



Lay Dominicans English Province

Annual Report 2025/26

Margaret Doyle

September 2026

Introduction

This report covers a very busy year for the Province! In July we held our first Provincial Chapter at Ushaw, and it was good to bring people together from all our groups and to spend the time praying together, socialising and discussing some key issues.

The report itself gives an overview of the life of the Province, and there are 2 Appendices:

A: Formation Report

B: Treasurer's report

If you have any questions or comments about the information in this report, please get in touch.

In St. Dominic,

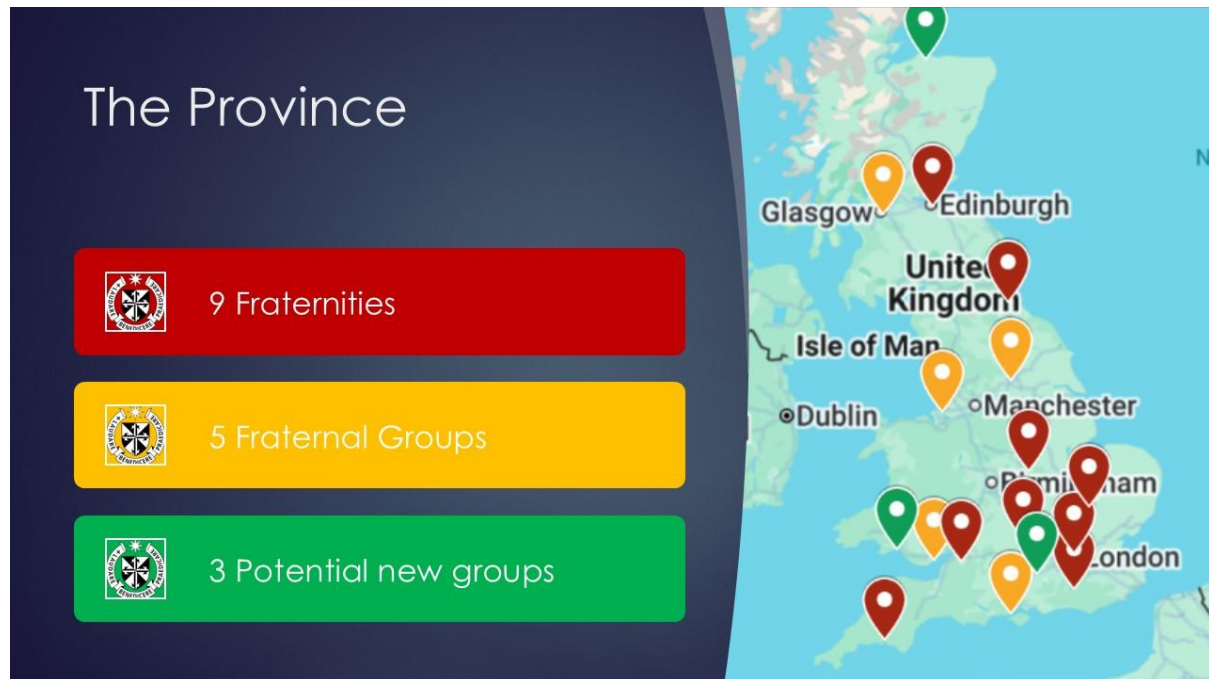
Margaret Doyle

Lay Provincial President

Email: margaretdoyle1066@sky.com

Lay Provincial Council		
Margaret Doyle	President	North East
Fernando Cervantes	Vice-President	Bristol
Gigi Horsfield	Secretary	Oxford
Philip Owens	Treasurer	Oxford
Andy Doyle	Directory Review	North East
Teresa Jankowska	Communications	Oxford
Sara Parvis	Formation	Edinburgh
Catherine Wallis-Hughes	Events	London
Fr. Thomas Therese Mannion OP	Provincial Promoter of the Laity	
Sr. Cooley Fowler OP	Representing the sisters	

Our Fraternities and Fraternal Groups



We now have 14 fraternities or groups. 5 of them are next to a house of friars and 2 next to houses of sisters. For the other 7, the Lay Dominicans are the only Dominican presence in their area.

Possible new groups

- ❖ **Elgin:** we have a group of people discerning whether they are interested in exploring their vocation as Lay Dominicans, and setting up a group alongside the Dominican sisters in Elgin. They are being well supported by the sisters and by Edinburgh fraternity.
- ❖ **Swansea:** a group of Dominican friars from Nigeria are ministering in Swansea, and some of the lay people who have come to know the Dominican charism because of them are now exploring whether to set up a group in Swansea. They are in contact with our group in Cardiff.
- ❖ **Hook:** there is a small community of Dominican sisters in Hook, Hampshire, and during the last year the lay people who are associated with the community have been finding out about what it means to be a Lay Dominican, with a visit from Margaret, the Provincial President, and making contact with the group in Lymington.
- ❖ **Grenada:** we have also had enquiries about setting up a group in Grenada which is part of our province, but this is at a very early stage.

Lay Dominicans: Numbers

Lay Dominicans in our Province



Fully professed: 94
Simply professed: 52
Admitted: 17
Total: 163

We have 163 Lay Dominicans, a net increase of 5 from last year. 7 people made their perpetual professions during the year, 17 made temporary profession and 8 people were admitted. And many of our groups have enquirers too.

One of the most notable things from these figures is that 42% of Lay Dominicans in our province are admitted or simply professed. This is indicative of the growth in the Order as a whole. The friars have described themselves as 'Britain's fastest growing religious order' this year and it seems that people continue to be drawn to the Lay Dominicans too.

One impact of this is that many of our groups have the issue of capable people willing to take on roles in the group, but who have not yet made their final profession, and the Lay Provincial Council is working with groups to establish what support they can provide.

We have also lost some of our brothers and sisters this year. May they rest in peace.

Rest in Peace



Sue McQuinn (London)	Sofia Leonard (Edinburgh)	Conchita Dunn (Tamar)
Ian Gardner (Oxford)	Johnny Morris (London)	

Chapter 2026



For the first time, we held a full chapter for the Lay Dominicans of the Province. In recent years we have met once a year at our Assembly and Annual General Meeting, but we have found that this does not give us enough time for the discussion we need on subjects which affect the whole province. In addition, the Lay Provincial Council had identified that the questions and issues raised by some groups were in fact subjects which were of interest to all, and would benefit from wider discussion.

We met at Ushaw, Durham, in July for a weekend of discussion, prayer and socialising. All our fraternities and groups sent their elected representatives, and we were joined by fr. Thomas, the Provincial Promoter of the Laity, fr. Cristóbal, the Order's Promoter of the Laity, and representatives of the sisters and the Priestly Fraternity as our guests.

The discussion at the Chapter covered 3 key issues:

- Community
- The Directory
- Mission

Before we met at Ushaw there was a series of Zoom calls to hear the views of everyone in the province, and the papers were then made available 3 months before the event so that each group could discuss them and ensure that their representatives knew their views.



Outcomes and Next Steps	
1.	The Chapter recommended improving communication further by considering a WhatsApp community or email distribution list
2.	Consider online workshops and study events available to all
3.	The idea of a leaflet was agreed, but the Chapter asked for 2 leaflets rather than 1 (1 for general publicity and 1 for new enquirers) and for further work on the language and design of the draft.
4.	Amendments to the Directory and proposed appendices on individuals taking on responsibilities, first contact with enquirers and people who wish to leave were accepted with minor amendments.
5.	The Chapter asked the Provincial Council to provide more clarity on what is expected of office holders in fraternities / groups
6.	The Chapter asked for further discussion on the proposed appendix on Associates
7.	Proposed appendices to the Directory on New Groups, Fraternal Groups and Religious Assistants were accepted with minor amendments
8.	The Chapter suggested that there should be additional clarity on the role of the Religious Assistant
9.	The Chapter suggested that members of the Provincial Council should take on the role of link person for a fraternity / group.
10.	The Chapter requested further guidance on what people should be including in requests for admission / profession, particularly when the requests are to be considered by the Provincial Council.
11.	The Chapter agreed that work on formation is welcome, including sharing resources and expertise at province level.
12.	Consider whether we should use social media to bring attention to our mission.
13.	The Chapter supported working with the Short Courses programme
14.	The Chapter agreed that we should build on links with Dominican Young Adults



The Chapter was a great way for groups to share their ideas and opinions and to learn from others.

It was also an opportunity to come together to pray for each other and for the Lay Dominicans of our Province.

Holding a Chapter is a considerable expense and was only possible because of the money available to us from the Barbara Knight Fund. We believe that there are considerable benefits from events like this, and we will need to think about the frequency and the funding of any future events.

Celebrations

During the year we also celebrated with:

- ❖ Fernanda Mee (Crawley) who was awarded a doctorate in Theology by St Mary's University, Twickenham. Fernanda's subject was 'From Familiaris Consortio to Amoris Laetitia, the family as domestic church', and
- ❖ Ted Patulan (North East) who was ordained to the Permanent Diaconate for the Diocese of Hexham & Newcastle.

Events

Once again, it has been a busy year for events, both those organised by the province, and those organised by individual fraternities, but advertised more widely so that others can attend:

- ❖ At our Annual Assembly in September 2025, our main speaker was fr. Cristóbal Torres OP, the Promoter of the Laity. He spoke about Mission, and in particular the Master's recent letter on preaching to the '4 publics', and how this applies to the laity of the Order.
- ❖ '2 new Lay Dominican Saints': to mark the canonisation of St. Pier Giorgio Frassati and St. Bartolo Longo, we held an on-line talk. Lilian Lee from Edinburgh Fraternity talked about St. Pier Giorgio Frassati, and fr. Thomas Mannion spoke about St. Bartolo Longo. The talk is available on our YouTube Channel.
- ❖ Many of our groups celebrated the Feast of St. Dominic with pilgrimages and social events.

Finance

The annual statement and update from our Treasurer, Philip, are attached separately.

The major expense for the year was the Chapter weekend at Ushaw, which was made possible because of the money left to the Lay Dominicans by Barbara Knight when she died in 2017.

The other major expense of the year was our attendance at the European Assembly in Maynooth, Ireland.

The 12th European Assembly



The European Assembly took place in Maynooth, Ireland. Our Province was represented by Margaret Doyle (Provincial President), Catherine Wallis-Hughes (Events Officer) and fr. Thomas Mannion OP (Provincial Promoter of the Laity). It was an excellent opportunity to meet Lay Dominicans from all over Europe and to hear about what is happening in other provinces.

During the Assembly, we considered the *Ratio Formationes* with the help of fr. Vivian Boland OP, and this will be

really useful in deciding on how we take forward the Ratio in our province over the next few years.

[Read Fr. Vivian's talk on the Ratio here.](#)

We also talked about improving communication and agreed some amendments to the statutes of the European Council of Lay Dominican Fraternities (ECLDF).

The Assembly elected the new council, to serve for the next 4 years. Catherine was elected to the council and will serve as secretary.

During the Assembly we also visited Kilkenny, where the Black Abbey, the oldest Dominican church in Ireland, holds relics of St. Dominic and a statue of him that was mutilated at the Reformation but then hidden and is now restored to the church. With many thanks to the Province of Ireland who made us so welcome.

[Read a full report on the Assembly here](#)



The Dominican Family in the English Province



- ❖ The Dominican Seminar takes place annually at Hinsley Hall in Leeds, and this year's theme was 'Pilgrims of Peace: the Christian Calling in a Polarised World'. As always, there were several speakers, including Howard Trust (Cambridge) who spoke about 'Law as an Instrument of Change or of Social Policy' and our guest speaker was Jenny Sinclair, from Together for the Common Good, who spoke about 'the Christian Calling and the Relational Imperative'.
- ❖ The pilgrimage to Walsingham has been a regular event for many years and Lay Dominicans from many of our groups joined the pilgrimage.

Contact with Lay Dominicans elsewhere

Members of the Lay Provincial Council continue to have regular Zoom meetings with the Provincial Councils from the Irish province and the Province of Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea.

In addition, the Irish Province are very keen to work with us more closely in the future and it was good to make connections with them at the European Assembly.

Thank you

The current Lay Provincial Council were elected in October 2022 and are now coming to the end of their term of office. It has been a very busy 4 years, with so much happening in the province and the growth of so many of our groups.

Thank you to Andy, Catherine, Fernando, Gigi, Margaret, Philip, Sara and Teresa for everything that they have contributed over the last 4 years.

We will have our elective chapter in Leicester at the beginning of October. Please keep the new council in your prayers.

www.laydominicans.org.uk
email: laydominicansuk@gmail.com

Appendix A: Lay Dominican Provincial Formation Report and proposal

Introduction:

As we come to the end of the four-year term of this Provincial Council, we have 3 Formation matters in progress, apart from the normal Initial Formation programme underway in all the Fraternities and Fraternal Groups. The first is the incorporation of the new *Ratio Formationis et Studiorum*, into the provincial Formation programmes, the second is the friars' Oxford Short Courses, which you are all encouraged to make use of and which I will report on orally, and the third is the preparation of the Fraternity videos, which is ongoing.

With regard to the first, I want to make a proposal to the AGM.

Proposal:

- That this AGM set up a Formation Commission of ten people, to be chaired by the Provincial Formation Officer with the assistance of the friars' Provincial Promoter of Lay Dominicans, with the purpose of discussing how the *Ratio Formationis et Studiorum* should be incorporated into the ongoing formation of the English Province.

1. The new *Ratio Formationis et Studiorum*

As you all know, Fr. Gerard Francisco Timoner III, Master of the Order, formally approved a new Lay Dominican Formation document on July 16, 2025, our first ever *Ratio Formationis et Studiorum*. It is available on our Lay Dominican Provincial website under Resources: [Ratio Formationis et Studiorum Laicorum – LaiciOP](#). This is a very exciting challenge, as it is offering us the chance to up the Lay Dominican theological game considerably. It has been discussed at the European Lay Dominican Council- Margaret Doyle and Catherine Wallis-Hughes can give further information on what was said. But there are three main things to be said:

1. Each Province has to decide how to implement the Ratio. However, it's worth noting that we are one of the Provinces with the most academics teaching or studying in relevant areas, so we should be leaders in showing the rest of the world how the Ratio can be implemented over the next few years.
2. It is not just about academic formation, it's also about human formation.
3. The Ratio concerns ongoing formation. Our current initial formation programme (as drawn up by Catherine Wallis-Hughes) continues in use as at present.

2. The Oxford Short Courses

These are recommended to you all for ongoing formation purposes, and the Oxford group are hoping to do some supplementary material. The first one is on 31st October, on Scripture, by Fr Richard Ounsworth OP.

The videos are ongoing; the next Council will need to decide whether plans for more should continue.

Dr Sara Parvis, Provincial Formation Officer 2022-26

Appendix B: Treasurer's Report for the Lay Dominicans in the Province of England 1 September 2025 to 31 August 2026

Introduction

There are two bank accounts, both with HSBC, in the name Dominican Laity: -

- the main account, number 91177869, sort code 40-10-14 and
- the secondary account, number 91177877, sort code 40-10-14.

As of 1st September 2025, they held a total of **£17850.78** which constituted our general funds plus **£12427.03**, the current value of the Barbara Knight Fund intended for extraordinary expenses. Last year it was decided to spend money from the Barbara Knight Fund to finance this year's Provincial Chapter. As expected, this made major inroads into the fund and we must now determine how to replace this reserve. Also, this year has been particularly expensive in that our Chapter coincided with the four yearly European Assembly, held this year in Maynooth, which was inevitably very expensive. Both of these events were extremely productive but perhaps we can consider having our next Provincial Chapter in two years, before establishing the intended four-year rotation? There are arguments for and against this decision.

The two accounts are actually unnecessary, they exist for historical reasons. There is a case for using the second one to hold the Barbara Knight Fund but in practice all the expenses pass through the main account.

I explained last year that while we collected the monies requested by the ICLDF, since they seem not to be functioning, I have simply banked the amount raised. This accumulation has been held in the account but has not until now appeared on any report. At a recent meeting of the Provincial Council, it was decided that this backlog should be returned to our general fund but that we would still hold the 2025/6 levy in case the International Group is re-established. (Our representatives at the European Chapter were informed that this should happen in the near future.) If the newly resumed council informs its members that they are in desperate need of funds the then Provincial Council will consider an appropriate response. This decision returns a sum of £844 to our general funds.

There is a further complication. The Dominican Association is completely separate from the Dominican Laity but for sometime now the Lay Dominican Provincial Treasurer has been co-opted as the treasurer for the Association. This extra, unconnected role largely consists of signing the cheques for the Dominican Seminar held each year in Leeds. At the end of the 2025 Seminar the Association learned that it would be necessary to book our event two years in advance which required a further £500 deposit which was not available so, after some consultation, it was agreed since I control both accounts, we would forward this sum and it would be returned this year. In fact, the Seminar overspent significantly and this time the friars stepped in. Not only did we not receive our loan back but we ended up contributing a further £50, bringing the sum up to £550. The organisers of the Seminar are now very aware of the need to sort out their finances and this will be done in the planning stages for the 2027 Seminar.

The ECLDF levy I transferred was a repeat of last year's figure because they were anxious to finance the European Assembly and I had not got our current numbers. I apportioned the same sum to the ICLDF. Incidentally the large bank charges recorded are due to the £30 it costs to transfer money from our account into Europe. I checked again and if we want to avoid paying that sum, we need a different type of business account which would invoke an increase in regular charges. For the moment this seems to be the cheapest option. Our problem is we can not take out a charity account because we do not qualify for formal charitable status and we are therefore obliged to function as a very small business.

There is one final point that is of interest. This is the final treasurer's report of the current council, and it is worth noting that since they decided to hold their meetings online rather than in Oxford and make much greater use of Zooming in general there has been a considerable reduction in councillors' expenses. This is not to criticise the previous councillors whose situation was in many ways very different but it will be something for the

next council to consider.

The Combined Balance as of 1st September 2025 was £17850.78 of which £12427.03 constituted the Barbara Knight Fund, £5423.75 the general funds.

Transactions this year from the general account

Income from Annual Levy for 2025-6				£1675.00
Interest from the Bank				+52.36
Profits from Dominican Memorabilia				+46.10
Bank Charges			-61.60	
Expenses paid to members of the Provincial Council			-383.57	
Half cost of an annual Zoom licence (shared with Oxford Fraternity)			-51.96	
Levy paid to ECLDF for 2026 (at 1.50 Euro per Estimated number of professed members)			-122.67	
Levy due to ICLDF for 2026 (at 1.50 Euro per Estimated number of professed members)			-122.67	
Money resumed from the ICLDF (see note above)				+844.00
Loan to Dominican Association (see note above)			-50	
Profits from the Assembly				+45.00
Provincial Chapter:				
Cost of Ushaw	-7897.50		-8820.00	
Cost of dinner at New Board Inn	-910.50			
Travel & Incidentals	-1312.00			
Donations towards costs		+1300.00		
Cost of 2026 European Chapter			-2481.51	
Total loss for year			-£9431.52	
Summary of Assets & Liabilities				
Cash in bank				7991.93
Loan repayment due from Dominican Association				550.00
Levy due to ICLDF			122.67	
Funds available				£8419.26

This frightening figure means that we enter the new provincial year with a combined sum of +£8419.26 available in our general funds but clearly the Barbara Knight Fund needs to be reassessed for our future finances.

Philip Owens

Provincial Treasurer

3rd September 2026