

## Part Two

### General Declarations of the Master of the Order and General Chapters

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## General Chapter of Tallaght

1971

#173. [Exhortation]: The General Promoter of the Laity of Saint Dominic, either personally or through the national and regional promoters, should urgently promote lay membership in the Order for the following reasons:

( 1 ) The doctrinal mission of the Order of Preachers can no longer be adequately achieved without the participation and active assistance of lay people, a laity who are concerned with present-day problems, questions of science; united in the spirit of the Order;

( 2 ) To foster a more intimate connection with the Order, these lay people should testify with their lives what they propose by word. To help them more fully to fulfill this task, their participation in the spiritual life of the Order should be promoted; they should be led to a more profound commitment. With their cooperation we can expect a more effective promotion of the Order and of vocations.

#174. [Ordination]: The newly proposed Rule for the Priests' Fraternities of Saint Dominic is adopted ad experimentum until the next General Chapter. Therefore, before the next General Chapter, the General Promoter of the Dominican Laity, with the promoters, directors and selected members of these fraternities [i.e., Priests' Fraternities and Dominican Laity] from all the Provinces of the Order shall prepare a new revision of both Rules taking into account current needs.

General Declarations Page 4

# Elective General Chapter of Madonna Dell 'Arco

1974

#224. *[Preface]:* The name *Dominican Family* was introduced into recent documents of the Order since it is used in both the Constitutions and in the Acts of General Chapters. This name truly expresses something that has happily in recent times been alive and experienced: the fraternal communion among the diverse groups that bear the name Dominican. They all share a common vocation, and each has a place in the mission of the Order.

Fraternal cooperation among the entities of our family is very much to be desired and strongly encouraged, so that the riches of the Dominican charism can be directed to the good of the whole Order and our apostolate becomes even more effective in the contemporary world. To attain this end, dialogue among the various branches of the Order will greatly contribute to achieving a sense of mutual responsibility, especially in newly planned apostolates and in particular those which seek to reach out to young people.

In this way the Order will show itself to be faithful to past traditions, strong in the present, and filled with hope for the future--prepared to respond to the world and the needs of the Church.

Communion in the spirit and intention of the founder was, and remains, the determining characteristic for the organization of the Order. So each branch, following its own end, participates in the life of the Order in a way which is proper to it. Let these branches connected the Order, or which in the future will be lawfully connected to it, preserve according to their own juridical status an institutional autonomy.

The Master of the Order and the General Chapter are to be considered the principle and sign of unity of the Dominican Family and the interpreter of our spirit and our mission. The presence of nuns, of sisters and of lay collaborators in the works of the Chapter offers precious testimony of the unity of the Dominican Family. In this Chapter, for the first time, such collaboration occurred and we hope it will bear much fruit in the future.

#225. *[Declaration]:* Where it says: *The name of the whole Order of Preachers is the same as Dominican Family'* the name *Order* is taken not in the strictly juridical sense as a religious institute of solemn vows, but in the broad moral and spiritual sense as an organized way of living. The different entities, joined by a spiritual bond, each according to its mission, are part of the Order and exists in a state of autonomy. They do not have any other juridical relationship toward the Order or towards each other except insofar as recognized by they themselves and their approved statutes.

#226. [Declaration]: Section IX of the Fundamental Constitutions includes both our cloistered sisters and affiliates of the Pious Unions of the Order.

#229. [Announcement ]: In spite of the fact that notification was made in a timely manner by the Promoter General, no petitions were submitted for the revising of the Rules of the Priestly Fraternities and the Dominican Laity. Indeed, many expressions of praise and approval were offered for the present text of both Rules. Hence, the present texts of both Rules, approved by the General Chapters of River Forest and Tallaght,<sup>2</sup> and by the Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes on January 4, 1972 for three years ad experimentum, remains in force until January 5, 1975.

#232. [Exhortation]: Mindful of the words of Vatican Council II: *The Church is not truly established nor is it a perfect sign of Christ unless there is a genuine laity existing and working alongside the hierarchy*<sup>3</sup> and also what is stated in LCO #150, we exhort the brethren to work hard to set up in all our communities a well established lay apostolate which will foster and promote lay Dominican vocations.

*We exhort the brethren to ... foster and promote lay Dominican vocations*

#232.

To achieve this, the traditional forms of lay involvement in the order should be carefully examined so that they might respond to the needs of the local Church and, in conjunction with the appropriate pastoral activities become better suited to meeting the needs of people today.

And especially so that the young people whom we serve be attracted to the Order, attempts should be made to find new ways of organizing lay Dominican chapters which, while innovative, will remain faithful to, the spirit of Saint Dominic and Saint Catherine.

Communication between the various chapters should be actively encouraged so that through mutual knowledge of each other's apostolates they might better help one another and thus more efficiently fulfill the lay activity of the Order in today's world.

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2 Acts of the General Chapter of Tallaght #175.

3 Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity (Ad Gentes). Second Vatican Council, December 7, 1965, #21.

4 *The brethren should take great care to encourage these lay fraternities and to collaborate with them, so that the ministry of the Order may be more fully carried out in different fields both in the Church and in the world.*

And so, the brethren should take very special care of the spiritual and apostolic formation of the laity. *They should recognize and promote the dignity and responsibility of the laity in the Church and in the Order, they should willingly use their prudent advice and confidently assign duties to them .... Leaving them freedom and scope for acting, indeed they should give them the courage to undertake works on their own initiative and they must recognize and respect the liberty which belongs to all in the terrestrial city.*<sup>5</sup>

Moreover, we encourage our cooperator brothers and the sisters to willingly offer their services in promoting the life of the Dominican laity, and, if called upon, to undertake the office of religious assistant to the chapter.

#233. *[Exhortation]*: The editorial staff of the I.D.I. (International Dominican Information) is to make this an even more useful publication for the Order through the best possible selection of important news and information. We ask the brothers and sisters to subscribe annually to the I.D.I. and to regularly send newsworthy items to it. The principle non-legislative documents of this - Chapter should be printed in I.D.I. Also, the Master of the Order should frequently use I.D.I. to speak to the Order and to the fiars.

#234. *[Recommendation]*: To assert better the unity of the Dominican Family, in the future, wherever possible, the terms *first, second* and *third Order* should be omitted, since they lack any historical and traditional foundation and since they now convey unwanted negative connotations.

*In the future . . . the terms first, second and third Order should be omitted.*

#234.

#238. *[Commission]*: The Promoters General of the various groups, in consultation with the Master of the Order and among themselves, should establish a General Secretariat for the Dominican Family. They should provide for the establishment of national and regional secretariats in provinces where they do not yet exist as soon as possible.

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<sup>5</sup> Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Lumen Gentium) Second Vatican Council, November 21, 1964, #37.

## General Chapter of Quezon City

1977

#15. [ ]: Paragraph #5. Considering the actual conditions of the contemporary world we intend, by means of careful consideration, to renew the preaching and life of the Order so that *updated preaching* becomes the law of all evangelization, and the whole Gospel <sup>7</sup> is reaffirmed in all its vigor. And so we propose for the apostolic work of the Order the following priorities:

- a. Catechesis in a dechristianized culture and milieu;
- b. The cultural policy of the Order. the philosophical and theological study of cultures, intellectual systems, social movements, and religious traditions existing outside of historical Christianity;
- c. Justice in the world: a critical analysis of the origins, forms and structures of injustice in contemporary society; evangelical practice (praxis) for the liberation and promotion of the whole human person;
- d. Use of the mass media in the preaching of the Word of God. Mass media has revealed as perfectly obvious the *drama* of our time: the disjunction between human culture and the gospel message, between human words and the word of faith. The mass media is, today more than ever, the privileged instrument for communicating words and ideas and can contribute to effectively proclaiming the Gospel in its entirety.

#64 [Introduction on the *Dominican Family*]: ... At this time, the Order is confronted with two great movements in the Church and in the world-the emergence of the laity as an indispensable element in the establishing of the Kingdom of God, and the more recent and constantly growing movement towards the liberation of women and the recognition of their equality with men....

.... Both the Basic Constitution of the Order and the general legislation of the brethren call attention to this idea of the Dominican Family which ... finds its most explicit expression in the legislation of Madonna dell 'Arco.

The Master of the Order in his report to the Chapter states that the idea of the Dominican Family is one that has given rise to great hopes within the Order and is expected to be a source of inspiration and creative development for the future....

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6 LCO #99, II.

7 LCO #99, I.

Saint Dominic created his Family, not for itself, but to be at the service of the Church and its mission to the world. In terms of human potential there are vast resources within the Family. We must admit that this tremendous potential is not fully realized due to a lack of cooperation. The development of an authentic Dominican spirit and of Dominican formation have suffered because of the lack of closer bonds within the Dominican Family. The mutual development of vocations which could have taken place has also suffered. Most seriously there has been a diminished effectiveness of each branch of the Family due to a lack of mutual enrichment between them, leading to one-dimensional viewpoints. It is the genius of the Order that there is in principle a wonderful balance whereby each of the branches of the Family reinforces and supplements the others. But unless this delicate balance is maintained, the total apostolate of the Order suffers....

... We might ask ourselves why we find it so difficult to implement and give expression to the communitarian nature of our vocation. Is it because of an exaggerated and distorted notion of individualism? But surely it is a sign of maturity when an individual can enter the social life of a group without fear of losing his or her freedom or identity. Communion and collaboration are the test and proof of a healthy individualism.

... Now is the acceptable time for the Dominican Family to achieve true equality and complementarity among its different branches. If we believe that the Holy Spirit truly speaks to us in and through the signs of the times, we cannot ignore this call to develop among all the branches of the Order a greater collaboration in all our ministries, and we cannot neglect to undertake efforts to study and promote a greater organic unity between these branches. What lies before us at this time is a challenge to become what Saint Dominic had begun: a Family joined in unity of life and complementarity of service to the Church and the World.

*What lies before us ... is a challenge to become. . . a Family joined in unity of life and... service.*

#64.

#65. [Declaration): The reality that our Order is a clerical one,<sup>8</sup> is to be understood in this sense: all members of the Dominican family each in accord with his or her own proper way of life, participate in the apostolate of Saint Dominic. The nonclerical members of the Dominican family are no less Dominican, nor do they have a defective participation in the Dominican vocation.

All the groups comprising the *Dominican* Family share its *common* vocation and each *in its own* special way serves the one mission of the Order. Participation in this common vocation brings with it the unity of all. The service of the mission of the Order ties all to each other by necessity. Differences therefore are not founded in any inequality among the members of the diverse groups of the family, but rather in the mission of the Order that is accomplished in different and complementary ministries and brought to perfection in mutual and complementary collaboration.

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8... even when said explicitly, as in LCO # 1, VI, concerning the friars ...

<sup>9</sup> LCO #1. VI



#68. [Exhortation]: It is very important that each branch of the Dominican family have some kind of regional congress or meeting to discuss their own issues so that all the branches may later hold a general assembly to discuss questions which effect the whole Dominica Family in fulfilling its common vocation and in carrying out its own proper work.

#69. [Exhortation]: As much as possible the Promoters General of the different branches of the Dominican Family should not take on other jobs which would impede the exercise of their duties.

#70. [Exhortation ]: In order to foster the unity of the Dominican Family, we strenuously exhort that, in the means of cooperation of every branch of the Dominican Family, reference be made to the Master of the Order inasmuch as he is Saint Dominic's successor and the foundation and sign *of unity of the Family.*<sup>10</sup>

#71. [Exhortation ]: To foster a common spirit and understanding of the Dominican vocation and mission" among candidates and associates of the same region, whether friars or sisters, a common course of fundamental formation should be instituted when possible.

#72. [Exhortation ]: It is desirable that the title Order of Preachers by used explicitly in the books of Constitutions of the various branches of the Dominican Family where it does not yet exist.

#73. [Exhortation ]: Recognizing the collaboration which has already been brought about or is actually underway among the various members of the branches of the Dominican Family, and desiring even greater cooperation of the members of our family, especially of those in the same region, we recommend to the friars, nuns, sisters and laity who work in carrying out a common collaboration in the apostolate of the Order, that they show themselves faithful in this project. We exhort all the members of the Order to promote new collaborations following this example.

#75. [Recommendation ]: The Dominican Laity, in accord with the General Instruction on the Liturgy of the Hours,<sup>11</sup> are to pray the Office of the Church, especially Morning and Evening Prayer, according to their Rule<sup>12</sup>. The friars and the sisters should invite the laity to a common recitation of the Liturgy of the Hours so that in coming together as one, the unity of the Dominican Family is fostered.

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10 Acts of the General Chapter of Madonna dell'Arco #223 and LCO #1, VI.

11 LCO #141. 12

12 General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours, #27.

13 The Rule. #6c.

#76. *[Recommendation j]*: We especially ask the friars, the nuns and the sisters to give help to the Laity in the exercise of their own apostolate.<sup>14</sup>

#79. *[Commission ]*: For better fostering the unity of the Order and for greater efficacy in the apostolic work of the Order, the Master of the Order should form a commission from members of the various branches of the Dominican Family whose principle purpose will be:

- a. to complete a study of the fundamental elements of the Order so that a single text may be drawn up which expresses the charism and purpose of the Order for all the members of each branch of the Family;
- b. to undertake a study of the possibility of drawing up a common program of initial formation, where along with the fundamental elements of religious life and the humanities, there also will be the principle elements of the history of the Order and of its traditions in the service of the Church;
- c. to promote an investigation of future collaboration in a common apostolate among the various branches of our Family in accord with the needs of our time;
- d. to make accessible the results of these studies along with the principal documents of , the life and spirituality of the Order so that the Dominican Family might be nourished in its authentic tradition.

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<sup>14</sup> Cf. The Rule, #7.

## General Chapter of Walberberg 1980

#92. (Preface):

1. In recent General Chapters the reality of the Dominican family has been more and more confirmed. Although the name is recent, the origins of the Order demonstrate what this word signifies and expresses. The present General Chapter wishes to join with what has been asserted by previous General Chapters and enunciated in the Constitutions of the friars.

In the hope of offering new hope to each branch of the Dominican Family, let there be a new impulse and assistance, so that attention is given to bettering the life of each branch and joining us to each other in a closer bond. In this way the riches of the whole Dominican Family can be increased by the progress of each.<sup>15</sup>

2. The General Chapter celebrated at Quezon City<sup>16</sup> pointed out the reality of our Order and its constant concern for resolving modern problems in the Church and in the world. It describes two events that occur frequently in our day: namely, the emergence of the laity in their own proper role in building up the Reign of God, and the progress of women in the understanding of their equal dignity with men. Our Family plays its own part in resolving these issues, especially through the continued increase of relationships and cooperation between the branches, in which everyone, whether male or female, according to their particular ministry, participates in and develops the mission of the Order.

3. Saint Dominic recognized the need to associate others with himself in the preaching of the faith, particularly contemplative women whom he wished to join to the apostolate of the friars by their prayer and sacrifice. In this way the ministry *of* the word would not be neglected. For they announced the Word by hearing it, celebrating it and keeping (Luke 11:18), the Gospel *of* God through the example *of* their lives."

The nuns were included in Saint Dominic's Family, as were later the laity living in the world. Collaboration of this sort, in the following decades, assisted the Family especially when there was a canonical approbation of the norms which governed the life of the laity who were already close participants in the Family of Dominic, sharers of the life of the friars with whom they collaborated in apostolic work.

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15 General Chapter of Madonna dell'Arco, 1974, #224 speaks of this very well.

16 Quezon City, #64.

17 Source unknown.

The Dominican Family attained even further progress with the joining of sisters to the Order. They already first appeared in the fifteenth century and, in the last two centuries, have multiplied in a marvelous way. Their current presence gives effective impulse to our family throughout the entire world.

The Fundamental Constitution of the friars records that above all *The Dominican Family is helped*. . . by the association of secular institutes and priestly fraternities. <sup>18</sup>

It is noteworthy that from the beginning in the cooperation among the various branches of the Dominican Family, women found a place for themselves; and in serving the mission of the Order, they found new expression and vocation. Mutual relationships among these branches, today closer than in the past, are much to be nurtured. Reports of the Priors Provincial sent to the General Chapter show how alive is the discussion concerning the Dominican Family in the various Provinces of the Order. That, indeed, helps all in the various branches to understand their own spiritual life and to exercise the apostolate.

4. The General Chapter of Walberberg already promoted mutual and lively respect among the various branches of the Dominican Family and cooperation among them.

This mutual cooperation is of great importance today. It allows us to pool our resources, to seek new ways of life, and appropriate means for the work of evangelization in order for us to respond better to the needs and sensibilities of the people of our age. It is of equal importance that we bring about the participation of all in new forms and ministries of apostolic work according to our tradition. We can find many examples in our Dominican Family that show us clear signs of this among which the prophetic figure of Saint Catherine of Siena is preeminent.

*Mutual cooperation . . . allows us to pool our resources, (and) seek new ways of life.*  
#92.4.

This General Chapter recognizes and encourages with joyful and grateful heart the existence of lay chapters of youth, who by their vitality and creativity offer new strength to our family. . .

Therefore we are able to live the unity of our Dominican Family not only through the ideal and spiritual links which bind us all to the life and intentions of Saint Dominic, but also in our common participation in the mission of the same Order.

5. All this can be done more easily through the assistance of Provincial and regional secretariats of the Dominican Family. Where these already exist, let them act with greater speed. Where they are still absent, let them be established as quickly as possible. The General Secretariat of the Dominican Family, which according to the words of the Master of the Order is an organism which has as its *end, under the authority of the Master of the Order, the promotion of connections among the different branches which constitutes the whole Order of Preachers or the Dominican Family*, <sup>19</sup> already fulfills this responsibility. But we very much hope and exhort that, with proper

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<sup>18</sup> Fundamental Constitutions IX

<sup>19</sup> Source unknown.

reorganization, it be able to give aid even more efficaciously to all branches of the Dominican Family. Thus testimony can be given that our Family is *a single unity in the whole of its life and complementarity in the service of the Church and the word.*<sup>20</sup>

Let us not forget the periodicals published by our Family which aid this unity and cooperation. Let members take care that they promote and distribute these, whether they are edited for an individual group or for the whole family, in their own provinces and regions, and in particular I.D.I. (International Dominican Information) the newsletter from the General Curia. Through publications and in other ways, the members can be sure to bring to the attention of others what has begun or is currently underway, along with the benefits that have been obtained and the difficulties experienced-thus encouraging a more intense collaboration. All these things are a tremendous help for other Dominicans.

6. The unity and complementarity spoken of above ought to be understood in an even more profound way, and made a reality as quickly as possible, so that having heard them, and with the assistance of the upcoming international symposium on the Dominican Family, a magna carta of the Dominican Family can be prepared: a text in which each of us can find ourself, our own ideal and way of life, and in which is contained the fundamental elements of the Dominican Family, expressing its spirit, charisma *and purpose* of the Order<sup>21</sup>.

7. . . . The world in which we live is in many ways repeatedly tom apart by adverse forces and various disputes. It is worn down by evil especially in the form of oppression and injustice. Our attention and energy ought to be devoted to these real problems, especially to the problems of justice and peace in the world. The 1971 Synod of Bishops and the General Chapter of Quezon City have spoken with a single and unanimous voice asserting that justice is *a constitutive element of the preaching of the gospel.*<sup>22</sup> We find each one of us is sent to *all human beings, groups and peoples, believers and non-believers, and especially to the poor.*<sup>23</sup>

The Church of Christ offers to all people its proclamation of freedom and hope. In the Church, our Family, according to the will of Saint Dominic and the wealth of our tradition, has a special place.

The force and vitality of our Family ought to strengthen our hearts and help us to show to the Church and the world the charism of Saint Dominic.

*Our attention and energy ought to be devoted to ... justice and peace in the world.*

#92.7.

8. In this day and age everyone, especially youth, ought to be able to find in our Family a response to their hope and wishes. All people thirst for the truth: in authenticity of life and in relation to the search for divine truth. A solid human and Christian formation is needed by many since myths which deceive many, have lost their power. We ought to respond to these necessities

<sup>20</sup> General Chapter of Quezon City, 1974, #64 at the end.

<sup>21</sup> General Chapter of Quezon City, 1974, #79a.

<sup>22</sup> Synod of Bishops, 1971, # unknown.

<sup>23</sup> LCO #98.

with the strength and vitality of our charism, announcing by word and example the Gospel of Christ everywhere. These words are especially addressed to new members joining and being received into our Family. Above all we need to be faithful in our vocation, so that, like the first apostles in the Church, we live in strength, with a joyful heart, and preach the truth-Christ the Lord.

**#95. [Exhortation]:** The members of our Dominican Family should find appropriate ways, according to the diversity of place, sensibilities and custom, to aid spiritually and to re-integrate into our family those who have left the Order (for example, by inviting and admitting them into Chapters of the Dominican Laity).

## Elective General Chapter of Rome

1983

#269. [Announcement]: A symposium of the whole Dominican Family, provided for by the last two General Chapters was held at Bologna April 11-16, 1983.

#270. [Announcement]: A commission of experts established by the Master of the Order prepared the draft of the Fundamental Charter.... The development of the Dominican Family, which successive General Chapters greatly fostered reached a certain culmination at Bologna.... Such a congress, indeed, never before had taken place in the history of the Order. After long and laborious discussion held among the participants of the Symposium, the delegates agreed to publish the "Bologna Document"<sup>24</sup> . . . . The Master of the Order concluded ... Each group and each entity, then, will, in accordance with its own statutes, see what is appropriate to do. Relying on these words, we present the Bologna Document to all of the brethren as something of great importance, which no one can take lightly in the future.

#271. [Declaration]: The evolution of the Dominican Family has not yet reached its goal. For this reason, in the Bologna Document, it was treated not as an institution, but as a kind of movement, and, because that movement lives especially in local regions, the movement itself is affected in different ways by different local circumstances.... Therefore, the Bologna Document on the Dominican Family by no means represents the last word, but rather calls us patiently to correct and perfect the text. Because the Document has no juridical force, it does not prevent the brethren from criticizing it freely. However, because it was published by the whole Dominican Family, it is not granted to any branch of the Family either to approve it or reject it on its own.

#284. [Recommendation]: In different Provinces new associations of the laity have been erected under the care of the Order. We recommend that statutes for such associations of a new kind be approved by the Provincial Chapter of the brethren (thus, they can share in the Dominican Family in a broader way).

#285. [Exhortation]: We likewise urge the Provincial Promoters of Lay Chapters or the Provincial Promoters of the Dominican Family to look for suitable structures by means of which the laity who wish to associate themselves with the Dominican Family in different ways can be taken into this Family.

#286. [Commission]: Finally, we commission the next International Congress of the Dominican Laity to discuss the evident need of creating new forms of associations and make known their wishes and proposals to the General Secretariat of the Dominican Family.

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<sup>24</sup> See General Declarations, pages 16-18.

## The Bologna Document

*On the Dominican Family*

*Rome, 1983*

### 1. Prologue

God continually calls a people out of darkness into the light of the Good News of Jesus Christ. He has always called men and women to worship him and to proclaim his name. Dominic heard his call in the cry of the men and women of his time and brought them a message of hope and freedom. From the very beginning people followed in the footsteps of Dominic. Today Dominican men and women are attentive, as Dominic was, to the needs of our time.

The Church, the people of God, is open to the Gospel values wherever they are found and proclaims these values to the ends of the earth. The followers of Dominic, because of their diversity, are a microcosm of the Church, in the local community and throughout the world, fully engaged in spreading the Word of God. Faithful to the example of Christ and the vision of Dominic, we are open to the Spirit, continually calling the Church to make the risen Lord present in every age and culture.

### 2. Charism of Dominic

1. Dominic was a man of the Gospel in word and in deed. He had only one passion: to know and to experience the Word of God in truth and from this experience to announce the compassion of God to men and women.

2. The Word of God who became man in the womb of Mary now takes flesh in us, a Word contemplated, celebrated in joy, studied attentively, lived and announced as Good News.

Dominic was at the heart of the Church in the service of the world. He was sensitive to the Word spoken in the heart of every man and woman, especially those who were enslaved in misery and need. We share in that charism and his prophetic vision, proclaiming the Word that the Lord puts into our hearts.

Our apostolic way of life is continually renewed in dialogue with our brothers and sisters and challenged by the values of the Gospel. Dominic associated women with his mission, thus affirming their place in the Church and its mission. As his heirs we have the task of manifesting the equality and complementarity of men and women.

We are open to the world, celebrating the goodness of creation and encouraged to use our freedom and to develop the gifts God has given us.



### 3. Followers of Dominic

1. From the very beginning the charism of Dominic was realized in different groups. New forms are still emerging, but all find their roots in Dominic. He is their common father.

The first group to be called into existence by Dominic's preaching was the nuns. In the first stage they formed part of the *Jesu Christi Praedicatio* of which Dominic was the leader. After he had established an Order, the nuns became part of that Order. They were deeply rooted in Dominic's work of preaching by their totally contemplative way of life. The nuns retain their original relationship to the Order through their profession made to the Master of the Order, the successor of Dominic.

In 1215 Dominic founded his Order of Preaching Friars, whose purpose was summed up by Honorius 111. God has *inspired you to embrace a life of poverty and regular observance and to devote yourselves to preaching the Word of God, making known the name of our Lord Jesus Christ through the world.* The friars comprise priests and brothers, forming a branch of the Dominican Family, under the Master.

From the beginning, groups of lay people associated themselves with the Order, some of whom committed themselves to its life and mission in a more integral way, either in fraternities or as *Brothers and Sisters of Penance of Saint Dominic*, with their own proper rule. The Dominican laity is directly under the authority of the Master.

In a similar way, there arose fraternities of priests who wished to be integrated into the life and charism of Dominic and his Order.

Over a period, especially in the nineteenth century, different congregations of sisters were formed, who by their mission shared directly in the Order's charism of preaching. Each congregation is independent, and profession incorporates the sisters into their congregation and the Order. In the twentieth century secular institutes sprang up. Their call to evangelization is by way of a presence to the world in which they live out their total gift of themselves to God. They make profession of counsels in the spirit of Dominic.

A phenomenon of our time is the emergence of groups of looser structures who look to Dominic and the Order for inspiration. These new groups, together with members of associations connected with the Order along with relatives, friends, and collaborators, belong to the Dominican Family in a broad sense.

2. Sharing in Dominic's charism these various groups participate in the one Dominican vocation. In complementarity and mutual collaboration, these branches constitute the Dominican Family and realize their mission while respecting the autonomy and vocation proper to each.

The principle and sign of unity of the Dominican Family is the Master of the Order, successor of Saint Dominic, the one who grants aggregation to the Order, the one who outside the General Chapter guarantees and promotes fidelity to the spirit of Saint Dominic.

On the basis of their equality, the different branches discover their responsibility for one another. This care for one another is expressed by regional, national and international organizations. All of these serve to foster cooperation at the local level, which remains the most fundamental area of mission and unity.

#### 4. Evangelization as Common Mission for the Kingdom

1. The members of the Dominican Family live out their baptismal commitment and their special Dominican charism. The particular mission we receive is the proclamation of the Word of God, above all by sharing, as Dominic did, God's mercy as a sign of liberation.

In the spirit of Dominic this Word is addressed to all, to *the sinners, the destitute and the afflicted*,<sup>25</sup> and is awaited especially by the poor, the blind, captives and those on the margins of society.

Preaching in the various forms as understood in the Dominican tradition, is the indispensable liberating force most needed in the contemporary world, and without it the command to spread the Kingdom cannot be fulfilled.

Open to the actual needs of the time we search for a path to young people and their world.

The Dominican Family, especially the Dominican Laity, show to its contemporaries the richness of an authentic apostolic lay spirituality.

2. The Dominican charism of preaching is continually nourished by the Word shared in community. Thus, in the proclamation of the Word of God the Dominican Family expresses a unity centered on the Word of God and seeks to give common witness to the Good News.

3. So that we might be effective preachers, we see ongoing formation as a central task. Our study is, above all, of the Word of God, but we must also seek to understand the world in which that Word is proclaimed. In a rapidly changing world, Dominicans listen to and welcome the Word of God already present in the cultures in which we live. We must also be in the vanguard in proclaiming the liberating Good News in diverse cultures.

#### 5. Conclusion

The Dominican Family is present with a certain vitality in all five continents. We are united to one another by the deepest bonds of the Lord's love. We affirm our solidarity with all our suffering brothers and sisters, especially those who are persecuted for their fearless proclamation of the Gospel of peace and justice. Grounded in the profound peace of our common vocation we move full of hope into the future. We pray the Holy Spirit to renew in us the courage to continue in the footsteps of Dominic, *speaking only to God and of God*.

## General Chapter of Avila

1986

### #83. *(Exhortation)*: THE LAITY AND THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE ORDER.

The forthcoming Synod of Bishops which has as its focus the vocation and mission of the laity in the Church and society, obliges all of us in the Order to study more deeply the teaching of the Second Vatican Council on the subject, to take it to heart, and to apply it more zealously in our work.

The cardinal points of the conciliar doctrine on the laity are the following:

- a. Through Baptism and the other Sacraments of Initiation each and every Christian is incorporated into Christ and consequently shares in his saving mission;
- b. The laity therefore, precisely as baptized and confirmed and communicant members of the Church, share fully in its saving mission which is itself a continuation of the mission of Christ;
- c. By the same token they share in their own way in the threefold office of Christ as priest, prophet and king;
- d. More specifically, by their involvement in the secular affairs of the world, the laity play their indispensable part in the Church's saving mission;
- e. Unless they do in fact play this part, local Churches cannot thoroughly take root among the various peoples of the world or achieve the necessary inculturation of the Gospel;
- f. Such inculturation is necessary in order that the whole Church, both as communion and as institution, may be a sign and sacrament of the union of humankind with God and with one another.

Accordingly, we exhort the brethren to

1. take to heart, and constantly bear in mind that the laity have an irreplaceable mission in the Church and world of today, and that furthermore, our own proper mission as the Order of Preachers cannot be effectively accomplished unless the laity are responsibly carrying out their proper mission;
2. be faithful to their vocation to serve the truth by intensifying their reflection on the ecclesiology of the laity; on the possible variety of lay ministries in the local Churches; on the question of participation in ecclesiastical jurisdiction; on the role of women in the life, mission and authority of the Church; on the place in the Church of the basic communities which lay people are founding;

3. contribute to the more thorough formation of the laity, so that those already proficient in the human and social sciences may be enabled the better to shed the light of the Gospel on the critical problems facing the world, such as over-population, bio-ethical questions, armaments, the economic and political orders, famine, fundamental human rights, etc., and to take their rightful place at the points where for better or worse such issues are decided.

#85. [ Introduction on *The* Laity in the Order of Saint Dominic ]:

TRADITIONAL CHAPTERS OF LAY DOMINICANS.

In the 13th century a religious upsurge took hold of a great number of lay people. In 1285 the Master of the Order, Munio de Zamora, wanted to give them a more solid and evangelical structure, and so he proposed a rule for those who were more closely associated with the Order. Not all of them accepted this offer. Those who did so realized that it opened up for them a new way of directly and actively participating in the Order's apostolic ministry. This is how the Third Order of Saint Dominic came into being.

Paul VI summed up the form of evangelization appropriate for the laity: *Their proper field of activity in the task of evangelization is the vast and complicated world of politics and social affairs, of the economy and culture, the sciences and the arts, international life and the mass media.*<sup>26</sup>

*In their chapters there is a notable absence of younger persons and hence a certain lack of vitality*  
#85.

What is true for the Christian laity as a whole applies a fortiori to lay Dominicans. And they are faced with a particular problem at the present time: in their Chapters there is a notable absence of younger persons, and hence a certain lack of vitality. Could this perhaps be at least in part a result of unawareness of the teaching of the Church since Vatican II on the subject, and hence a failure to put it into practice?

In an effort to meet this problem, and in response to initiatives made by the last two General Chapters, an international Congress of lay Dominicans met in Montreal in 1985. It has adapted and renewed the rule of what had hitherto been known as the Third Order, as it had been asked to do, and in its fundamental constitution,<sup>27</sup> emphasis was laid on the essential need for a commitment to the apostolic life.

A large crowd of people cannot effectively carry out together the kind of work the Church hopes for from lay people today. This means that Chapters should not have too many members. Otherwise it risks, together with a decline of fervor, a loosening of the ties of friendship and close collaboration which should unite it. Chapters which have too many members should therefore split up into smaller ones. To this end, account should be taken of the age of candidates and members, their professions, tastes, particular apostolic preferences and so on. There could also be family Chapters, Chapters for the sick and those engaged in health services, of academics and lawyers, of persons concerned with justice and peace, above all Chapters of young people, just as there are Chapters for the elderly. Certainly one would envisage that these smaller groups would meet all

<sup>26</sup> On Evangelization in the Modern World, (Evangeliū Nuntiandi), Pope Paul VI, 1975, #70.

<sup>27</sup> Statutes of Montreal, 1-7.

together from time to time in order to share their experiences and recall their ties with what was the parent Chapter.

NEW ASSOCIATIONS OF LAY DOMINICANS.

Almost everywhere in the Order one comes across the desire to form new associations or groups of lay people. The last Chapter was in favor of this development and asked for a study to be made of these new forms.<sup>28</sup> By their very existence and dynamism, they illustrate the vitality of the lay Dominican ideal and bear witness to the wide influence of the Order.

To be integrated into the Dominican family they should base themselves on the fundamental constitution of the Montreal Statutes referred to above. They are to be encouraged in every way possible by the brethren, especially by the Promoters of lay Chapters and of the Dominican Family.

What we are concerned with in fact, as the Bologna document stated, is *the appearance, as a phenomenon characteristic of our time, of groups of lay people with their own types of organization, who draw their inspiration from the charism of Saint Dominic and his Order.*<sup>29</sup> It is a matter of creating more flexible associations, capable above all of attracting young people by their freedom and breath of outlook. The only requirement, in order for them to be accepted as belonging fully to the Dominican Family, is, as we have said, that they should base themselves on the fundamental constitution of the Montreal Statutes. Each group, of course, will choose its own favored form of apostolate, but the most important common denominator must always be their inspiration by Saint Dominic as *vii apostolicus*, as a man combining intense contemplation of divine truth with an active mission to the world.

#93. [on Formation for the Apostolate]: The apostolate of the Order, for laity as well as the brethren, can be fully realized only when there is a solid and complete formation. Those who would serve the Truth and preach it must first be formed in its principles and doctrine. Such formation must be based upon the doctrine and tradition of the Church and the Order. Likewise, it must respond to present needs within the Church and society and seek new places and forms to extend the saving mission of Christ, true to the spirit of Saint Dominic.

***Those who would serve the Truth and preach it must first be formed in its principles and doctrine*** #93

Formation for the lay apostolate, whether Dominican laity or others, demands a formation that is human, integral and accommodated to the abilities of each. The more the laity increase their share in the Church's life, the more they will feel the need for a solid formation that is at once doctrinal, social and apostolic. It is in these areas especially that the lives and work of the brethren can serve as a catalyst and example for the laity.

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<sup>28</sup> General Chapter of Rome, #284 - 285.

<sup>29</sup> The Bologna Document, 111. 1. fin.

## COMMUNITY, THE LOCUS OF FORMATION.

Since Christ founded a community of believers, we reaffirm this same community as the proper context for the formation of the laity. In this context the parish, various kinds of groups, and movements and associations are of special importance. Within the Dominican Family this is strongly supported by various efforts to form and renew ourselves individually and collectively within our groups and communities. It is this aspect that is most often attractive to the young.

In these communities of faith and action a true formation can be achieved for each member. It is in community that we share our reactions, listen to those who share our opinions, or gain from those who think differently, which is often more valuable. Here we become aware of new experiences, and we recognize and encourage those with special talents that help solve difficulties and transform our lives.

Formation for the Dominican also involves study and contemplation and the sharing of these fruits with others. Often this first takes place within the group or community to which we belong. So important are study and contemplation to the life of the Dominican community that without them such a group would not be truly Dominican.

*So important are study and contemplation to the life of the Dominican community that without them such a group would not be truly Dominican.*

#93.

Groups of lay Dominicans should also be in communication with other parts of the Dominican Family, inviting them to share their insights and difficulties. In this way they can come to know one another better and understand the common bonds which make them one within the community of the Church and the Order.

## GENUINE LAY SPIRITUALITY.

The origin and source of the apostolate of the Church is Christ; hence the effectiveness of any individual apostolate depends upon a vital relationship with Him. So too, then, the apostolic work of the laity. Lay persons must use all the spiritual helps available in such a way that the fulfilling of their temporal responsibilities, in the midst of the ordinary circumstances of life, intensifies rather than separates them from Christ.

The presence of Christian lay persons in the world and what they do for its development must have, above all, its motivation in God and their love for Him, rather than in any purely human consideration. At the same time, the laity should not, like some monks, flee from the realities and problems of the world, but persevere in being actively present in the thick of these realities, and there to encounter Christ who through them can transform the world.

A genuine lay spirituality will allow lay persons to recognize always and everywhere *the God in whom we live and move and have our being*,<sup>30</sup> to seek the will of God in all the activities of life, to contemplate Christ in all men and women and to judge rightly the true meaning and value of material things.

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30 Acts 17:28.

The mission of the laity is often full of conflict and tension because of their faith. They must, then, in such cases, strive to renew their Christian identity in contact with the Word of God and strive to live in closer intimacy with the Lord through a rich sacramental and prayer life. To renew one's identity, that is to say, to be more and more oneself, is to become capable of facing the world and the difficulties of one's faith and mission.

For the Dominican lay person, the life of Saint Dominic should serve as the supreme model of a life of action grounded in a rich spirituality and communion with the Lord. It is said of him that he spoke only about God or to God. He spoke about God in his preaching; and as for what he said to God, his first brethren testify that he repeated again and again the same words: My God, my mercy, what will become of *sinners*? So he spoke to God about those he had met during the day. Blessed Jordan of Saxony adds that he used to pray continually not only for sinners, but also for the poor and unfortunate. Thus in his prayer there was only God and all who suffered. In all this he was conformed to Christ, Our Lord. Thus we should take as our motto: *Be conformed to Christ in order to transform the world.*<sup>31</sup>

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31 Source unknown.

## General Chapter of Oakland

1989

#74. *[Recommendation]*: In order to promote our apostolic priorities, a wider collaboration with the Dominican Family should be established; and furthermore, the laity should also use and strengthen their gifts, placing them at the service of our common inquiry and action.

#75. *[Recommendation]*: The Dominican Laity should broaden their activities through a proper theological formation so that they might increasingly be heralds of the word of faith, creative and free in different situations and responsive to new questions that arise.

#76. *[Recommendation]*: The brethren and the Dominican Family should revise existing catechetical materials so as to eliminate all expressions that discriminate against people for reasons of race, sex, or any other kind of bias.

Appendix XII. *[On the Dominican Family]*: We also need to foster the Dominican Laity. The Chapter of Avila gave the possibility of promoting groups with *looser structures who look to Dominic and the Order for inspiration*, as was stated in the Bologna Document. It is important that these groups be approved by the Provincial authorities and that they receive the formation mandated by the Province. Provinces need to include our sisters in their promotion of and direction for these lay groups.

#69. *[Ordination]*: The four priorities established by the General Chapters of Quezon City, Walberberg, Rome and Avila, are to be maintained as priorities in our contemporary apostolate. These priorities can be described in summary fashion as follows:

1. catechesis in a de-Christianized world;
2. evangelization in the context of diverse cultures;
3. justice and peace;
4. human communication through the media of social communication <sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> General Chapters of Quezon City #15, Walberberg #17b, Rome #28 and Avila #28.



## Elective General Chapter of Mexico City

1992

#111. *[Commendation]*: We commend and support our Dominican sisters and lay Dominicans who have undertaken the mission of preaching. We also commend the Congregations of Dominican women who have established promoters of preaching, and the efforts to promote collaboration in preaching between women and men, such as the Parable Conference for Dominican Life and Mission in the United States, the Logos Retreats in Ireland, etc.

#112. *[Exhortation]*: We remind our brothers of the ordinations of Oakland <sup>33</sup> on preaching and we encourage them to invite the other members of the Dominican Family:

- a. to prepare themselves for the ministry of preaching;
- b. to take advantage of opportunities to preach;
- c. to embrace the mission of preaching with a commitment to act in collaboration with others.

#116. *[Introduction on the Dominican Family]*: The Dominican Family has its roots in the project and practice of Saint Dominic himself. Our historians in their research point out that besides the foundation of the nuns of Prouille (1207) and of the order of friars (1215), some laity and even married couples in 1207 offered *themselves and their properties to God, to Blessed Mary, to all the Saints, to the Holy Preaching, and also to Dominic of Osma, and to all the friars and sisters who exist today and who will exist in the future.*<sup>34</sup>

Several documents of the period speak of the newly-born Order as *Ordo Praedicationis*, which seemed to include laity as well as sisters and friars, in one and the same membership for one and the same mission. This idea of family, which existed from the beginning though not fully shaped, was soon enriched by the publication of the **Rule of Munio de Zamora (1285)** and with the juridical addition of the laity, and later--after the slow evolution of the concept of the Third Order--with that of the sisters of apostolic life ....

This Chapter is happy to recognize that many of the decisions and exhortations of the legislative organisms and of the Masters of the Order have been welcomed and put into practice and have brought about, in spite of the decrease of vocations, a revitalization of the Dominican Family ....

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<sup>33</sup> General Chapter of Oakland, #44 - 47.

<sup>34</sup> Source unknown.

The needs of the modern and post-modern world offer a wide field for evangelization. Dominican spirituality, when it is known, attracts many women and men today, especially young people. We cannot be in accordance with the apostolic priorities established by our General Chapters unless we work together as friars, sisters, clerics and lay people, inspired by the zeal of Saint Dominic, so that we can respond to the challenge of the second millennium: to announce to all, in every place, Jesus Christ, friend and savior of humankind.

The Dominican Family then, consists of friars, nuns, sisters in apostolic life, members of secular institutes, priestly fraternities, and laity who belong to fraternities or new groups

*This very diversity could be our strength, if it is placed at the service of our common charism.*

*#116.*

accepted by the Order. In the past perhaps, we have emphasized the diversity rather than the identity of the Dominican Family. This very diversity could be our strength, if it is placed at the service of our common charism, which consists essentially in that Word of God prayed in common, studied in common and, above all, preached in common ...

To cooperate means to work together. This is applicable to any family, and more so when we speak of the Dominican Family, which has in common the special mission of preaching the Word of God.<sup>35</sup> The Chapter therefore strongly emphasizes the common dignity and equality of all who belong to the Dominican Family, women and men, laity and clerics, and encourages whatever cooperation already exists and that has given such inspiring results, with a view to intensifying and extending it to every field, especially in the ministry of the Word, teaching, initial and continuing formation, presence in the communications media, promotion of vocations, defense of justice and peace, prayer and liturgy celebrations together. In this way, because of its unity and diversity, the Dominican Family will be a prophetic sign for today's world, as we enter into a family, are formed as a family, and are in mission as a family ....

Our family should be the result of our communion of life, of fraternal relations, of our common projects, of cooperative efforts, and of generous help and gift of self. Our relations should be gratifying and life-giving, beyond mere bonds of friendship or understanding. To be Dominican Family means, and commits us, to leave behind attitudes of esteeming any branch more than another, and to avoid any type of dependence or domination.

For the Dominican Family to become a lived reality and a project, it is absolutely necessary that the sense of identity and membership begin in the first years of formation. Beginning in these years, the young people should learn to share times of prayer, reflection and study, work, initiation into and projects in mission. This will ensure that the family will really be a sharing of life.

#117. [Declaration]: The Dominican Family consists of several branches: friars, nuns, sisters in apostolic life, secular institutes, fraternities of priests and of laity, whether they belong to the fraternities or to new groups and associations approved by the Provincial Chapter or by the Provincial with his Council.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>35</sup> The Bologna Document, 4.1.

<sup>36</sup> LCO and IX, in line with the General Chapter of Avila, #89.

#118. [Recommendation]: We ask the competent organisms that in affiliating congregations of religious in apostolic life or of new associations into the Dominican Family, the criteria for affiliation be applied rigorously, so as to avoid having as members congregations or associations that have little in common with the spirit of the Dominican Family.

#121. [Recommendation]: We recommend that in accord with previous General Chapters, in places where they do not already exist

- a. There be a Conference (Association, Council) of Major Superiors of Dominican Sisters and Brothers and the President of the Dominican Laity at national and/or provincial levels.
- b. In the same way, that there be established at the same levels, Secretariats of the Dominican Family which will exercise the functions delegated to them by the Conference (Association, Council) mentioned above.

#125. [*Exhortation* to the Friars]: In regard to the Dominican Laity, we exhort our brothers and especially the promoters and assistants to commit themselves to

- a. revitalize the lay Chapters, urging them to attend to their own *aggiornamento* (updating);
- b. to encourage the development of new forms of Dominican laity, especially in the search for a more intensive community life;
- c. to assist them in the development of their Dominican spirituality;
- d. to cooperate in formation of lay people for mission in the Church, the Order and the world;
- e. to participate in common mission programs.

#128. [*Exhortation* to the Laity]: We exhort our lay brothers and sisters

- a. to deepen their specific lay vocation to be church in the world as well as being presence of the world in the church;
- b. to become aware of their real membership in the Dominican family in moral equality with the other members;
- c. to accept new groups of Dominican laity that have arisen; '
- d. to promote new forms of Dominican laity;

- e. to establish channels of communication among the various groups of Dominican Laity;
- f. to commit themselves to their own formation, together with the other members of the Dominican Family, as preparation for their specific mission within the Order,
- g. to join with mission teams of the Order, committing themselves to the priorities and orientations of the recent General Chapters, especially the promotion of justice and peace.

Appendix I. [*Report to the Mexico City Chapter of the Master of the Order, Damian Byrne*]: It seems to me that there is a great deal of inertia among the Brethren when it comes to promoting the Dominican Laity. They have been an integral part of the Order almost from the very beginning and down through the centuries have been exemplary in their devotion to the Order and to the twin pillars of Christian life, viz., prayer and penance. We are *confronted* with a concrete problem: in *the fraternities there is a notable absence of young people and, as a consequence, a certain lack of vitality*.<sup>38</sup>

Accordingly, the Avila Chapter, following on the recommendations of the Montreal Congress, made it possible for groups attached to our churches and schools to be incorporated into the Dominican Family. This has had good results in many countries but needs to be developed much more.

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<sup>38</sup> General Chapter of Avila, #85.

## General Chapter of Caleruega 1995

[Report to the General Chapter of Timothy Radcliffe, Master of the Order]: The Dominican Laity should be important partners for us in the preaching of the Gospel, especially today in a Church which sees the flourishing of so many new

lay movements. Alas, I have to agree with what Father Damian wrote in his final report: It seems to me that there is a great deal of inertia among the brethren when it comes to promoting the Dominican laity. My experience suggests that this vital and ancient branch of the Dominican Family flourishes best when it is regarded not as an additional work for the brethren, but an opportunity for us to work with partners who can carry the Gospel to people whom we cannot meet.

*The Dominican Laity should be important partners for us in the preaching of the Gospel*

Timothy Radcliffe, Master of the Order.

I would like to underline the importance of the meeting held in Santa Sabina earlier this year, . . . attended by representatives of new Dominican youth movements, to seek ways of international cooperation with each other and collaboration with the Order in the preaching of the Gospel. An international meeting of young Dominican Laity is planned for August 1996, and I intend to be present.

At the Synod on Consecrated Life, encouragement was given to the development of forms of temporary commitment to religious life that would allow lay people to share in the apostolate of an institute for some limited time. I hope that we may be able to develop this sort of collaboration with the laity.

#92. [Prologue]: As members of the Dominican Family, we accept the invitation to direct an attentive reading and mature reflection of the documents written about the Dominican Family. It seems to us, after analysis of the events of recent years, that the time has come where we might propose more concrete steps to both ourselves and to the other members of the Dominican Family.

In fact, over the last 30 years we have noticed the recovery and development of an old reality, that of the Dominican Family, in such a way that at the present moment many strengths or positive results show a desire to see the men and women in a single world-wide organization which discovers in Saint Dominic a model and inspiration to proclaim together the good news of Christ Jesus to today's world.<sup>40</sup> -

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General Chapter of Mexico City, 1992, #11.

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General Chapter of Mexico City, 1992, #116.

We consider among our recent achievement the various teachings that have been affirmed by General Chapter, historical investigations, letters from the Master of the Order and studies and publications by the sisters and laity in magazines, days of reflection, journals on Dominican life, congresses and seminars and in some parts of the world, visible signs of organization.

While these efforts are very encouraging, the Dominican Family still remains a dream or an ideal to many people. The partially attained collaboration between the different branches of the Dominican Family has not grown in proportion to expectations if we consider the lived reality in some areas or countries. We note that the friars are not sufficiently prepared for working in collaboration with the sisters and the laity.

*Authentic* collaboration cannot be realized without planning." In fact, utopia and doctrine will not bring commitment as long as they do not express their *spiritual and moral basis*<sup>42</sup> in a larger organization that shows in which areas all its members enjoy equality in proposals, decisions, and actions.

#93. [Proposal]: In order that the Dominican Family might develop a greater consistency in its identity and mission, it should produce its own organizational project, with the participation and commitment of friars, nuns, sisters of active life, members of secular institutes *and* fraternities of priests *and* laity.'

In recent years we have witnessed signs of a process of an international organization in some branches of the Dominican Family: the International Commission of Nuns, the International Movement of Dominican Sisters, the European Congress of Lay Dominicans. In Latin America, where the Dominican Family is strongly present, instances of coordination between the various branches can be seen, as in the case of joint meetings between CODAL and CIDAL. Here and in other areas there are secretariats for the Dominican Family.

Bearing in mind these experiences, we set as an objective that within six years, the first General Assembly of the Dominican Family will be convoked by the Master of the Order, as a source of unity, with the agreement of the representatives of the other branches of the Dominican Family. At this occasion, the representatives of all the previously organized branches of the Dominican Family will be able to jointly study proposals that might foster common projects with regard to formation, collaboration and action.

*(By 2001) the first General Assembly of the Dominican Family will be convoked.*

#93.

<sup>41</sup> General Chapter of Mexico City, 1992, #116.

<sup>42</sup> General Chapter of Madonna dell'Arco, 1974, #225.

<sup>43</sup> LCO I, IX.

In order to attain this goal, we suggest that the Dominican Family initiate a process that will allow it first to receive and study this proposal of the General Chapter of Caleruega. Such a reflection should reinforce already existing local or regional centers of coordination among the distinct branches and create them where there are none yet. Once this is done, better forms of organization and representation to the General assembly of the Dominican Family can be set up.

It is only then, at this level of organization, that we shall be able to answer most of the questions concerning the Dominican Family.

As it follows this path, the Dominican Family will continue with its style of collaboration and the sense of belonging to the charism of Saint Dominic, as it has until today, empowering them and broadening their participation in assemblies and meetings at different levels; and, at the same time, each member and each branch will be aware of deepening their own identity, as well as their own commitment with the common mission of the Dominican Family.

Let us go forward on this road with Saint Dominic, thinking of Christ our Lord.

#94. [*Petition*]: We ask the Master of the Order to institute an Assistant for the Dominican Family.

#96. [*Recommendation*]: We recommend that the Assistant of the Master of the Order for the Dominican Family counts among his tasks

- a. to promote among the brothers the proposal that this Chapter makes about the Dominican Family and its projection into the future;
- b. to coordinate with the delegates or representatives of the other branches whatever has to do with the life, mission and organization of the Dominican Family.

#97. [*Exhortation*]: Inspired by the growing role that the laity, and particularly women, are filling in ecclesiastical life, we appeal to our brethren

- a. to pay special attention to the laity in the Dominican Family, both in promoting them and encouraging their growth in the charism and mission of the Order,
- b. to support those friars who are able to create a sense of welcome and organization for youth movements with a Dominican inspiration;
- c. to encourage explicitly the charism and vocation of the Order among youth, associating them with our mission, and if suitable, with a temporary commitment;
- d. to accompany young people in the discernment and process of their definitive incorporation into the Dominican Family. .

## General Chapter of Bologna 1998

*[Prologue to THE MISSION OF THE ORDER]* Situated at the "fault-lines" ("lignes de fracture" Fr. Pierre Claverie, O.P.) of humanity, which go across our globalized world so often marked by injustice and the violence of racial, social and religious conflicts, our Order seeks to discover the truth of the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ in encounters with "the other". Our mission in the service of "the whole truth" towards which only the Spirit sent from the Father through the risen Christ can lead us, requires of us an attitude, characterized by dialogue, by which we place ourselves at the service of "the other", ready to listen to him and to let ourselves be transformed by him - and to give our lives so that our brothers, our sisters, may live.

The mission of the Order receives its freedom from the vow of obedience which makes us available and responsive to confront new challenges together.

It is a mission shared with our brothers and sisters of the Order who live the same common priesthood through their baptism and who are consecrated by their religious profession and commitment to the same mission. This mission is realized according to the richness of our charism and the priorities of our Order; it expresses itself in a pluriform service of the Word and the Sacrament.

It is a mission which seeks dialogue with different cultures and religions on all the continents. In Eastern Europe and especially on the Asian continent the Order is aware that it belongs to its mission to seek dialogue and to promote conditions for dialogue. This presupposes great coherence in all the actions of the mission.

It is finally an intellectual mission which is rooted in the study and the contemplation of the Word of God and which receives its dynamism from compassion. Without pretense, and in a humble way, it gives account of the hope that is in us. It proclaims and teaches the intelligence of the Word as a force for reconciliation, forgiveness and joy.

### #34. *[MEN AND WOMEN IN MISSION TOGETHER]*

1. The Order of Preachers is proud of its tradition and legacy which includes Friars, Cloistered Nuns, vowed religious women, and lay men and women. While other Chapters have referred to the dignity of women and our collaboration both with the laity and our sisters, this Chapter believes it is important to say more at this time in our history. Our Order reflects an understanding of mission that has its origin in the life of the Triune God. As a sharing in the divine mission, our Order, in all its unique branches, is both to manifest communion and collaborate in the mission of leading all creation towards communion in the divine life. The friars do not monopolize the vocation, nor do they hold 'pride of place' in the Order founded by St. Dominic. The mission holds the 'pride of place,' while every branch realizes this vocation in the manner proper to it. We, together, constitute the Order and together realize its whole mission.

*The friars do not monopolize the vocation ... every branch realizes this vocation in the manner proper to it.*

#34.1.



2. Thus, the most complete manifestation of our total identity is in our collaboration together. This collaboration includes praying together, mutual planning, decision making, and the execution of projects in mutual and equal complementarity. These projects include such fields as ministries of prayer, preaching, teaching, pastoral leadership, justice and peace, mass media, research and writing, as well as in the promotion of vocations and formation.

3. We are aware that this consciousness calls for a conversion of mentalities on the part of everyone, and will be only gradually realized. Often friars of the Order have treated the sisters and the laity solely as objects of their pastoral care rather than as peers in their apostolic mission. Failure to listen to the laity has created a dependency of the lay chapters on a friar, thereby impeding the development of their own self-responsibility. Failure to recognize the apostolic capacities of Dominican Sisters has negatively affected the mission of the friars as well. Further, we believe it is important for the friars to examine their image of women and what is conveyed to others by our speech and behavior. If we listened to the brothers and analyzed attitudes, reactions, spontaneous reflections of speech, we would be surprised to note that our masculine and ecclesiastical world carries strongly contrasting images of women. We ask pardon for all the instances of condescending and destructive attitudes and action on the part of the friars. For many Chapters now, the Order has called us to this conversion.

4. Lay men and women offer a unique vision of preaching and living the Gospel because of their total insertion into society with all of its secular, economic, and political realities. They are able to live shoulder to shoulder with men and women with whom our religious brothers and sisters will hardly have contact. The friars and sisters need their vision and expertise. In addition, women bring a distinctive vision and sensibility which we can learn from and which is essential to save the soul of an age in risk of losing its soul. Women are the principal educators and nurturers of the children of the world, so their critical formative role needs to be acknowledged and valued more highly. In a world characterized by social and religious fragmentation, women are often models of solidarity in families and society, transcending forces that create division.

*Lay men and women offer a unique vision of preaching and living the Gospel ...*

#34.4.

5. Our contemplative nuns are at the heart of the mission of the Order. By their way of life they proclaim to all that God is capable of totally captivating the human heart. At the same time their prayer is a cry that the word proclaimed by the preachers may be received by the world. Their hospitality to their brothers and sisters of the Order strengthens fraternal bonds and stirs up a deeper faith and more fervent prayer. Sharing their liturgical prayer with God's people and offering an oasis of peaceful retreat and study is fundamental to the mission of the Order.

6. We encourage Dominicans from all branches of the Order to claim their identity as preachers. Furthermore, we ask all members to prepare themselves

*We encourage Dominicans from all branches of the Order to claim their identity as preachers.*

#34.6.

for this preaching and to take advantage of every opportunity. We are aware that the exclusion of women from ordained ministry and consequently from preaching the homily at the Eucharist is a painful experience for many. At the same time we are also aware that the

debate itself on the ordination of women is painful for many. While remaining respectful of the Church's Magisterium, we are convinced that our Order is called to find creative ways to release the fullness of our preaching charism. We owe it to Veritas-the Dominican goal of truth-to advance the theological and ecclesiological dimensions of this question.

7. It is crucial for us to note that, through our baptism and in a special manner through our Dominican commitment, all members of the Order participate without distinction in the common priesthood of the faithful. We ask all our brothers who exercise an ordained ministry in the Church to understand it as a service to this common priesthood lived in charity and without claims to power.

8. While we Friars desire to do all we can to collaborate with other branches of the Order, we encourage, in so far as is financially possible, all branches to be formed deeply in the theological traditions of the Church and the Order. Otherwise collaboration will remain unbalanced.

9. Having said all this, the great challenge that lies before us is addressing in our concrete situation the many injustices that are still major issues for all of society, but which cause particular burdens for women and children: economic issues, health care services, violence, discrimination, disempowerment, and lack of fundamental dignity, equality, resources, and opportunity. Addressing those issues requires that we stand in solidarity with our sisters, that we listen to their voices, concerns, and challenges, and that we engage in genuine dialogue with an open spirit so that together we can understand, address, and change attitudes and structures of male dominance, lingering feudalism, and systematic discounting of women's gifts and leadership.

#35. [Declaration-Exhortation] We recognize and appreciate the role of our nuns, sisters and the laity in promoting vocations to the friars. We exhort the friars to work together with the sisters and lay members in promoting vocations to the whole Order.

#36. (Commendation-Recommendation) We commend all those entities of the friars that have developed projects of preaching with the sisters and laity together. We recommend that, where possible, all entities of the friars invite our sisters and the laity to plan, decide and evaluate such preaching projects.

#37. [Commendation-Recommendation] We commend those friars, sisters and lay members who work together in centers for human rights and in solidarity with the poor and oppressed. We recommend that in all entities of friars such collaboration be encouraged.

#39. [Recommendation] We recommend that the friars, nuns, sisters, and laity who live and work in a common location invite one another to share their particular projects and from them to develop priorities and directions for a common mission in that area. In turn, Dominican leaders could gather periodically in each place to evaluate the common plan and its realization.

#40. [Recommendation] We recommend that some sisters and lay members be invited to provincial chapters of friars and friars would welcome an invitation to chapters of sisters. In this way, there would be a reciprocal exchange of knowledge and mutual collaboration.

*We recommend that some sisters and lay members be invited to provincial chapters of friars...*

#40.

#41. [Recommendation] We recommend that friars study theology together with the nuns, sisters, and lay members of the Order and where possible find financial assistance to those in need. In addition, our faculties of theology should both include competent professors from other entities of the Order and provide creative ways to make the study of theology more accessible to all members of the Order.

#42. [Petition] We petition the Master of the Order to constitute a commission of highly competent theologian brothers and sisters of the Order whose task will be to examine the question of the charism of preaching for men and women of the Order and its relation to ordained ministry, and to advance the theological and ecclesiological dimensions of the question. In addition, other related issues of the priestly and prophetic roles ought to be explored.

#76. [*On the INTELLECTUAL MISSION OF THE ORDER, Internet Mission*] The presence of the Order of Preachers on the world-wide Internet system is a pastoral response to the needs and questions of the modern world. The Internet is a "new country" to be evangelized, and is a way to extend our preaching mission and to help our existing ministries. The already existing Internet Commission established by the Master of the Order needs to be augmented and supported. New forms of ministry through the Internet need to be explored and developed. The chapter encourages the formation of forums and Internet seminars so as to extend and intensify research and debates on the subjects which concern us.

#84. [*Prologue on FORMATION AND COMMUNITY LIFE*]

1. At the end of the twentieth century, the Order, along with the rest of the Church and of humanity, is confronted with the numerous challenges of a world, whose rapid evolution affects and puts religions and traditional ideas in question. This general chapter, the last of the century, is aware of all these challenges, and wishes to encourage the brothers and all the members of our Order, especially the youngest, to sustain the effort we are making to face better these new and original situations in our world today. Convinced that formation is one of the major tasks of the Order and that it depends in great part on the authenticity of our vocation and the quality of our community life, we want to underline here the necessity of a more global and complete vision of Dominican formation, which alone can unify and enliven our preparation for the doctrinal and prophetic mission of the Order.

2. "And he appointed twelve to be with him" (Mk 3: 14). During three years, Jesus patiently taught and prepared his disciples for the preaching of the Kingdom through his actions and with power, and by the example of his whole life devoted to the Father. He took special care to form them at home or away from the crowds (cf. Mk 4:10; 6: 31; etc.), giving them special instructions for mission and for fraternal life in community (cf. Mk. 18). The call which is addressed to us today in the Dominican Family, is, first of all, a call to live in company with Christ the condition of a disciple, in our slow and progressive growth to maturity in faith. The process of complete Dominican formation, which begins with the years of initiation and continues with permanent formation, plunges its roots into and draws its dynamism from this patient search for God.

3. "If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." (Jn 8: 31-32) Interior freedom, the freedom which leads to the whole Truth, supposes that we engage in a voluntary process of conversion of heart, a process begun by our profession of vows and our commitment to the heart of the Order. As in preceding Chapters, we wish to reaffirm the importance of formation of heart in Dominican life. Compassion and mercy, reflections of the Face of the Savior God, are welcomed and

lived with a vulnerable heart, in a human affectivity which is often wounded and made fragile by all sorts of handicaps. The project of a chaste life opens the heart and one's whole being to new qualities in relationships, marked by humanity and the Gospel, both in community life and with the outside world.

4. It is more opportune than ever to recall that Dominican formation, whether it is human, intellectual, spiritual or pastoral, aims above all to make us true disciples of Christ, assiduous in listening to his Word, in the ardent search for the Truth of God, and stirred by the cries and groans of humanity in travail. Our spiritual tradition, the teaching and example of the saints of our Order, as well as the humble experience of God displayed in the daily life of our brothers and sisters, constitutes a support and a source of stimulation in our striving for conversion. Besides, creative fidelity to the doctrinal tradition of the Order can greatly contribute to a renewal of the philosophical and theological sciences in the Church. Contemplation, study and the apostolate remain the life-giving pillars of Dominican life.

*Contemplation, study and the apostolate remain the life-giving pillars of Dominican life.*

#84.4.

5. The Gospels report that Jesus "began to send the twelve out two by two" (Mk 6: 7) to announce the Good News to all parts of Israel. Dominic was inspired, no doubt, by Jesus' action, when he dispersed his brothers across Europe to form them better for mission. Our fraternal collaboration in the mission received from Christ and following Dominic, constitutes a living witness and a strong sign that the Kingdom of God is already among us. In his Gospel, Luke tells us that the apostolic group, gathered around Jesus to help him to announce the Good News, was composed not only of the Twelve but also contained women who shared the life and mission of the community. The first Christian community in Jerusalem was also composed of apostles along with men and women all proclaiming the Good News of the Risen Lord, each according to his or her charism (cf. Acts, chapters 1-5). Today more than ever, collaboration between the branches of the Dominican Family is necessary. Collaboration can better incarnate and realize the charism transmitted by our Father, St. Dominic. It proves also to be, for all, a place of mutual formation in true dialogue, in sharing and solidarity, in the practice of fraternal correction and reconciliation.

6. This apostolic fraternity is one of the strong values we are called to live and witness to in our communities. Dominican community, inspired by the model of the apostolic community in Jerusalem, and challenged by the sometimes despairing search for community life in our societies, is called to rediscover in our democratic style of government and in the apostolic goal of lived fraternity, the prophetic values and Evangelical dynamism of the Beatitudes. The priory, or monastery, then appears as a "Holy Preaching", a house of prayer and preaching, where one "speaks of God or to God", where there is mutual help in sharing and example.

7. Finally, in the face of growing individualism and isolation which characterizes our societies, communities are called to constitute a true challenge for young people in search of an ideal, through becoming true places of fraternity and prayer, characterized by research and by the service of truth, by the joyous celebration of the Word, by sharing in solidarity, goods, projects, responsibilities, and a concerted apostolic commitment. We can thus express, live and offer, in different ways, a new vision of the Order for the third millennium.

#103. *[On The Intellectual And Pastoral Formation of The Brothers, Recommendations]* We recommend that the fields of pastoral experience be chosen in such a way that they include the

widest variety possible of apostolic work in specialized ministries. In the choice of fields, it is necessary to consider the apostolic priorities of the Order adopted by the last general chapters: catechesis in dechristianised places and cultures; the cultural policy of the Order; justice in the world; and the integration of the means of social communication. Another aspect that we believe is important in the pastoral formation of the brothers, and that we therefore recommend, is learning how to collaborate: how to collaborate among brothers, with the laity, men and women, and with the other branches of the Dominican family.

#115. [On Formation of Formators, Recommendations] We recommend that at those regional meetings of brothers in formation, the formators of the other branches of the Dominican Family be invited.

#124. [On Community *Life*, Our democracy]

1. Its goal: In society, democracy is often simply a matter of finding the will of the majority. One votes with the purpose of winning, of having one's opinion determine the course of things. The goal of our democratic process, however, is to come to a consensus between the members of the community on what is the common good. There is not a government and an opposition. We all share the same way of life and we try to determine what is the best for the mission of the Order and for the life of the community. It takes longer, as we often experience with a sense of frustration, but the result binds the community together.

2. An art of dialogue: Our democratic process requires the participation of all, an openness and the readiness to let go of one's privileges and to accept personal sacrifices. On the other hand, it should not dampen personal initiative; on the contrary, we have to be ready to take initiatives to make things move, and bring the best of ourselves to the common good. But that does not mean doing what we want, and presenting to the community an accomplished fact.

Our democracy cannot function without the art of dialogue among the friars. One has to listen to what the others want to express, without imposing on them preconceived opinions. And one is not to repeat endlessly the same arguments, once they have been expressed and understood by the others. One has to let go of one's personal agenda. The practice of such dialogue, in which one affirms oneself while at the same time respecting the other, requires affective maturity. It also has to do with our vow of obedience, for the discussion leads to a decision that everybody will have to accept and implement.

3. Learning: Democracy touches all our life, which is moulded by it. Our preparation for the art of dialogue is never done once and for all, and everyone has to perfect it and learn it over and over again. This is true in a special way of the new friars coming to the Order. For a good part, their learning will be done by experiencing our democracy in action, how decisions are made in chapters, how our superiors are elected, and by participating progressively in the process. It is an important aspect of formation that the community itself gives to the new friars by the way it lives its life.

The functioning of democracy in meetings and chapters presupposes certain skills. They are for a good part natural. But they can be developed, and partly acquired. Developing these skills can help everybody to be a better participant in community meetings. But they are particularly important for superiors and the moderators of community meetings.

#124. [Recommendations and exhortation] We recommend that all brothers, and particularly the superiors and moderators of community meetings, do all they can to acquire the skills of moderating meetings.

#126. We exhort all brothers to support the efforts of those who try to develop these skills and to use them in community meetings.

#146. [Prologue on *DOMINICAN FAMILY*] The Dominican Family has its roots in the vocation and charism of Dominic de Guzman, preacher of the Good News of Jesus Christ. This charism has been lived in many different forms throughout the centuries. It is incarnated in old and new forms in the lives of men and women, young and old, who upon hearing the call of the Spirit decide to follow the way of the preacher.

It is from the silence of monasteries to the noise of a youth gathering, from the tranquility of the classroom to the deafening noise of the factory, from the pain of hospitals to the heroic involvement of missionaries, that the charism of Dominic gives unity to the life and mission of those who have followed in his steps.

The positive experience of working together in the areas of formation, prayer and ministries within the Dominican Family and the need to proclaim the Good News encourage us to continue promoting in complementary and mutual collaboration the diverse experiences of the Dominican vocation, while realizing the mission in the Church and the world in an attitude of respect for the autonomies and particular characteristics.

Though the Master of the Order plays the same role with all the branches in promoting fidelity to the spirit of Saint Dominic, we have to take into account that his relation with them varies in order and degree. So he enjoys full authority over the friars, according to their constitutions; the nuns, who have their own constitutions approved by the Holy See, profess obedience to him, as their own proper and immediate regular superior (cf. LCM 238); he has a particular relationship with the priestly and lay fraternities but the congregations of sisters and secular institutes are fully autonomous.

At the 1983 Symposium of the Dominican Family in Bologna the different branches acknowledged that, as successor of Saint Dominic, the Master is the principle and sign of unity of the Dominican Family. As such, he grants aggregation to the Order whether directly or through an entity.

On the threshold of the Jubilee year 2000, and in accordance with the proposal of the General Chapter in Caleruega 1995, we acknowledge the need to concentrate our efforts in the next few years on the assemblies, national and regional, of the Dominican Family. Following in the steps of the Symposium of Bologna, these Assemblies will invite representatives from the different branches of the Family so that together they may continue to celebrate and reflect on our Dominican vocation and call to collaboration for the sake of our common mission.

#147. [Order of Preachers and *Dominican Family*] In the past years the titles of Order of Preachers and Dominican Family have been used interchangeably. Both concepts describe the Dominican reality from different perspectives. We believe it is time to

*... Order of Preachers and Dominican Family have been used interchangeably ... it is time to clarify these realities...*

#147.

clarify these realities so that all branches of the Dominican Family arrive at a common understanding and acceptance.

**#148. [Recommendation]** We recommend that the International Commission of the Dominican Family appoints a group of qualified members to:

- 1) Study and clarify the difference between Order of Preachers and Dominican Family.
- 2) Circulate this study to the national assemblies of the Dominican Family for discussion and feed back.
- 3) The General Chapter suggests the following text to the Commission for reflection:

The word << Order >> should be understood in a dynamic way as the special task or mission that constitutes a group of persons that is publicly recognized and entrusted with carrying it out. Our Order is sent for the proclamation of the Word of God (Fundamental Constitution, I).

"Order of Preachers" refers to the religious society of all those who, through their public engagement, are incorporated into the Dominican mission as it is recognized by the universal church.

The Order generates a family. This is especially appropriate, since preaching is not merely instruction directed to individuals, but its fruit appears in the creation of community.

"Family" is a metaphor that evokes and expresses the experience of belonging together, sharing the same name and roots, recognizing and offering mutual support in a loving relationship as brothers and sisters.

Therefore the "Dominican Family" is that communion of friars, nuns, apostolic sisters, members of secular institutes, fraternities of priests and laity, associations attached to the Order, who, through a shared charism, are ordered to assume a similar mission of preaching and compassion.

The family seeks to establish an Order. In its turn the family seeks to organize itself as an order, through defining the roles and responsibilities of its members and thereby assuring them of their place within the whole. Other persons may consider themselves members of the Dominican Family in the sense that they either individually or through various associations have been attracted by the mission of the Order and continue to look to it for inspiration and support. In this sense the Dominican Family can be considered as a movement, which is open to new forms of life and mission. (Rome 271).

**#149. [International Commission of the Dominican Family]** The International Commission of the Dominican Family is a consultative body convoked by the Master of the Order and is composed of the Master of the Order, the Promoter of the Nuns, the Promoter of the Laity and a representative of "Dominican Sisters. International".

**#150. [Recommendation]** The appointment of an Assistant for the Dominican Family requested by the Chapter of Caleruega was a visionary response to the needs of the Family. New times though present new needs, and the need for a more collaborative approach moves us to propose the following:

We request that the International Commission of the Dominican Family consider the following as their task:

To promote collaboration of the Dominican Family in mission projects pertaining to the Order.

To encourage and aid all the entities of the Dominican Family world-wide.

To co-ordinate the work done by the Secretariats of the Dominican Family in their respective territories.

To organize periodical regional and international meetings for representatives and members of the branches of the Dominican Family.

To share the work done by the Dominican Family in their respective territories.

#151. [General Assembly of the *Dominican Family*-Petition and Commendation] We petition the Master of the Order to convene an international committee of the Dominican Family - of no more than (10) ten members - to co-ordinate the planning and implementation of the Assembly of the Dominican Family in the year 2000.

#152. We recommend those existing provincials, regional and national commissions/councils/secretariats/assemblies of the Dominican Family and we encourage their creation in the provinces, regions or countries where they do not exist.

#171. [Promoter of the *Laity-Recommendation*] We recommend that the Master of the Order appoints a Promoter for the Laity, preferably a lay person:

- 1) To represent the laity at the international level.
- 2) To encourage contact among the different groups within the Dominican Laity.
- 3) To encourage the laity to form regional and continental organizations.

#174. [On Laity associated with the Friars] In many places, lay groups have appeared as alternatives to the traditional Dominican fraternities. In general, these lay people do not primarily desire to integrate themselves into a structure, but to participate in the mission of the Order as individuals or a family aggregated to some community of friars and their work

*... Lay groups have appeared as alternatives to the traditional Dominican fraternities. . . . We recommend... to grant these groups admission to the Dominican Family.*

#174-175

#175. [Recommendation] We recommend to the Prior Provincials and their Council that they use the possibilities offered at the General Chapter of Avila (# 8513, 88,89) to grant these groups admission to the Dominican Family.



#176. We recommend to the Prior Provincials and their Councils and equally to the Prioress Generals, that they establish basic criteria of admission that integrate the four fundamental pillars of Dominican Life: prayer, study, community and ministry.

#177. *[Proposal of some basic criteria for the aggregation and admission of new groups- Recommendation]* As an explanation of these basic criteria we offer the following suggestions:

1. Participation in the Dominican mission of preaching and teaching the Word of God.
2. Active participation and collaboration in the concrete carrying out of the local and universal mission of the Order.
3. A government that expresses the democratic and communitarian tradition of the Order.
4. Community of life and prayer, unity in prayer with the whole Order, formation and study for the ministry of salvation and apostolic works to which they have been called.
5. Knowledge of and acceptance of the history of the Order; its origins and spirituality.
6. A commitment, at least temporary, to the mission of the Order, expressed as a profession, promise or other form of formal commitment.
7. As well as being admitted by the Superior Generals in the case of the movements of the associates to the congregations of sisters, and by the Master of the Order, in the case of groups associated to the friars or others who desire to belong to the Order, they should be recognized by the commission/council/secretariat of the Dominican Family of the area.

*[Appendix 1. 7. The Dominican Family]* In accordance with request of the General Chapter of Caleruega (no. 94), I have named fr Yvon Pomeleau OP as the Promoter General of the Dominican Family. I have also named a small Commission of the Dominican Family, which includes fr Yvon, Sr. Margaret Ormond OP (delegate of Dominican Sisters international), fr Viktor Hofstetter OP, the Promoter General of the Nuns, and myself. This Commission will meet to discuss how to co-ordinate various projects of the whole Dominican Family. The Commission has been invited to give a presentation during the first days of the Chapter.

The close collaboration of Sr. Margaret, fr Yvon and fr Viktor in the promotion of the Dominican Family is a wonderful sign that this ideal is beginning to become a reality. They are working together in the preparation for the General Assembly of the Dominican Family which was proposed by the last General Chapter, and which will take place in the year 2000.

During my visitations of the Order I have frequent meeting with the Dominican Family. Often I have been inspired by the way that we are growing together in a shared mission which respects each other's talents.

The Dominican Family seems to flourish:

- a. when there are structures which enable the branches to meet together, to get to know each other, discover each other's gifts, and to plan common projects. Often the other branches wait for the brethren to take the initiative to organize such structures, although,

alas, it is sometimes the brethren who least appreciate the importance of developing such collaboration.

The initiative should not depend upon the brethren.

b. when we see each other as partners in mission rather than as just another obligation to be borne.

This requires a good solid formation, in which we are all open to team from each other.

*The Dominican Family seems to flourish ...  
when we see each other as partners in mission*

Timothy Radcliffe, Master of the Order

c. when we give a priority to the young, both to reach out to them, to welcome them into our communities, and to ask for their help in our mission. My hope is that before the end of my mandate we shall have made further steps in the development of a movement for young lay volunteers who wish to give a year or two of their lives to work in the mission of the Order.

## Elective General Chapter of Providence 2001

#83. *[Youth]* A particular challenge to our mission today is to listen to young people and to meet them in their cultures: the evangelization or the re-evangelization of youth. Many of us live in societies that are heterogeneous and pluralistic, secular and consumerist where often God is not prominent in people's lives. For some, God's reality has no meaning. Many young people abandon their religion after adolescence - indeed, some were never introduced to religion. Nevertheless, in young people there is still a craving for meditation and spirituality and for the supernatural. The young are frequently caught up in drastic social problems like migration, drugs, unemployment, and sexual abuse. The rise of suicide among the young in affluent countries bears painful witness to the void and pain created by a lack of meaning, purpose, and hope in a situation of practical materialism. The variety of schools in which we teach are valuable places for evangelization and witnessing to Christian values, for inspiring young people to reach out to their peers and families. Young people are the future and the fulfillment of what the present brings - they are a trajectory of hope.

*Young people are the future and the fulfillment of what the present brings – they are a trajectory of hope*

#83.

#84. *[Non-practising Catholics]* It is urgent that we undertake a re-evangelization, with pastoral dialogue and adult catechesis, of those who tend to call themselves "non-practising Catholics" and who are becoming ever more numerous in some countries and regions. Usually having received the sacraments of initiation, little by little they abandon their active and habitual participation in the life of the Church, although they continue to maintain certain Christian values. Often, many of them fall into that growing and progressive religious indifference called "post-Christian" that has invaded the culture of some countries.

#86. *[New Evangelization]* In response to challenges posed by youth, non-practising Catholics, sub-cultures, and minority groups (and there are others) evangelization should touch the personal identity and quest of each and every individual, speak to their problems, and display solidarity with them. This preaching includes not only friars but sisters and laity. Such an evangelization might lead to improving human lives in concrete ways. This evangelization would use the opportunities of a world linked in varied ways - the media and the internet, for instance, or other languages of contemporary society like music and sports - in short, the culture of the globalised world. Regional and international meetings could be held not only for young people connected to the Order but for youth who have little contact with faith.

### *The Credibility of Our Witness*

#87. *[Wealth]* The Church does not live independent of societies, of their age and ethos. In a globalised world, wealth is related to power and the powerful, and this issue affects the Church and the Order in ways that can be either real or apparent. For Dominicans a misuse of wealth or a lifestyle that does not show that we too are working people (LCO 33; 538 P II) is contrary to the Gospel message and a scandal to the poor.

### Simplicity of Means

- #230. In our search for a way towards contemplative prayer or for a way of responding to God's love, we, as Dominicans, are guided by our constitutions and by the example of our brothers and sisters, past and present, in their experience of God. We especially look to the recognized spiritual masters of our tradition, while never losing sight of the simple ordinariness of the ways in which God speaks to us.
- #231. God generally speaks to us in gentle ways (I Kg 19:12), at times through an impulse of grace or a quiet feeling, at other times in a simple word or phrase or idea that strikes us as we read the Scriptures, or in a conversation with others, or in a particular experience of the world around us. We attend to these experiences allowing them to enter our hearts as well as our minds, realizing that God is behind the impulse that touches us.
- #232. We then relate our experience to that of Jesus, his Mother and the disciples in the Gospels, and of the people of God in the traditions of the Church.
- #233. Along the way there will be obstacles to overcome. If we are accustomed to reading the Bible as if it were a telephone book or a study text, we will not be able to hear what God is saying to us.
- #234. Childhood traumas, deep resentments, anger, inner sexual conflicts, unresolved grief and a restless spirit are among the obstacles that might stand in our way. We will have to find ways of dealing with these and any other obstacles to contemplation such as overwork, over-intellectualizing, perfectionism and narcissism.
- #235. Contemplation is a gift. By a passive openness and waiting we prepare ourselves to receive God's own self. Along the way we may experience periods of dryness or aridity. Only through fidelity to prayer, knowledge of oneself and seeking advice will we be able to discern whether these times are normal steps towards a deeper life of contemplation, a time of purification, or an obstacle due to lack of faithfulness to prayer, lack of self-discipline, inattention to the common life, and to regular observance.
- #236. Contemplation puts us in contact with the mystery of God. This can make us feel overwhelmed by a deep sense of wonder and awe as we marvel at the grandeur of God and God's creation. But if no one has ever seen God, Jesus Christ, the only Son, has revealed him (cf. Jn 1:18). Christian contemplation establishes us in a personal relation of friendship with God, through Jesus Christ. And since "one who has no love for the brother he has seen cannot love the God he has not seen" (I Jn 4:20) our friendship with God encompasses a spiritual friendship with our brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus.
- #237. In contemplation we also experience the Risen Lord as present not only in the glory of his Father, but also within our world, and especially in the poor and suffering, and among the sinful. It would be strange indeed if this did not give rise to strong emotions. Dominic wept at night for sinners, while during the day with his companions he was known to be constantly joyful.

### Conclusion

- #238. Our commitment to contemplation will enable us to live out our lives fully, and to face the problems of the world, the Church and the Order, in whatever form they present themselves to us. It is through our faithfulness to a life of contemplation together that God imbues us with hope for the future.

*Communities Open to the Dominican Family and to Other Persons*

#268. [Recommendation] We recommend that superiors be attentive in seeing that the friars have the freedom to welcome religious sisters, laity, and youth, and that they invite them to participate actively in certain acts of the community: encounters, fraternal sharing, formation, study, liturgy, and collaborating in the apostolate.

CHAPTER EIGHT: THE DOMINICAN FAMILY PROLOGUE:  
VITALITY, DIVERSITY AND COMMUNION

#407. In our General Chapters we dedicate part of our time to the Dominican Family. We do not reflect coldly on this, as if it were some foreign matter for us or some conceptual topic to consider. For us it means much more than that: in community, we discern our deep experience of life and mission shared fraternally with the nuns, the friars, the sisters, and laity, women and men, and also many youth, with whom we share a strong filial love for St. Dominic and a strong attraction for the preaching of the Gospel.

#408. A few years back, recalling the past, the Chapter in Mexico [1992] bore witness to a reality that is affirmed and grows strongly among us today: "Some thirty years ago we noticed the recovery and development of an old reality, the Dominican Family" (Acts, 116). During recent years, our family has continued to grow. The Master of the Order Fr. Buenaventura Garcia de Paredes [1926] said that "the blood of St. Dominic *flows* in the veins of all his spiritual sons and daughters." Today that blood *flows* with great energy. Both the International Symposium of the Dominican Family held in Bologna in April 1983 and the very successful General Assembly of the Dominican Family held in Manila in October 2000, attest to this energized vitality.

#409. The Dominican Family is in full growth. Using the analogy of the tree, we can say that the foliage on the branches of the tree is becoming denser: a sign of a rich harvest. It is true that the branches do not all grow at the same rate and vigor. The new growth of green buds appears on the branch, foretelling new fruit; the old branches maintain their vigor, trusting hopefully for a greater harvest. Our roots run very deep and they take hold in the fruitfulness of St. Dominic. We delight in the fact that we are fully alive and our fruitfulness, indeed, surprises us. We thank God for this, and we marvel increasingly at the attraction that St. Dominic's charism exercises in these new times of uncertainties and hopes.

#410. Within the Dominican Family due, thankfully, in great part to its fruitfulness and its wide welcoming spirit, there are many ways to live the charism and the mission of preaching, which are mutually complementary, and, consequently the vigor and the richness of the common mission increases. Born out of the profound experience of the Dominican charism, this diversity of options is our great wealth, because these differences in styles of life and options mutually complement us, generously and fraternally enrich our lives, and give greater expressiveness, vigor and credibility to our common mission.

#411. We discover that we are a family in the simple celebration of our feasts, in common prayer, in shared reflection, and, finally, when we engage in mission together. Communion and mission are the vital bonds that unite us. Nuns and friars, laity and sisters, men and women travel the same paths proclaiming the same Word with different voices. We all live our common commitment to mission in different ways, with or without vows or promises; in the [monastery. in](#) priories, in the heart of family life, and in diverse professions in the business of the world. But we all feel fraternally united in the mission and we unanimously recognize "the Master of the Order as the successor of St. Dominic, who is the principle

and sign of unity of the Dominican Family," and "outside of a general chapter, is the only one who guarantees and promotes faithfulness to the spirit of Saint Dominic" (Bologna 146: *The Dominican Family*, 3,2).

#### *A Few Difficulties*

- #412. We note, however, that in the heart of the Dominican Family, ambiguities and tensions arise that injure our common life and our common mission - among them a certain resistance to what is new in what appears within our family, without undertaking a proper discernment concerning it (cf.: *Information from the General Promoter of the Dominican Laity*, B.1).
- #413. Some members of the Dominican Family are worried about the ambiguity that, in their judgment, exists between the notion of "Order of Preachers" and "Dominican Family." For that reason they ask this General Chapter for a greater clarification that will manifest their mutual differences and, furthermore, they ask us to say a word concerning the relationship that exists between them. Others have demonstrated their preference for not entering into an analysis of their juridical aspects but for deepening collaboration between them.
- #414. These difficulties normally arise when something new comes about, as we believe is happening in our case. The Holy Spirit unceasingly raises up in the Church, in ever new and at times surprising ways, different forms of evangelical life. We need to receive them joyfully, after discerning them carefully. Among us, the Master of the Order and the General Chapter are the ones to guarantee the authenticity of what is new, of new foundations that desire to live the riches of our Dominican charism. That is why it is important that no one in the Dominican Family speak or act in such a way as to appropriate that charism for the exclusive benefit of a few, so that it cannot be shared in a just and fitting way.

#### I. THE ORDER OF PREACHERS AND THE DOMINICAN FAMILY

- #415. The charism of Dominic, a gift from God for the benefit of the church, is one and undivided: *the grace of preaching, nourished and increased through contemplation*. This charism, with its great apostolic vitality, reveals itself continuously in the course of time with new expressiveness and wealth. At the same time, it makes itself a concrete historical reality through distinct means and grades of apostolic life, thanks to its great capacity to stir up enthusiasm among women and men, youth and adults, believers in Jesus and witnesses to the Kingdom.

*The charism of Dominic, a gift from God for the benefit of the church, is one and undivided: the grace of preaching, nourished and increased through contemplation.*

#415.

- #416. The name "Order of Preachers" designates, by the conferring of an ecclesial mandate, a body of people whose way of life and preaching derive from the distinctive charism given to Saint Dominic. The name "Dominican Family" designates the coming together within a wider unity of all those who have been called by the Spirit to participate in this charism in a variety of ways. In their distinct and successive historical periods, these two great movements make up a homogeneous process without splintering. We, the whole Dominican Family, feel united as brothers and sisters, by the unique mission of preaching "the word of God, propagating throughout the world the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" [LCO 1, I], according to the spirit of Dominic.

- #417. In the course of time, inspired by the Dominican charism, new groupings, with their projects of life and mission and their particular characteristics, sprang from the same trunk of the Order, and acquired distinct juridical forms, in keeping with the age. Currently:
1. the friars promise obedience to the Master of the Order "according to the laws of the Preachers" [LCO 17, II]; the nuns make profession to the Master of the Order [LCO 143] and are united to the friars in a spiritual sense. Their juridical relationship with the Order is expressed in their own Constitutions [LCM]. The laity "are incorporated to the Order" (*Rule of the Secular Fraternities of St. Dominic*; N.2) in the Secular Fraternities of Saint Dominic, make their promise to the Master of the Order, and follow the "Rule of the Secular Fraternities of Saint Dominic" [FCDL] approved by the Church [1987]. Similarly, the Dominican priestly fraternities strive "to develop their life and ministry in the spirit of St. Dominic" [LCO 149, II];
  2. the *sisters of the distinct Dominican congregations*, so numerous in our family, participate in the mission and charism of the Order through the richness of the congregational charisms, although they do not have a direct juridical bond to the Master of the Order. They are congregations aggregated to the Order by the Master of the Order. They retain their full autonomy, but can propose to the General Chapter of the friars their desires and suggestions with respect to the Dominican Family [cf. LCO 415, III]. The *secular institutes*, aggregated to the Order, "embrace profession of the evangelical counsels in the world according to the spirit of St. Dominic [LCO 147];
  3. The associates mentioned in the LCO (152 and appendix 4) are new groups that can be recognized by the provincial chapters of the friars or by priors provincial with their councils (Avila, 89) or by the prioresses general of the congregations of sisters (Bologna, 173): the members of the different groups of the Dominican Youth Movement and many other persons that, without any type of formal commitment, participate and collaborate in various ways in the mission of the Order. Our family has always been an open house that welcomes new members unceasingly, for which reason the Chapter of Bologna affirmed that the Dominican Family can be considered as a movement open to new forms of life and mission.
- #418. The "Order of Preachers" is configured by those who, through profession (for those who follow the evangelical counsels, i.e., the nuns and friars) or promises (for the members of the presbyteral and lay fraternities, who make a commitment to an evangelical life style that is consonant with their condition) made to the Master of the Order, integrate themselves to the Order (cf. CIC 303 and 614; LCO 142 and 149; LCM 1, '2; RFLSD, 2). Their incorporation to the Order implies, furthermore, a permanent commitment to live the particular Dominican style of life, approved by the Church, which takes Dominic as its model.
- #419. Religious sisters and members of secular institutes, lay and priestly fraternities, as well as the nuns and friars, can be considered integral parts of the Order of Preachers, albeit under various titles, understanding the term "Order" in a broad sense that includes all those who are committed to a particular type of life, inspired by the life and mission of Saint Dominic and approved by the Church, each according to its own proper condition and with the respective autonomy established in its own statutes (cf. *Madonna dell'Arco*, n. 225).
- #420. Whereas the term Order expresses a precise juridical organization, the image of Family evokes the experience of a mutual belonging, through which all of us who acknowledge Saint Dominic as our common father recognize and support each other mutually as sisters and brothers. Integrated into the Constitutions by the General Chapter of 1968 (LCO 1, IX), this image reflects an ancient reality which is manifesting itself in new ways. It makes

manifest the fraternal communion among the distinct branches and the consciousness that this reality implies: profound bonds between us and concrete attitudes of complementarity and collaboration, of mutual respect and equality of dignity, in the diversity and particularity of each branch. These differences arise from the needs of our mission, which requires diverse and complementary services (Quezon City, 65).

- #421. The Master of the Order, as successor of Saint Dominic at the head of the Order, occupies a central place in the family, as principle and sign of unity. Nevertheless, although the Master of the Order plays the same role of promoting fidelity to the spirit of Saint Dominic among all the branches, it must be remembered that his relations with them differ in order and in degree (Bologna, 146).

#### *Exhortations*

- #422. In view of extending our fraternal bonds, we exhort the friars, and we invite all the members of the Dominican Family, to the "change of heart" to which the General Chapter of Bologna invited us (*Bologna* 34:2,3). We exhort the brothers to extend a generous and solicitous hospitality to married couples, families and youth, so that they might have the opportunity to share in liturgy, prayer, and study. In this way we will be better able to attain the goal of working together in mission, enriching one another for the benefit of the common service of preaching the Word of God.

- #423. We exhort all the members of the Dominican Family to live our mission as Preachers, joyfully and together in a climate of fraternity, dialogue and freedom. "In order to be truly a family of preachers," said Master of the Order Timothy Radcliffe, "we must acknowledge the authority of one another. I must admit the authority of a sister because she speaks from the truth of her experience as a woman, or perhaps also as a professor of theology. I should give authority to a lay Dominican who knows much more than I about many things: perhaps about marriage, or of a particular science or art. If we acknowledge the authority of each other, we shall be truly a family of preachers. Together we can find an authority that no one of us has individually. Together we must find our voice" (Letter of fr. Timothy Radcliffe, Master of the Order, *To Praise, to Bless, to Preach: The Mission of the Dominican Family*, Manila, 2000).

*In order to be truly a family of preachers, we must acknowledge the authority of one another... Together we must find our voice.*

Timothy Radcliffe, Master of the Order

#### II. EXHORTATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COLLABORATION

- #424. The Mexico Chapter [116] tells us that "collaborating means working together. And this, which is applicable to all families, is all the more applicable to the Dominican Family, which has in common 'the particular mission of proclaiming the Word of God' [Bologna Symposium Document, 4:1 ]. The Chapter therefore strongly affirms the common dignity and equality of all those that belong to the Dominican Family, men and women, clerics and lay, and urges that collaboration among them, which is already partially achieved with positive results, be intensified and extended in all fields. Thus, from its unity and diversity, the Dominican Family will be a prophetic sign for the modern world, because we are born in a family, we are formed as a family, and we are on mission as a family." In this spirit, we propose the following exhortations and recommendations.



*At the Level of Structures*

- #425. *[Exhortation]* Since it is still not possible to convoke an international commission that would be representative of each of the branches of the Dominican Family, we exhort the Master of the Order to encourage the collaborative efforts already engaged in by the different promoters who work in relation to the Dominican Family (Promoter of the Dominican Family, of the Nuns, of the Laity) and to continue promoting coordinating meetings with other branches of the family, in particular with those who already have an international organization, such as DSI.
- #426. *[Recommendation]* We renew the exhortation of the Chapter of Mexico (121), and in its spirit we recommend constituting at the national and/or provincial levels
1. a conference (association, panel) comprising majors superiors of Dominicans, the President of the National (or Provincial) Council of Fraternities of Lay Dominicans and representatives of other duly recognized lay groups. This group's goal would be to share information; to discuss common projects; to raise a shared awareness of needs and resources; and in this way, to promote the collaboration and common mission of the Dominican Family. This conference (association, panel) does not have jurisdiction over the entities that constitute it;
  2. a secretariat of the Dominican Family, at the same levels, whose structures and responsibilities shall be defined by the conference (association, panel) previously mentioned.

*Foundations and Projects*

- #427. *[Exhortation]* Since "our global identity is best manifested through our collaboration" (Bologna 34.2), we believe that foundations and new projects are privileged areas of collaboration. We exhort that, whenever possible, these be conceived, carried out, and evaluated in collaboration.

*Sharing Costs*

- #428. *[Recommendation]* We recommend to the organizations that plan Dominican Family initiatives of any kind, that the economic implications of these initiatives be foreseen, as well as an equitable manner of sharing the costs among participating entities.

*Dominican Family Day*

- #429. *[Recommendation]* We recommend that the friars, in accord with the other branches of the Dominican Family, celebrate an Annual Day of the Dominican Family. The object of this would be to call to mind our common mission and to celebrate it. We believe that the appropriate date for this event can best be chosen locally. Nevertheless, we suggest that a possible day would be the Feast of All the Saints of the Dominican Family (November 7) or around that time.

*Assemblies of the Dominican Family*

- #430. *[Recommendation]* Taking into account the proposals of the Assembly of Manila, we recommend that the organization of assemblies at continental, sub-continental, national or regional levels be pursued according to what is considered appropriate by the respective coordinating bodies. We recommend that the organization of these assemblies, with

respect to their objectives, their festive mood, and their composition draw its inspiration from the Symposium in Bologna (1983) and the Manila Assembly (2000). These assemblies could be followed by an eventual second international assembly.

*Solidarity Within the Dominican Family*

*[Exhortation]* Living in a globalized world that frequently excludes the most needy, the Dominican Family has many opportunities for realizing within itself innumerable gestures of solidarity that are beyond the limits of each branch. We recognize with satisfaction several of these efforts already carried out. We exhort the friars, and invite all the branches of the Dominican Family, to undertake new gestures of solidarity, such as sharing economic resources, as well as resources of formation, information, and others.

*Priority Areas of Collaboration*

Following the recommendations of the Assembly of Manila, we wish to underscore several priority areas of collaboration.

#431. *[Recommendation: Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation]* Given the quite frequent affronts to justice, peace, and the integrity of creation, we recommend that we assume the following objectives:

1. Sharing information, experiences, methods of action.  
Moved and summoned by our common passion for the truth in these matters, studying and discerning situations together and engaging together in gestures of truth.
2. Relying on the indispensable help of the Promotes of Justice and Peace;
3. Being conscious of the consequences that our commitment to the truth implies in terms of economic systems that cause unlimited consumerism and that compromise the natural world.

#432. *[Exhortations and Recommendations: Formation]*

1. For the benefit of the initial and permanent formation of all, we exhort the friars and invite the members of the Dominican Family to share the available resources having to do with the common charism of the Order and its history, and, likewise, the history and the particular charisms of each of the branches of the Dominican Family.
2. We know that, in many places, there are documents, formation projects, internet sites, and capable persons for the formation of the Dominican Family, but often they tend to be unknown, even in the same region. In order that we can take advantage of this wealth, especially - but not only - for the laity, we ask that the Promoter of the Dominican Family produce a list of available formation resources for Dominican life, the history of the Order and its charism. We believe the internet can be a very useful instrument for this service, just as is already being done with happy results in various entities of the Dominican Family.
3. We gratefully recognize the experience of common formation of formators brought about in Asia and the Pacific. We recommend that this serve as an example for other regions, including in these experiences formators of Dominican Laity as well, whenever this is appropriate.

4. We recognize the wealth of formation initiatives, brought about in various regions, that consist in brothers and sisters" sharing experiences of common initial formation. We recommend that in each region these experiences, during the period of initial formation, be implemented to the extent possible.
5. We recommend that the distinct entities of the Dominican Family of each region who possess universities, faculties, institutes, or secondary schools offer to the members of the Family the resources for Dominican formation that are available in these institutions.

#433. *[Recommendation. Youth Ministry]* We recommend to the brothers and invite the members of the Dominican Family to consider youth ministry as a priority option for our common mission.

#434. *[Exhortation: Communications]*

1. Many initiatives for furthering communication already exist within the Dominican Family. We exhort those in charge of communications to increase and improve this service as much as possible.
2. To the Promoter of the Internet we entrust the creation of links which would facilitate access to sites which are of interest to the Dominican Family.

*Acknowledgment, Request, and Recommendation*

#435. We acknowledge the interim report entitled "The Charism of Preaching for Women and Men in the Order of Preachers," presented by the Commission which the General Chapter of Bologna (42) had petitioned.

We entrust the assistants for Intellectual Life and Apostolic Life with the continuance of this reflection, together with experts from diverse parts of the world.

#436. We recommend that the members of the Dominican Family, men and women together, address in the ministry of preaching such topics as the family, social values, the Christian understanding of the economy and politics; that they engage together in youth formation, and in the design and production of radio and television programs.

III. THE DOMINICAN LAITY

#440. We rejoice in the growing vitality of so many Lay Dominican fraternities and in the appearance of new groups of lay Dominicans in different parts of the world. Their presence is "a source of new life for the Order" (*Relatio Magistri*, 6.5.2) and an enrichment for its mission. The reasoned and conscientious commitment of the laity to their vocation and mission in the Church, the Order, and the world; the powerful attraction of the Dominican charism; the mission of preaching the Word of God in this world of constant change; and the vitality and wideranging apostolates of the Dominican Family are a stimulus and an evangelical impetus to incarnate Dominican life and mission in diverse ways within their particular lay ecclesial situation.

*We rejoice in the growing vitality of so many Lay Dominican fraternities and in the ... new groups of lay Dominicans ... Their presence is "a source of new life for the Order" and an enrichment for its mission.*

#440.

- #441. The Dominican Laity fraternities are being renewed and rejuvenated in some countries (cf. *Relatio Magistri*, 6.5.1), although not in others. This difference is possibly due to the ability or the lack of ability to overcome obsolete paradigms; to the degree of attention, interest, and welcome that the friars give to them; and the quality of formation offered to them. On occasions we brothers do not understand, and therefore we do not value, their vocation in the heart of the Order, in service to their mission as laity in the various areas of secular human society: the family, politics, society and culture, the economy, and work (cf.: *Lumen Gentium* 31). This deficiency of ours was already pointed out by the Chapter of Bologna, and again recently by the Master of the Order Timothy Radcliffe in his *Relatio de statu Ordinis (Relatio Magistri*, 6.5.1).
- #442. In addition to Dominican Laity fraternities, we also see the appearance of new groups of lay Dominicans. "At times, there is a worry that these new groups are leaving the lay fraternities to the side... , but there can be no rivalry. The fraternities have an irreplaceable role in the life of the Order" (*Relatio Magistri*, 6.5.2), and each one of the new groups (Dominican Youth Movement, International Movement of Dominican Volunteers, associates of sisters" congregations, laity associated with the friars, etc.) live, in their own way, the basic Dominican values of prayer, study, community and preaching in different areas.

#### *Recommendations and Declaration*

- #443. We recommend earnestly that brothers accompany the Dominican laity diligently, offering them the best they have to offer, for their benefit and the benefit of the mission, and that brothers demonstrate a generous openness to receiving the richness that the laity can provide from the diversity of their situations.
- #444. As requisites for acknowledging new groups of laity within the Dominican Family, we recommend the following, which are based on the *suggestions* of the Chapter of Bologna [177]:
1. Participation in the Dominican mission of preaching and teaching the Word of God;
  2. Participation and active collaboration in concrete projects in the local and universal mission of the Order;
  3. A government that expresses the democratic and communal tradition of the Order;
  4. A community of life and prayer, unity in prayer with the entire Order; formation and study for the ministry of salvation and apostolic tasks to which they have been called;
  5. Knowledge and appropriation of the history of the Order, its origins and its spirituality;
  6. Adherence to the mission of the Order, either without any explicit type of formal commitment to the Order, or together with promises (optional or general) or other forms of temporary or perpetual commitment.
- #445. We recommend that the Promoter General of Dominican Laity, in collaboration with his international and national counterparts:
1. ensure that lay Dominican groups, in their dynamic rhythms of renewal and growth, be faithful to our genuine tradition, and that they be enlightened and stimulated by Dominican theological creativity, in order to discern as a community their proper identity of life and mission in current times;
  2. in addition to stimulating the life and mission of these groups, offer them the best possibilities for their formation, since preparation for the mission of the Dominican laity "presupposes a deep formation in our theological tradition. This is more than simply knowing the lives of Saint Dominic and Saint Catherine. It is an initiation to our manner of doing theology, whether academic or not" (*Relatio Magistri*, 6.5.1).

3. determine the advisability of international encounters of delegates of lay Dominicans together with the Promoters of Dominican Laity. The objective of these encounters would be to seek ways of promoting the laity at national, regional, and international levels; to discern the best structures to achieve this end: and provisionally to designate lay delegates to participate in certain instances in the Dominican Family where they are not yet represented.

#446. *[Declaration]* In the "Rule of Secular Fraternities of Saint Dominic," there is no provision made for dispensation or expulsion of members of the fraternities after their final commitments. Until this matter is dealt with, and provision made for these situations in the Rule, we declare that provincial priors, at the request of the local councils of the fraternities, have the authority to dispense or expel members of the fraternities after their final commitments.

#### DOMINICAN YOUTH MOVEMENT

#447. We affirm integrally the declarations and exhortations of the Chapter of Bologna concerning the Dominican Youth Movement *[160-165]*.

#448. We exhort the brothers to become acquainted with the Dominican Youth Movement. We exhort them to make this movement known and to consider the possibility of integrating into it the youth groups with which they work.

#449. We exhort the promoters of Dominican Laity that, at local, national, continental and international levels, they integrate the Dominican Youth Movement in the structures of promotion and organization of the Dominican Laity and the Dominican Family.

#### INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT OF DOMINICAN VOLUNTEERS

#450. We affirm integrally the declarations and exhortations of the Chapter of Bologna concerning the International Movement of Dominican Volunteers *[166-170]*.

#451. We exhort whoever is responsible for its membership, that the committee that animates and coordinates the International Movement of Dominican Volunteers be made up of brothers, sisters and laity, so that this collaborative venture be truly common.

#### *[Appendix I: 6.5 The Dominican Laity]*

6.5.1. *[The Fraternities]* The fraternities of the Dominican laity are being renewed and rejuvenated in many places, for example the USA, Germany, Holland, Uruguay, Mexico, Latvia, Lithuania and Vietnam. In some other countries, the fraternities find it hard to recruit younger members. The vitality of the fraternities depends largely on whether we see them as our active collaborators in the mission of the Order, who have a unique contribution to make because of their experience as lay people and their own expertise. Sometimes the brethren see them as pious disciples whose role is just to listen to us. Some lay Dominicans bring an academic knowledge in areas such as economics science, ecology, sociology, etc., which can help the Order to participate in the debates of society. Others have an experience of industry or the arts. Some help us reach groups who may be far from the Church, such as the young or the poor. Secondly, preparation for this mission means a profound formation in our theological tradition. This is more than just learning about the life of St. Dominic and St. Catherine. It is an initiation into our way of doing theology, whether academically or not.