



Veritas Spring issue 2023

The Lay Dominicans of England, Scotland and Wales

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He is Risen!

Alleluia, the Lord has risen as He promised, alleluia



Fra Angelico (c 1387-1455) 1442

Welcome to our spring edition 2023 of **Veritas**. This is the time of hope, re-birth and resurrection. As Pope Benedict XVI said:

“For the Christian community, it is the moment to place with sincerity - together with Martha - all our hopes in Jesus of Nazareth: “Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who was to come into this world” (Jn 11: 27). Communion with Christ in this life prepares us to overcome the barrier of death, so that we may live eternally with him. Faith in the resurrection of the dead and hope in eternal life open our eyes to the ultimate meaning of our existence: God created men and women for resurrection and life, and this truth gives an authentic and definitive meaning to human history, to the personal and social lives of men and women, to culture, politics and the economy. Without the light of faith, the entire universe finishes shut within a tomb devoid of any future, any hope.”

Pope Benedict XVI, Lenten Homily, 2011

View from my window



The Promise....

Christine Byrne

Prayer for the day

Yellow Roses

One afternoon, a friend said that I should go and visit two women whom she had just visited in the local hospital so I went straight away. Julie was the older of the two women. She was losing a long struggle with cancer. I knew that what she feared most was death. When I got there, she was away for a scan and so I didn't see her that afternoon but I noticed that someone else had been and had left her a small bunch of yellow roses. On the floor below, Rose would soon give birth to her first child. When I got to the maternity ward, the door was locked but I met Rose when she came out to use the coin phone box. She looked so young, so fragile and was clearly very afraid. She trembled as she spoke but kept the conversation well away from the things that she feared most and spoke rather of the baptism to follow the birth. She said that someone had left her some yellow roses. I could just see those kind hands splitting a single bunch into two. She would preserve them, she said, for these were the first flowers the child would receive.

Two women both waiting alone, the one for a birth, the other for death, and both so afraid. Both were given the same yellow roses by my kind-hearted friend. As children we would call out "Cowardie, Cowardie Custard", so I grew up thinking of yellow as the colour of cowardice, but that afternoon it became for me the colour of kindness; the warm colour of generous love.

Dear Lord,

be with me when I am afraid,

and when I sense fear in others

make of me a companion for them. Amen.

Dermot Morrin OP, Chaplain Edinburgh

Dominican Seminar 2023



This year's seminar took place from 17-19 March, at Hinsley Hall in Leeds. The seminar was attended by many branches of the Dominican family - friars, sisters, Lay Dominicans, the Priestly Fraternity, the Secular Institute and Associates. The theme was ***Being Prophetic: Reading the Signs of the Times and Being a Sign for the Time.***

For a full report of the seminar, visit our website: <https://www.laydominicans.org.uk>

Poetry corner

Joy

A fleeting emotion, words seldom can capture,
Seen on the face, of a person in rapture.
Happiness, elation, at hearing the news,
Silently disclosed, by the contemplative's muse.

Incoming light, from source far away,
For that's how it seems, in times little play.
And as it draws closer; I am moved from within,
An enveloping experience is how it does begin.

Warmer and warmer I am made to feel,
Sublime beauty, words cannot reveal.
And yet in the moment was lost all despair,
Drinking from the cup, in which we now share.

A fleeting emotion, ending all too soon.

Now but a memory, of life's pleasant tune.
The grim face of nature, no longer seems cold,
As all is transformed, by a gracious move bold.

Who is the architect, of such devise,
A creative force, in whom all things entice.
Can we express, what the mirror does show,
A new life beginning, is the joy we all know.

By Karol Grobicki

In our deepest despair, God seeks us out

I used to be a volunteer chaplain at my local mental health hospital. One day, as I was 'doing my rounds', a patient asked if I would spend some time with him. He was in such a deep state of despair and fear that it almost made him incoherent. We sat in silence for a moment and then he asked me to pray. All I could say was, "God loves you, He will never leave you alone. You are loved." The man began to cry, but these were not tears of sorrow, rather tears of recognition. It was only a moment but one of, I believe, gentle healing.

Dear Lord

Never let me forget that I am loved and always will be. Give me the grace to recognise your love in all those whom I encounter in my daily life. Amen

Teresa Jankowska

Preaching through art

Dominican dog



Early in 2022 I was able to take my final vows as a lay Dominican. In celebration of this occasion and to commemorate the 800th anniversary (celebrated in 2018) of the formation of the order, I decided to create a Dominican inspired work of embroidery.

I am currently in a Master of Sacred Art programme through Pontifex University. <https://www.pontifex.university/?visitor=true> I wanted to apply some of the knowledge I have acquired about sacred images to my piece to the best of my abilities and learning. I wouldn't necessarily classify the piece as being sacred in a rigorous way, but rather, it is a piece which contains elements that are present in sacred art. A fellow student and dear friend, Kathryn Laffery, encouraged me to enter the piece in the annual sacred art contest sponsored by the Catholic Art Institute. <https://www.catholicartinstitute.org/>

I started off with a plain linen fabric and the wonderful dream of Joan of Aza, St. Dominic's mother. She dreamt her son was born as a little dog carrying a great torch to illuminate a darkened world. I am a great lover of dreams and of dogs, so it was only natural for me to be drawn to such imagery. I wanted this piece to convey a dream-like quality to it, as well as the energy and strength of a large protective dog. Movement is also something that I really wanted to emphasise in both the dog and the flame. I found tremendous inspiration from the images in the Hortus Deliciarum. The leap of Jonah as he dances on the lip of a great smiling fish was irresistible. If you turn my Dominican dog on his side, perhaps you can see a hint of that fantastic fish.



The active nature of the piece is supposed to prompt the viewer to contemplate our pilgrim journey through life. We are moving towards a greater reality and the Flames of Truth light our way.

It was my hope that people would see it as a contemplative piece. It certainly was a contemplative experience to make it. There were times when I was so frustrated and tired of dealing with the flames and smoke! It seemed to take forever. Each

flame is unique. At first, I was really annoyed with myself for wanting every flame to be different, but now I think it makes sense: Many individual flames coming together to create one giant flame to light up the darkness is an important aspect of the Dominican life.

The Dominican dog is a combination of my two dogs (a golden retriever and a boxer) and an image from an old plate I found from Poland. The fat nose and big eyes are my golden retriever's, and the body is definitely the boxer's. It's been a very encouraging experience for me. I am overwhelmed with the support given by my fellow lay Dominicans, as well as my family and artist friends. I almost didn't enter it the contest and I was hesitant to share the piece with anyone. I'm glad I did in the end. I didn't place in the contest (I wasn't expecting to), but I made the finals, which was a very encouraging surprise. I pray when you look at this piece of art you will see some of the joy, strength and encouragement that is part of the lay Dominican family.

Alix Murray

The Body of Christ



Explanation of the Body of Christ

The picture *The Body of Christ* was painted in 2005, the materials being acrylic on canvas, in response to a series of talks on *Lumen Gentium* given to one of the Plymouth parishes by the then Bishop of Plymouth Christopher Budd. The yellow disc in the middle represents the Bread/Body of Christ and the red circle represents the wine/Blood of Christ. The fractals that are the texture of the picture represents us, the people, joined as one to make up the Body of Christ. Although all the talks spoke to me, below are the bits from *Lumen Gentium* which particularly inspired the picture.

Chapter 1 The mystery of the Church

7 By communicating His Spirit, Christ made His brothers, called together from all nations, mystically the components of His own Body.

Through Baptism we are formed in the Likeness of Christ; “For in one Spirit we were all baptised into one body”. (51).....

Really partaking of the body of the Lord in the breaking of the Eucharistic bread, we are taken up into communion with Him and with one another. “Because the bread is one, we though many, are one body, all of us partake of the one bread”. (53), in this way all of us are made members of His Body (54) “but several members of one another”. (55)

All the members ought to be moulded in the likeness of Him, until Christ be formed in them (62) For this reason we, who have been made to conform with Him, who have died with Him and risen with Him, are taken up into the mysteries of His life, until we will reign together with Him (63)

51 1 Cor. 12:13

53 1 Cor. 10:17

54. Cf 1 Cor. 12: 27

55 Rom. 12:5

62. Cf. Gal. 4:19

63. Cf. Phil. 3:21; 2Tim. 2:11; Eph. 2:6; Col. 2:12 etc.

Elizabeth Davey

News from around the Province

Admissions and Professions



Bristol Fraternity celebrated three admissions and one profession. From left to right, Nick Tarr, Ann Tarr and Domingo Totonese were admitted. Oliver Davies made his final profession.



On 18th February the North East Fraternal group celebrated the admission of Ted Patulan.



Edinburgh Fraternity - congratulations to Sofia Leonard, who made her final profession on 1st April.



Newly professed, Richard and Tony, along with other members of the Fraternity and Fr John Farrell OP

Please keep Nick, Ann, Domingo, Oliver, Ted, Sofia, Richard and Tony in your prayers.

Obituary

Ted Buchell was a member of the London Fraternity for many years. He will also be known to people across the province from his regular attendance at the Seminar and the Assembly. Despite his failing health, Ted continued to support his fraternity through his prayers. Ted died on 3rd February 2023.

Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord.

And let perpetual light shine upon him.

May he rest in peace. Amen.

Magazine

Patrick Doyle and a fellow parishioner introduced a contact magazine for the numerous parishioners who were isolating during Covid. It is still circulating to all non returnees and housebound, but it serves a wider purpose, namely formation as well as information. Inspired by the Irish Dominican St Martin's Magazine, it is compact, colourful, and well illustrated. There are no adverts, and it is free. Called 'The Messenger', it circulates widely, well beyond its Lincolnshire base. Could the Provincial Council produce a similar booklet for Lays and parishioners to publish their own 'wrap-a-round'?

Know Your Faith Group

We led a parish 'Know Your Faith Group' pre Covid, and during lockdown we continued by Zoom. Now we meet in our house, and sessions are planned on Lay Dominican lines, i.e. prayer, scripture and formation. It has expanded to 15 members drawn from several Lincolnshire parishes. For some years a friar came to lead a discussion weekend, which was widely advertised and well attended. During Covid Fr Matthew Jarvis OP led a Zoom morning, and in 2022 Fr Richard Ounsworth OP came in person. Think of the impact if you used your fraternity meetings as a springboard for activity like this in your own parishes!

Coffee Club

Wearing his SVP hat, Patrick helped the Hull SVP District Council organise a meeting to discuss the impact of Covid, and two initiatives emerged. One was to support 'Welcome House', a project founded by a Pakistani Catholic to help the many asylum seekers in the city. Secondly, to assist the lonely, isolated, bereaved and those hesitant about returning to church by starting a 'Coffee Club' to provide advice/information, as well as chat, coffee and companionship. It meets in a hotel every Friday before the midday mass at the city centre church of St Charles. The appreciation of the first attendees was revealing - 'Thank you, so little happens now'. Again this is something Lays could do in their own areas. The time for endless talk is long since over! We need to follow our father Dominic and take to the road.

Edinburgh Fraternity - 'Come and See Day' - 4th February 2023

Like many Lay Dominican Fraternities and Fraternal Groups, the Edinburgh Fraternity found the years 2020-2022 quite challenging. March 2020 was the last time we were able to meet in person as a Fraternity until August 2021. We met instead on Zoom, thanks to the infinite pains taken by our then President, Steve Male, to coach us all in the necessary skills. During this time, five members made Final Profession and one Temporary Profession, and we had three inquirers, but we were unable to do much about recruitment in general beyond holding series of online talks on Dominican Saints in 2020 and the history of Dominicans in Scotland in 2021 (for the Jubilee of the English Province).

Normal service being restored in 2022, and with a new and energetic Religious Assistant in the shape of the newly-ordained Fr Albert Robertson OP from September, we set out to have a 'Come and See' Day in early 2023. We have had one of these before, in November 2015, just after we became a Fraternity again: the idea is to give anyone in the parish or more widely who has been thinking about being a Lay Dominican a chance to meet some of us and hear about what we do.

On this occasion, Fr Albert had sent news of the day round the *Ad Clerum*, and it was well advertised in parish newsletters around the Archdiocese of St Andrews and Edinburgh. 12 new people attended, of whom half have indicated they want to stay in touch; five of these attended our recent Day of Recollection in Dunbar on 4th March.

We began at the parish 12 o'clock Saturday Mass, and then had a long soup and sandwich lunch, with the chance for everyone to mingle and get to know one another. There were nine of us from the existing group in person, plus three online. Fr Albert, an 'A list' chef among the friars, had made the soup, and also gave the opening talk on the Dominican tradition in general. I talked about Lay Dominicans, in particular the Four Pillars, and we also had short talks from Alan Cran, our Treasurer, on the Medieval Dominican Priory in Edinburgh, from Martin Colpi on what we normally study, and from Steve Male on our two talk series during lockdown, to give people a flavour of what the Fraternity has been doing recently. We then had coffee and cake, Adoration and Vespers, complete with the Dominican Salve and O Lumen, with the help of Fr Albert and Fr Matthew Jarvis. The strength of the singing was wonderful to hear.

We pushed the intellectual as well as the devotional side of the day; some wondered whether it wasn't over-packed as a result. Nonetheless, the energy it generated was palpable. The Day of Recollection at Our Lady of the Waves offered us a further wave of enjoyment in being together, talking about God and the things of God, and sharing our journeys as disciples. *Sara Parvis*

Crawley Fraternity

Crawley held their day of Lent Recollection and celebrated two newly professed members.



Social time during Lent Recollection Day 2023

Professions 2023



Food for thought.....

The phrase 'spiritual direction' is something of a paradox. This is because the term, 'direction', implies movement; while 'spiritual', implies being still. How we reconcile such opposites was at the heart of Heraclitus' philosophical endeavour; the river is moving and yet, it never changes, or at least we do not learn the lessons it teaches! There are, 'I think', two questions we need to ask when it comes to 'spiritual direction'.

1 When is it appropriate to offer a person 'spiritual direction'?

2 What form should the 'spiritual direction' take?

A further question, derived from the two questions above, is whether 'appropriateness' determines the form of the 'spiritual direction' given? 'Spiritual direction' was discussed at a meeting of the Northwest Fraternal Group. One member asked the question, why are most of the 'spiritual direction' courses in the UK based on the model provided by Ignatius of Loyola?

1 When is it appropriate to offer 'spiritual direction' to a person?

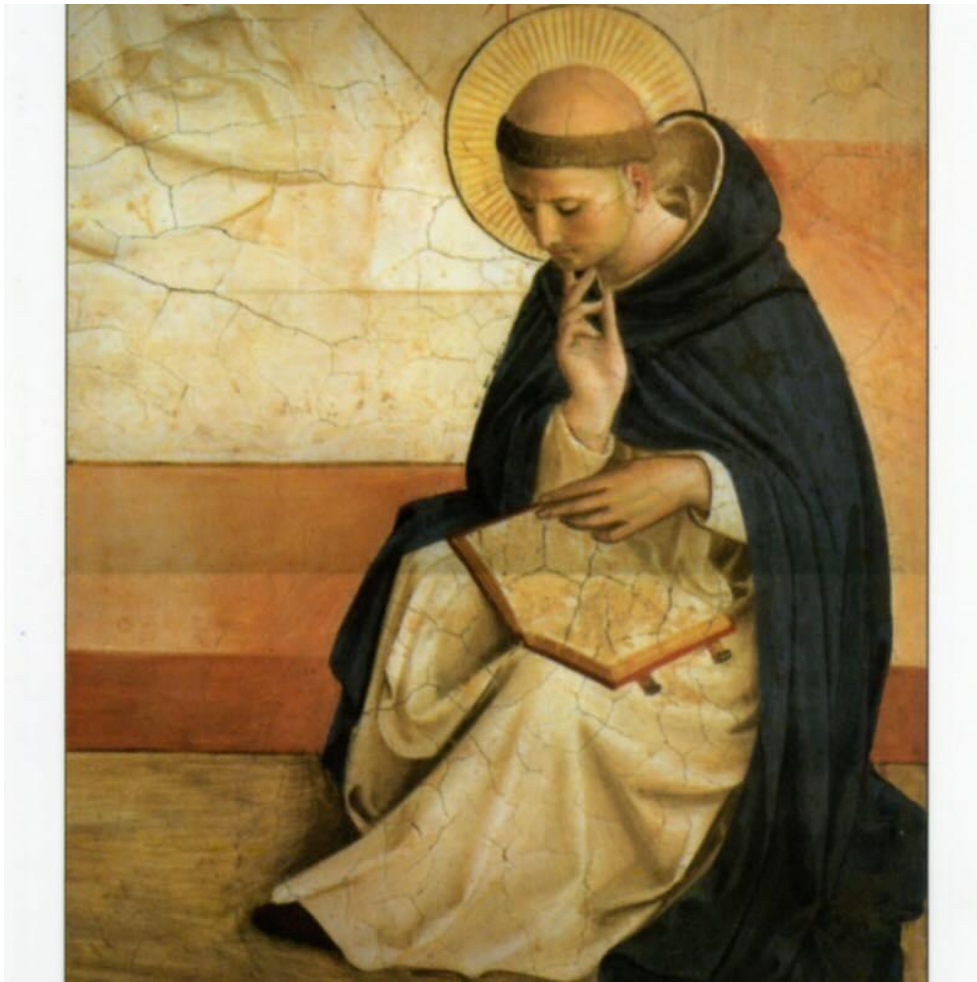
In the census data published November 29th 2022, 46.2% of the population in England and Wales described themselves as Christian. This represents a 13.1% reduction from the 2011 census. In real terms a drop of 6.8 million people. The second most common response was 'no religion', at 37.2%, an increase of 12% from 2011. In real terms an increase of 7.1 million. It is not the place here to try and interpret what these figures mean, only to say that in numerical terms, people looking for 'spiritual direction' from institutional religion has declined sharply! Does this mean that the appetite for 'spiritual direction' is similarly in decline? I 'think' not! The problem is that the 'gap' has been filled by the market-led quasi-spiritual phenomena known as 'mindfulness'. The idea, as the name suggests, is to fill the mind: with calm, peace, etc.... This is not a problem and a first stage of any 'spiritual direction' would be to create this stillness. The problem with 'mindfulness' is that this is its goal, it takes the person no further! They are not led on from this to contemplate the source of being, they are not led anywhere.

2 What form 'spiritual direction' should take?

In Christianity we are blessed with a strong 'spiritual tradition', not least that developed over 800 years by the Dominican family. However, the people who seek to join us, already have a background of 'spiritual' things. This is because a condition of joining a fraternity is that they are a practising Catholic. What do we do when this is not the case? How do we communicate our 'faith' in the home, in the workplace, in the street? The important thing, I 'think', is to consider what

makes people think again! As Dominicans, we try to help people do this by preaching. We do not need to 'think' about this! Instead, we need to look at the person in front of us and journey with them as appropriate.

Karol Grobicki



My thanks to all the contributors to this newsletter. Our next edition will be in the winter season.

If you would like to know more about our Dominican order, particularly about Lay Dominicans, then please visit our website, (laydominicans.org.uk)

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