

Friars Preachers



**Newsletter of the Dominicans in
England and Scotland
Advent 2014**

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- Update from Iraq
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- What are the 'quiet virtues'?

Celebrating commitment

JESUS AT THE LAST SUPPER consecrated Himself in death, as in life, to the service of His Heavenly Father and to the redemption of fallen humanity.

It was His 'solemn profession' which enables each one of us to be consecrated at our baptism and to further consecrate our lives to God as religious. This was the theme of the sermons preached this September by Fr John Farrell OP, the English Provincial, at first the solemn professions of Brothers Oliver Keenan OP and Matthew Jarvis OP in Oxford, and then at the simple professions of Brothers Joseph Bailham OP and Christopher Pierce OP in Cambridge (pictured right with Fr Richard Finn).



The same spirit of self-giving and dedication had earlier marked the ordination to the



Fr Nicholas Crowe OP with Sr Ruth Chongo OP and Sr Alexia Dendere OP

priesthood of Fr Nicholas Crowe OP at Blackfriars, Oxford, on July 4th. The chrism was barely dry before Fr Nick was off to work for the summer in the Caribbean with our brethren on Grenada. This, in turn, was followed by his move in the autumn to our London Priory where he is currently working in the parish until Easter, when he will begin work as the Promoter of Vocations for the Province, encouraging young men to offer their gifts for the Gospel, and helping them to discern their vocation. This year two men were clothed in the Cambridge noviciate. One has since decided that he is not called to the friars' way of life, but Br Stefan Mangnus OP remains as a novice for the Dutch province, and shares classes with Sr Mary Magdalene Debreczeni OP, a novice for the Stone Dominican sisters.

Information on vocations can be found on our new website www.english.op.org

Congratulations to Archbishop Anthony!

The Most Rev Anthony Fisher OP was installed as the ninth Archbishop of Sydney on November 12th 2014. Archbishop Anthony is an Honorary Fellow of Blackfriars Hall, Oxford, where he lived and preached while studying for his doctorate at University College.

Visit Blackfriars online at www.bfriars.ox.ac.uk



Walking with Dominic



THIS SUMMER, twenty-three young pilgrims from twelve different countries gave joyful witness to their faith as they walked the first ever Dominican Youth Pilgrimage in England from Arundel to Canterbury. Three friars (Fr Benjamin Earl, and Brs Matthew Jarvis and Jordan Scott), three sisters (from Elgin and Bushey), one lay Dominican, and sixteen other young adults linked to our various chaplaincies and parishes, teamed up to share ten days of walking, common prayer, study, and companionship. Walking sometimes up to 20 miles a day, they were warmly welcomed along the way by religious communities and parishes who sheltered and fed them, or who shared with them the spirituality of their shrines and churches, including the Benedictine monks at Worth Abbey, Carmelite friars at Aylesford, and Anglican Franciscans at Canterbury. As well as exploring the great cathedrals of Arundel, Rochester, and Canterbury, there were inspiring visits to the

Shrines of Our Lady at West Grinstead, and of St Augustine at Ramsgate. Spiritually sustained by the Eucharist and the Divine Office, sung in the Dominican tradition, the pilgrims prayed for all who

had supported them, and for all who had supported the Coast to Coast walk over the previous twelve days. When tired feet could carry the occasional pilgrim no further, two support cars were ready to ferry them on to the next stop and a well-deserved rest!

"There have been so many graces I have received as a result of the pilgrimage. Really incredible. Thank you again, so much, for organising it. It's one of those highlight-in-your-life events."

You can see more photos of the pilgrimage by visiting: www.facebook.com/thedominicanway

To contact us about receiving this newsletter, or to receive it by email, please write to newsletter@english.op.org



Update from Iraq



Please pray for all the Dominicans in Iraq. For more information about the dispensary at Ainkawa, and how you can support it, visit www.cnewa.org. For more information on how to support the churches in Iraq, visit <http://www.acnuk.org/christians-in-iraq>

Sr Luma OP

© Lauren Bohn

IN THE LAST issue of the 'Friars Preachers', Sr Nazik Matty OP wrote of her time as a doctoral student at Blackfriars Hall, Oxford, before returning to Iraq. Since we published her story, the Dominican sisters have been forced to leave their convents in the Nineveh Plains and flee to Erbil in Kurdistan. We offer here an update on their continuing mission.

Shortly before midnight on August 6th the Sisters were forced to flee by car from Karakosh and move north to Erbil, where around 120,000 Christians are refugees. In the words of Sr Luma, "We had only one choice: face death or leave." Of the fifty-seven sisters displaced from their convents at Tel-Kaif, Baqofa, and Karakosh, some found temporary shelter in the seminary at Erbil, while containers were adapted for additional accommodation at one of the sisters' two

convents in Ainkawa, near Erbil. They finally left the seminary on September 28th to re-unite in one place. The other convent there is being adapted as a home for ten orphans or girls with special needs who will be cared for by two sisters. Three elderly sisters have died in the past months, their deaths probably hastened by the trauma of what has happened. Most of the younger sisters work daily with the refugees. The early arrival of the winter rains on October 20th has added to the hardships. Yet, amid so much suffering, the sisters remain committed to their mission, and on September 13th celebrated the Solemn Profession of Sisters Muntaha and Nidaa. One new project is a dispensary at Ainkawa funded by support from the Catholic Near East Welfare Association (CNEWA). It provides milk, nappies, and clothing ahead of the bitterly cold winter in Kurdistan.

See above for details of how you can help.

Middle East: The wider picture

THE LAS CASAS Institute held a one-day conference on 1st November to examine the plight of Christian communities across the Middle East. Seventy people, academics and church leaders, met for this event in Oxford, co-sponsored with two institutes at Heythrop College, London: the Centres for Eastern Christianity and for Christianity and Interreligious Dialogue. Speakers, who included Profs. Herman Teule from Louvain and Elizabeth Prodromou from Tufts, looked at developments in Iraq, but also in Egypt, Turkey, and more widely in the region. The Institute promotes critical reflection on questions of human dignity in the light of Catholic social teaching and theology.



You can be notified of future Las Casas events by emailing lascasas@bfriars.ox.ac.uk



A new chaplain at St Mary's



Fr Benedict flanked by students and staff

Fr Benedict Jonak OP tells us about his new post at St Mary's University, Twickenham

MANY OF YOU have heard of St Mary's, England's first Catholic Teacher Training College and now its youngest Catholic university. Two months in, I'm enjoying meeting staff and students, and squaring up to the challenge of serving a vibrant and growing community. St Mary's excels not only in education, but also in Theology, Sports and Drama, and I would encourage Catholics young and old to consider studying here. Lots is happening, with a lively Cathsoc, volunteering, and outreach to the wider community.

Mass is celebrated daily at the heart of the campus in a beautiful chapel, famous for its stained glass. I'm not the first Dominican to work here: Fr Vivian Boland taught Theology here for many years. More recently, Fr Robert Gay led a Wednesday discussion group. Fr Richard Finn is a governor, and Br Joseph Bailham, professed this autumn, is an alumnus, and former member of Benedict XVI House – a small residency for Catholic students who help in the chaplaincy. I'm here for both staff and students, inducting new arrivals and supporting the strategic vision of a Catholic university serving the Church and the wider community. It's a ministry I love – **please keep me in your prayers!**

Who are 'we'?



PROF. Margaret Archer, head of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, tackled this philosophical question in the annual Las Casas Lecture on 12th November. The intriguing title was developed into a sophisticated analysis of what it means to say "we"; a word uttered countless times every day, but with little thought as to whether two "I"s make a "we" or if it's more than that.

Prof. Archer took us through the positions of various leading philosophers, including John Searle, before claiming that what makes us more than a just a collection of individuals is shared concern for the common good.

Why is this important in the context of the Las Casas Institute? How we think about "we" will affect how we understand what binds us together at the deepest level. "We" are constituted by our relationships with each other and only flourish together. This helps avoid a utilitarian understanding of morality, which calculates the total individual benefits of any action rather than seeking our common happiness.

To see an interview with Prof. Archer, go to www.bfriars.ox.ac.uk



Training Fund Appeal – Off at a brisk pace!

IT WAS with brisk and energetic steps that four friars,

Frs Benedict Jonak and Richard Finn, Brs Samuel Burke and Toby Lees, walked 192 miles, coast-to-coast, in twelve days this summer. They raised some £24,000 in immediate sponsorship towards the cost of training the next generation of Dominicans in England and Scotland, ably assisted by their support crew of John and Sue Collins, and Br Andrew Brookes. This was an opportunity to witness to our faith and

its joy, to preach, and to spread the word in parts of the country where the Order currently has no houses, parishes, or regular mission. Large numbers also followed the walkers on Facebook through daily posts. The friars were deeply struck by the kindness and generosity of all those who acted as their hosts in different parishes along the way. In turn they prayed for the intentions of their benefactors, reciting some two hundred and twenty decades of the Rosary as they made their way over moors and along ancient



tracks amid the astounding beauty of the Lakes, Yorkshire Dales, and Cleveland hills. You can see more photos and posts from the walk on www.friarswalk.wordpress.com

The walkers' pace has been more than matched by the determined efforts and support of many in our priories and parishes to get the Training Fund Appeal off to the best possible start. With the crucial promise of continuing help through standing orders, and several major gifts and grants, **we are already over one quarter of the way to our target!**

There's a good distance still to travel, and every gift matters in bringing us closer to the final goal, but we're off to a good start! A huge thank you to everyone who supported the walkers!

The Training Fund Appeal seeks to raise one million pounds over the next few years in order to prepare the next generation of Dominican Friars for England and Scotland. See below for more information.

Forming the next generation

It costs around £16,500 for each year of the seven years that a new friar spends in training. This includes food and lodging, formation expenses, tuition fees, clothes, books and so on. This is comparatively good value, but with a dozen men in training and more arriving, it all adds up!

The income we receive from ethically invested funds only goes so far, and we estimate we need to fill a £1 million gap over the next seven years.



The student brothers in training at Blackfriars, Oxford

Please pray for us to find the funds we need, and for continuing vocations! If you are also able to help us financially, turn to the back page for information on how to do so.



The 'Quiet Virtues'

In September the Cambridge Noviciate held its five-day retreat for entrants, given by Sr Margaret Atkins OSA, a canoness at Boarbank in Cumbria, and former member of the Blackfriars lay community. She summarises for us here the importance of often neglected virtues.

ST PAUL sets out for the Galatians what he describes as 'the fruit of the Spirit', a list of virtues, or qualities closely associated with virtues. Give or take the odd nuance in text or translation, they are: love, joy, peace, patience, goodness, kindness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control (Gal 5.2). Similar lists are found elsewhere in his letters, and echoes of these in the rest of the New Testament: Matthew's beatitudes, or James' 'wisdom from above', which is 'pure, peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy' (Jas 3.17). We might call these 'the quiet virtues'. Catholic moral theology tends to focus on the four cardinal virtues of temperance, courage, justice and practical wisdom, along with the faith, hope and charity of I Cor. 13. The cardinal virtues, central in Greek and Roman philosophy, seem robust and energetic in their overall tendency. The quiet virtues of the New Testament do not replace them, but supplement and shape them. They spell out in gentle detail what a life of faith, hope and charity means.

As fruits of the Spirit, they flow from prayer. Indeed, we tend to use the word 'prayerful' not just of people who pray a lot (we might call them 'devout'), but of people whose fidelity to prayer shapes their character. They overflow from prayer into our relations with those close to us, building community. From there, they overflow to those further afield. A person who is at peace within herself can generate a sense of peace in



those who encounter her. This is even more true of a religious community at peace: we say the atmosphere of such a place as 'tangible', as if we could literally reach out and touch it. This flowing from inner to outer, through the community, fits the shape of the *Rule of St Augustine*, on which the Dominicans, with many other religious orders, base their lives. *Contemplata aliis tradere*: the fruits of contemplation, spiritual and intellectual, are first shared in our lives in community, and then mediated to others. This happens in the most concrete and practical of ways: the patience the young and fit need to live with the old and sick, and vice versa; the faithfulness religious need to fulfil their commitment to the regular office, day after day; the peaceableness of the scholastic approach to debate, which insists on taking seriously an opponent's objections; the joy that is not the goal, but common accompaniment of a difficult task achieved, whether finally mastering Latin, completing the coast-to-coast walk, or making it through a demanding formation to religious vows.

For information about Boarbank go to:
<http://www.boarbankhall.org.uk/>

Buckfast 2014

THIS year's Dominican study week at Buckfast was our biggest ever, with over thirty attending – young friars, sisters and lay people assembling to study, pray, and relax in the beautiful surroundings of the Abbey. As previously, an introductory stream offered an overview of Aquinas' theology and was very well received: one participant said that it left her 'hungry for more!' A second stream for returning veterans focused more on the life of grace and moral reasoning. Again, the feedback was very positive. One cause for celebration this year was the 'graduation' of Joanna Gilbert and Daniel Cunningham, who have attended our Study Weeks for four years running and so have completed the cycle of courses on offer. To mark their achievement, both were presented with a bottle of Buckfast tonic wine! Our thanks as usual to Buckfast Abbey for their generous support.

Are you interested in coming to the next one in 2015? Email nicholas.crowe@english.op.org



Future Events

'Jesus' – The Dominican Seminar. Hinsley Hall, Leeds. 2–4 January 2015. Study weekend for members of the Dominican Family. Speakers include Archbishop Malcolm McMahon OP, Sr Raymunda Jordan OP and Fr Simon Gaine OP. For details email:

nick.baggio@zen.co.uk

God Matters? talks. Blackfriars, Oxford. 10 Feb 2015 – 17 March 2015 (Tues evenings, 8pm).

Aquinas lecture. Blackfriars, Cambridge. 28 January 2015, 8pm, – Speaker: Prof. Robin Kirkpatrick.

'Thomas & Thomisms' – Aquinas Institute Annual Colloquium. Blackfriars, Oxford. 7 March 2015

For details email: richard.conrad@bfriars.ox.ac.uk

Requiem for King Richard III. Holy Cross, Leicester. 23 March 2015. Special requiem Mass celebrated by Card. Vincent Nichols. Entry by ticket. For details nearer the time see www.holycrossleicester.org



Dominican Pilgrimage to Walsingham. Sunday 17 May 2015, The day begins with Mass at noon in the Reconciliation Chapel.

'Narratives of Poverty'. London, June/July 2015. A Las Casas Institute one-day conference. See next issue for details.

Dominican Study Week at Buckfast Abbey, 6–10 July 2015. Exploring a vision of the Catholic Faith. For students and young adults. Organised by the Aquinas Institute at Blackfriars Hall, Oxford. For further details email nicholas.crowe@english.op.org.

The Dominican Way. 29 July – 8 August 2015
Pilgrimage for young adults. If interested, contact Matthew Jarvis OP: matthew.jarvis@english.op.org

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In committing their lives to serve God,
Dominican friars give up all personal property.

The generous support we receive from others is therefore essential and sustains the fruitful variety of ways that we serve. In making a gift you become a participant in this work. We truly value this assistance, and remember all our benefactors daily in our prayers.

If you feel able to support us in any way, please send us your donation using this form. *May God bless you for your generosity.*

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Friars Preachers Advent 2014

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Development Office, 17 Beaumont Street, Oxford OX1 2NA. If you wish to give by other means, such as by
standing order or bank transfer, please call Richard on 01865 610208 or email development@english.op.org**

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