



JUBILEE 800 1216–2016

ORDER OF PREACHERS

Sent to preach the gospel

Jubilee 800 | 7 November 2015 to 21 January 2017 | Dominican Family Update 7 | December 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. In this Update we share a brief summary of two of the pillars explored: community and study. We also share some of our thoughts for the future of the Dominican Family in Aotearoa New Zealand and news of a Closing Liturgy for #Jubilee800.

COMMUNITY | LED BY CHRISTCHURCH

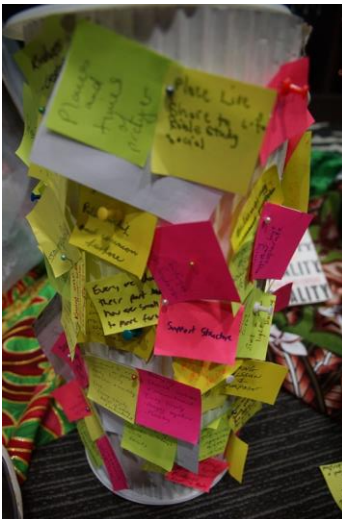
Three slides were presented with a question and discussion at the end of each one. This gave members of the Dominican Family a really good opportunity for discussion. We invite you to take time again to reflect on these questions...

1st A definition of community from the dictionary. **Question:** "What do you understand by Community?"

2nd an Extract from "Preaching with Fire" by the Dominican Sisters of Peace pointing out that St Dominic broke with tradition and his followers were itinerant in the ministry, but needed a place to return to for mutual support and encouragement. So, in a sense, community had a different meaning for Dominicans from the beginning. Dominicans carried *community* with them in

their hearts regardless of where they laid their heads. **Question:** "What does community mean to you as a member of the Dominican Family in Aotearoa New Zealand?"

3rd An Extract from Timothy Radcliffe OP says, *To be alive is to embark on the adventure which leads us to the Kingdom*. We need communities that will sustain us on the way. **Question:** "What would be your hope for community that sustains us as individuals and as Dominican Family in Aotearoa New Zealand in the future?"



Study – the pursuit of Truth in all its forms - is the Dominican tool which helps us to respond to life. Mary engaged in media analysis on the issue of *Child Poverty in Aotearoa*. She searched thoroughly for the TRUTH underlying this particular issue. She asked, *How does it happen? Who is responsible? What is the role of government policy and practice? Where do individual and societal responsibility lie?* We learned that it is very difficult to find TRUTH in official places. This situation challenges us as Dominicans to look behind, below and beyond what we see and hear in the media.

Maureen asked the questions, *“How do we know the mind of Christ? What is a Gospel response?”* She shared inspiring stories of ordinary people around the country who day after day respond generously to the issue of *Child Poverty* in a variety of ways. Maureen challenged us to ‘listen attentively’ – with the newspaper in one hand and the Gospel in the other.

Finally, Roxane explained that while the four pillars are equal and inter-dependent, STUDY is foundational in Dominican life. Study influences our contemplation – it stokes the fire of the Spirit within us. Communal study stimulates thoughtful conversation and deep sharing - thus influencing community. Study helps us to see people, issues and events from a variety of perspectives; it impels us to be aware of injustices. Study enables us to live with open eyes and ears, hearts and minds and to recognize God in all peoples and all things. This is WHY Dominicans study.

A second group looked at WHAT we study through a visual presentation depicting the “signs of our time” in Aotearoa New Zealand and the world today. Evocative background music *“Remember Me”* enhanced the presentation. Angela concluded this part by reading her poem STUDY. (This beautiful audio visual presentation and Angela’s poem are available on the website www.dominicans.org.nz).

We then looked at what we do with the fruits of our study:

We believe that for our study to be meaningful, there needs to be a sharing of the fruit of our



study. By sharing particularly useful or striking insights gained during our studies we are compelled to act.

Before we looked at how we might share the fruit of our study, we took a few moments to think about how we get to the point of being ready/ able to share from our study. The road is not always easy or smooth. We may well encounter barriers during our study. We may ask ourselves in the process of studying:

- So, what? What does this idea mean? Why does it matter? Why should I care? Or perhaps we think, this is so overwhelming I must set this aside for a while.
- What are the possibilities that emerge from the study?
 - Find/ Be with like-minded people; Join an already existing group, if possible
 - Prayer groups can also be catalysts (draw courage from one another)
- Testing the fruits of study –
 - evidence -> validation -> only then am I ready to communicate beyond our group

How do we share the fruits of our study?

- Discernment of the signs of our times – what next?
- Action outlets:
 - Writing letters
 - Publishing – use of the dominicans.org.nz website
 - Issuing collective/ corporate statements
 - Deciding what to focus on and keeping it simple -> action

HOW DO WE ACT? What are we going to do once we have done our study?

SOME OF OUR THOUGHTS FOR THE FUTURE...

As scribe for the final working session of our National Gathering I recorded nearly 2500 words over six pages. On this page, we share the words that Norman began that session with (in the box to the right) and some of our key thoughts. Tidying up what was recorded that day is on the "to do" list for after the holidays!

We wove the tapestry of participation, relationship, community, connection and communication. We reconnected and established new relationships. We took this opportunity to listen really well.

We were inspired to go out into our world, creating opportunities to preach. We are committed to be stewards of the earth and all that flows from it. We liked the idea of pilgrimage and we DREAMED big... wanting to find better ways to be inclusive of all and encourage others to share their gifts. We heard how technology offers useful communication tools for our deaf and youth communities. We acknowledged that we need to find new ways to inspire the faith of young people.

We acknowledged the very real value of gathering together as one large group and as smaller regional or local groups. At the same time we understand that it is not always easy or possible to gather with others. We recognised that people are craving and looking to express spirituality. We seek to find new ways to share. Ideas included:

- individuals and small groups committing to pray in their own place at a significant time; and
- using technology to share via skype, online forums and webinars.

We went home with new ideas on how to stay connected.

We gave thanks for all that is already happening around Aotearoa New Zealand. We gave thanks for all those people from around the country who had prepared and led the programme over the weekend. We were thankful for their gifts and talents in breaking open the four pillars: Prayer | Community | Study | Mission.

CLOSE OF #JUBILEE800 ON 21 JANUARY...

Please go to our website to find a short liturgy for the close of the Jubilee as part of the commitment we made to those who attended the National Gathering. You may choose to use this for a small group gathering, for individual prayer or you may wish to recognise the close of #Jubilee800 in another way. For those who choose to gather please do share photos and news of your gathering with us. Our final Jubilee800 newsletter will be published mid to late January. We take this opportunity to wish everyone a very happy and blessed Christmas and New Year.

Please direct any questions to a member of the Dominican Family Mission and Justice Group:

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How does Dominic speak to me today?

Hospitality
Faith
Creativity
Tolerant
Seeking
Proclaiming the Word
Prayer
Outspoken
Family
Listening
Courage
Truth
Hope
Respond
Journey
Live Gospel values
Reactive
Fun
Mercy
Prayerful
Pilgrim
Joy
Living the Word
Peace
Doing Stuff
Love

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