back from our meditating were a fitting way to end this moving presentation. An energetic interchange between the responders and the group then took place.

MISSION | LED BY AUCKLAND AND NORTHLAND

The Auckland Dominican Family group was the last group to present. Their pillar was MISSION. In a creative presentation nine people lined up to present us randomly selected saints. In the first round, there were nine saints ranging from 13th century Dominic's mother, Jane of Aza and Dominic himself to the 19th century St Francis Coll. It was amazing how in ONE MINUTE so much clear and interesting information could be imparted, containing an incredible range of ideas. We recall: the depth of prayer life of so many: St Catherine of Siena, Rose of Lima and the Rhineland mystics, the energy and stamina which they all portrayed. This mission had such a variety of faces: from Antonio de Montesinos and his prophetic homily in Santo Domingo in 1511 - to Francis Coll's one-man parish preachings in Spain, when religious houses were closed by government; from the Peruvian man of compassion, Martin de Porres, healer and father to the poor, to great medieval scientists, St Albert the Great and one of his disciples, Theodoric of Freiburg.



Then our attention was turned fully to carefully chosen modern favourites:

Sr Maria Hanna of Iraq and her courageous leadership against amazing odds; Sr Barbara Reid's telling of women's stories that go with her biblical scholarship and the editing of a feminist critique of the bible in 50 volumes; Fr Chris McVey and Sr Margaret Mayce, both of whom incredibly present to the problems of our day, the one in Pakistan and the other at the United Nations in New York ; the intrepid Mother Gabrielle Gill, foundress of the Dominican sisters of New Zealand and Western Australia; and two other NZ educators of note, Sr Marie Therese Smith and Sr Mary di Pazzi. Finally, the pair: Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, who died at 24 after a full life of looking after the young and the poor; and our brother, Fr Louis-Joseph Lebre, an innovative sociologist who became the ghost writer of Paul VI's 1967 encyclical letter, *Populorum Progressio*. This twenty minute presentation was rounded off with a rousing rendition of Cecily's hymn praising God in Antonio de Montesinos and all our saints. In response, there was a cri-de-coeur for more married saints, especially married couples who entered fully into their married life.

Regional Photos: South Island | Lower North Island | Auckland and Northland



CLOSING ADDRESS - MARGARET BUTLER OP

In her closing address Margaret Butler reminded us of some of the enduring symbols that we will take away from the Gathering:

- The weaving
- The Albatross flying in, in the early hours of our gathering
- The nine ways of prayer – how still and how quiet it was.
- From time to time Pope Francis talking about the mess and chaos of doing life
- Community and our gift to have wandering preachers sharing the good news and living poverty.
- The C Words: communication, community, connection, compassion, contemplation, communion
- In discussion we have been struck by Susan’s positive protest... Writing letters “I like that”
- The idea and the reality that all of us have different gifts and ministries.
- Our charism is to preach the good news. It is not to save the world.
- The anxiety about are we going to be our self has gone – it has been involved.
- Becoming aware that people here are working with and for young people. Hearing direct from a young person yesterday.
- The international connections and the buddy system.
- Margaret challenged us to look at the ways we communicate ... to pass on what we heard this weekend..

Margaret concluded by inviting us to join the Snowball Waltz:



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THE SNOWBALL WALTZ

(In a snowball waltz one couple begins the dance. After a few bars they separate and join with a new partner. This process continues until everyone is dancing.)

God is mission,
Breathing in, breathing out,
Calling in and sending out.

God is three,
Lover, beloved and love.
Sometimes I see Trinity as a dance,
Two dancing together
And the Spirit who is the dance.

From my youth
Comes a memory -
The Snowball Waltz.
Two begin the dance,
Grow in relationship,
Respond to the dance,
Move out,
Each to invite another into the dance.

The music and the dance continue,
Relationships grow,
The dance forms and is formed.
Again there is a sending out, calling in.
The dance grows, community forms.
Again and again the call,
The formation, the mission,
The return, the formation, the mission.

God breathes in call,
Breathes out mission.

The snowball waltz reminds me
Of call and mission,
Spreading the love of God
Who is lover, beloved and love.
Calling in and sending out,
Breathing in and breathing out,

God who is mission.

Margaret Butler OP 2012

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