

THE DOMINICANS

Summer 2023

The Magazine of the Dominican Friars in England & Scotland



- A New History of our Province **Fr Richard Finn OP**
- Ministry in Jamaica **Br Thomas Mannion OP**
- What Do Theologians Do All Day? **Fr Dominic White OP**
- A Busy Time in Edinburgh **Fr Dermot Morrin OP** and more...

1223–2023: 800 Years in London

Anniversaries and jubilees are an opportunity to take stock and remember the Lord's goodness and blessings, and to renew our hope in God's mercies and promise for the future. They are a moment to pause and reflect on God's providence expressed within the gift of time, and to share the blessings we've received with others. The book of Leviticus, therefore, called for a jubilee every fifty years; and indeed, I have been involved with the Holy See and various Marian groups and confraternities in preparing for the next ordinary Jubilee in 2025 through the organisation of a time of prayer preceding the Jubilee.

In the Order the jubilation continues: 2021 had been the 800th anniversary of the arrival of the Dominican friars in England, and this year, beginning on 28 January, the Master of the Order has declared a 'double jubilee' of the 700th anniversary of the canonisation of St Thomas Aquinas on 18 July and the 750th anniversary of the death of St Thomas on 7 March 2024. However, in our Province, 2023 also marks the 800th anniversary of the foundation of the first Dominican priory in London, at Holborn; our current priory in Haverstock Hill in north London is the fourth Blackfriars priory in London.

With each jubilee and anniversary, I feel called to give thanks for the survival and repeated revivals of our charism as friars preachers of the Gospel in our



Province. Fr Richard Finn OP has done us a service with his book on the history of the Province (p.7), which helps put into perspective our current challenges as we look to the future with hope and faith in God's goodness. As he said: 'Our apostolic enthusiasm has to be matched by a certain tenacity when the going gets tough, and the history of the province shows that the going does get tough, repeatedly. And if something is achieved once, it will have to be remade, redone, sooner or later. No achievement, as it were, just sits there.'

Hence, our celebrations of anniversaries and jubilees are not at all about nostalgia, or resting on our laurels, but about thanksgiving for the faithfulness of God as we reflect on God's blessings and providence over the centuries. There will be setbacks as our history teaches us, and the tragedy of the closure of St Dominic's Primary School this summer

cannot be glossed over – it does cast a deep shadow over our London 800th anniversary. Nevertheless, our history also shows that, by God's grace, our zeal for the apostolic mission in our Province remains undaunted. As Fr Simon Gainé OP says (p.9), even 'in an age of few numbers and threats of imprisonment for the faith, the English Province's intellectual life and apostolate shines through'.

Anniversaries and jubilees, therefore, give us an important and necessary prompt to recall our history, and to thus recall the goodness of God and the miracles of his grace. God works in and through our weakness, if we but remain faithful to his call and election of us, so that his strength might be displayed and not merely our human achievements. Thus, near the end of his life, having written so eloquently and incisively about God, St Thomas Aquinas still regarded his work as straw because he wanted nothing except God himself. The Master of the Order thus hopes that our celebrations in these double jubilee years (and I should think of every such anniversary) will 'propel us to serve God and the Church with great dedication and profound humility'.

Fraternally,

– Fr Lawrence Lew OP, Editor

You can send any comments
or feedback to me via
magazine@english.op.org

Receiving this magazine

This magazine is distributed free of charge twice a year. You can collect copies from any of the UK churches run by the Dominican Friars, or we can mail it directly to you. Email news is also sent out regularly.

Subscriptions

You are welcome to subscribe by mail, email, or both.

To subscribe, unsubscribe,
or update your details, email
subscriptions@english.op.org

Published by the English Province of the Order of Preachers,
reg. charity 231192 (England and Wales) and SC039062
(Scotland). Blackfriars, St Giles, Oxford. OX1 3LY.

Requiescant in Pace

We remember with affection and gratitude all the recently departed, including the following who made gifts to the Friars in their Wills.

- **Thomas Finnerty** (St Dominic's, London)

*May they and all the faithful departed,
through the mercy of God, rest in peace.*

Since 1221, gifts made in Wills have always played a vital part in sustaining the mission of the English Province.

If you are considering leaving such a gift in your Will, please see the back page of this magazine or visit www.english.op.org/legacies for useful information.





What Do Theologians Do All Day?

Fr Dominic White OP considers how theology can offer practical benefits to the Church.

In Nancy Mitford's comic novel *Don't Tell Alfred*, the narrator says of her theologian husband, 'he deals entirely in abstractions'. This is a common view – theologians live in ivory towers and know nothing of the lives of ordinary Christians – indeed this may make theologians' speculations positively harmful.

Being an English Dominican does a lot to protect you from that real risk. When the Province was restored in the nineteenth century, there were so many Catholic immigrants that the bishops required clerical religious orders to run parishes. While this requirement was later dropped, it has given the theological work of English Dominicans a strong pastoral focus. So when we go to our books, it's often to address the difficult questions our people have put to us about being a Catholic in a very challenging world – and indeed how we bring the Gospel to the 'no religion' majority. My first book,

The Lost Knowledge of Christ (Liturgical Press, 2015), came out of my work as a university and artists' chaplain, meeting people who identified as not religious but spiritual, and often found their spirituality in nature and the cosmos. Digging deep into 2,000 years of Christian tradition helped me find forgotten resources to speak to them.

In 2018 I moved to our Cambridge priory, becoming a research associate, and now Acting Director of Research, at the Margaret Beaufort Institute of Theology. Founded in 1993 to form Catholic women for lay ministry in the church (e.g. parish workers, university chaplains), Margaret Beaufort shares the same pastoral focus as the English Dominicans. Two alumnae founded and manage a parish in a new town – I celebrated Mass there once and was impressed by the congregation's reverence and engagement. The Institute now includes men students and tutors – and two of our Dominican Sisters teach here too.

St Thomas Aquinas always begins his answer to any question by giving his

opponent's case. At Margaret Beaufort we take a 'whole Church' approach, and so our teaching and research resist ideology and secular silo mentalities. For example, we hosted 'Views from the Pews' (bit.ly/viewsfrompews), a conference that sought to heal tensions over the Old and New Rites of Mass by asking people for their own experiences of liturgy. Stereotypes of 'rad trads' and 'Vatican II liberals' quickly collapsed. We are now turning the conference into a book.

Our next conference, planned for the autumn, is on women and *Diakonia* (ministry). With the many religious and lay women now ministering in the Church, especially as institutional chaplains, how best to enable their ministry? Should the Church restore the diaconate of women, attested in Scripture (Romans 16:1-2), given the clear distinction of priesthood and diaconate in Church teaching? And what did/could women deacons actually do? Or does this risk what Pope Francis calls clericalism? I don't have answers yet – but I look forward to learning more at the conference, in which we will dig deep into Catholic tradition and practice, at the service of the Church.

A Note on the Cover Image

The Paschal candle in St Dominic's London this year was hand-painted by Rachel Alem, and it commemorates the arrival of the Dominican friars in London in 1223. At the centre of their preaching is the Eucharist, indicated by

the Supper at Emmaus, and the Risen Christ preaching to the disciples at Emmaus, is the model of all Dominican preaching, so that our hearts might burn within us as the Scriptures are opened to us.

Fr Dominic is organising the Friends of Sophia conference on 8th July in Cambridge, 'Heavenly Harmony, Earthly Symphony', which will focus on ancient and modern spiritual music. See www.friendsofsophia.com



Fr Dermot Morrin OP shares news on what he considers to be some of the busiest and best times he has known at St Albert's.

The is a new energy in the Chaplaincy. Following lockdown, it took a while for people to have the confidence to organise events or even attend them. However, in a Parish Assembly held back in November the cry was for more events and in particular more parties! And so there were more events and more parties as people stepped up. At the Assembly one of the most insightful comments came with a discussion about whether or not we should form a new parish council. Someone said that we are not really ready for this, because we don't know each other, not really. We are not yet a community. Whether or not one agrees with this, there is work to be done and it has begun!

Our Lenten Fundraising Project

This Lent, at a Parish Assembly, we elected to raise funds for the charity Stella Maris which works globally on behalf of seafarers and has a significant role in the port of Leith. Several individuals made very generous donations, and on the Solemnity of the Annunciation there was

a sponsored walk: about 30 of us arrived by train at Aberdour, a small but ancient coastal town on the far shore of the Firth of Forth. We climbed up through sheep farms onto a ridge above the town to enjoy views towards Edinburgh and the Bridges before making our way back to the town where we celebrated Mass in the church of St Fillan, the first Catholic Mass to be celebrated in that ancient church since the Reformation. This year the church is 900 years old and parishioners made the event part of their centenary celebrations. More recently, the ladies of the Parish held a Swish Party. These events were enjoyable and helped build community as well as raising funds. To date we have raised the handsome sum of £4,547, when Gift Aid is included.

Garden Works

It has long been noted that while our chapel is admired by all including many visitors, the garden needs some adjustment to make it more fit for the way it is used. We are waiting for permission to carry out these works, as we are listed, but we hope that it can all be done in June and July. The centrepiece will be a full-size statue of St Dominic near the entrance gate. We commissioned it from a prominent and award-winning Scottish

sculptor, Kenny Hunter. He has been in dialogue with the Friars and representatives of the Lay Dominicans. On 26th March he spoke to parishioners about where his practice sits within the tradition of sculpture, and about this commission. We now have his preliminary version cast in resin. The final statue is on schedule to be in place for the Feast of St Dominic, when it will be blessed.

Chalice from Stone

With the closure of the Dominican Sisters' house at Stone, we asked for a chalice from there to be used here at St Albert's in memory of Sr Mary Ninian Averill OP, known here as 'Sister Dot'. She died in 2018 and we had not marked her passing in this place where she became a Catholic in the days of Fr Anthony Ross; and where she returned as a Dominican to found the small house of St Catharine of Siena and minister to families and children with special needs. The chalice has been inscribed in her memory, and on Easter Saturday we held a Mass for Sr Dot which was well attended. It was great to be able to live-stream the Mass, as this meant that her sisters in Stone could join us. After Mass over 30 people sat down to lunch in the Garden Room. It was a great reunion, and during the lunch

people shared their memories of her and all spoke of her with deep affection.

Conferences

On 13th March, our inaugural Holy Ground Lecture was given by Dr Rebekah Lamb from St Andrews University. She gave a great lecture on 'Art in the Light of the End: John Henry Newman's Aesthetics'. We used one of the University's Lecture Halls on George Square and had 96 people in attendance. After the lecture, we came back to the Chapel for Vespers, followed by a reception.

We are now looking forward now to a conference on 23rd–24th June at New College, 'St Dominic and His Preachers of Grace'. The idea is to raise our profile here in Scotland, providing those who may know us superficially with a deeper sense of what the Dominicans are about. Speakers will include Fr Martin Ganeri (Prior Provincial), Frs Dermot Morrin, Richard Finn and Fergus Kerr (on Zoom) on our history. Archbishop Leo will say Mass for us and Fr Timothy Radcliffe will preach. Fr Nicholas Crowe and Dominican sisters from Elgin and Crawley will present contemporary ministries. Margaret Doyle will talk on the Lay Dominicans in the UK. Fr Timothy will conclude by speaking on preaching and the imagination, pointing towards the future. A panel of student friars and sisters and young lay Dominicans will respond to Timothy's talk and the conference as a whole.

The conference is open to all, but you must book on Eventbrite. Full details are available at scotland.op.org/preachersofgrace/

Student Events

The CSU has had a very good year with a number of new initiatives. One such initiative has been to reach out to Catholic students from other universities in Scotland. They had a walk along the Fife coastal path with students from St Andrews, and welcomed students from Strathclyde at the midweek meal. Brenden Thompson, CEO of Catholic Voices, also came up to give a talk on how to do effective apologetics. In February they hosted a Youth 2000 retreat day entitled 'Return' with the assistance of Frs Matthew and Albert,



Fr Aelred (centre, front row) celebrates his retirement at HMP Polmont, together with the Governor (far left), Frs Dermot and Matthew, and his relatives.

and the Dominican Sisters from Elgin. It was a great success with an attendance of over 70. The Edinburgh Chapter of the Thomistic Institute has gone from strength to strength under the guidance of Fr Albert. Many of our students are involved in and committed to the Life Society. This year has been difficult as some of their events have been disrupted by other groups. The matter has been raised with the University, but so far there has not been any clear resolution. It seems that they are not the only group having this experience.

Prison Ministry

Fr Aelred recently retired after 16 years as a prison chaplain at Polmont HMP & YOI. In January his retirement was marked by a special event. The Governor, Mr Gerry Richie, said, 'It was an honour and a pleasure to work with Fr Aelred [...] and it was evident from the tributes I received from staff just how highly respected and thought of he is'. Fr Aelred was presented with a gold pocket watch and tumbler inscribed with the SPS logo. After the reception, Fr Aelred was able to take his sister and brother-in-law up into the prison to meet some of the prisoners in the Chaplaincy. He said this was the icing on the cake.

Fr Dermot has now been appointed to replace Fr Aelred in this ministry on one day a week alongside his other duties. In Fr Aelred's absence, he had

been providing some cover in Polmont on Mondays. 'I found that I love the work and was invited to apply for the job. Recently I was appointed as a Chaplain but I can only work part time. The great thing is that we can keep up this community's long-standing outreach to the prisoners in Polmont.'

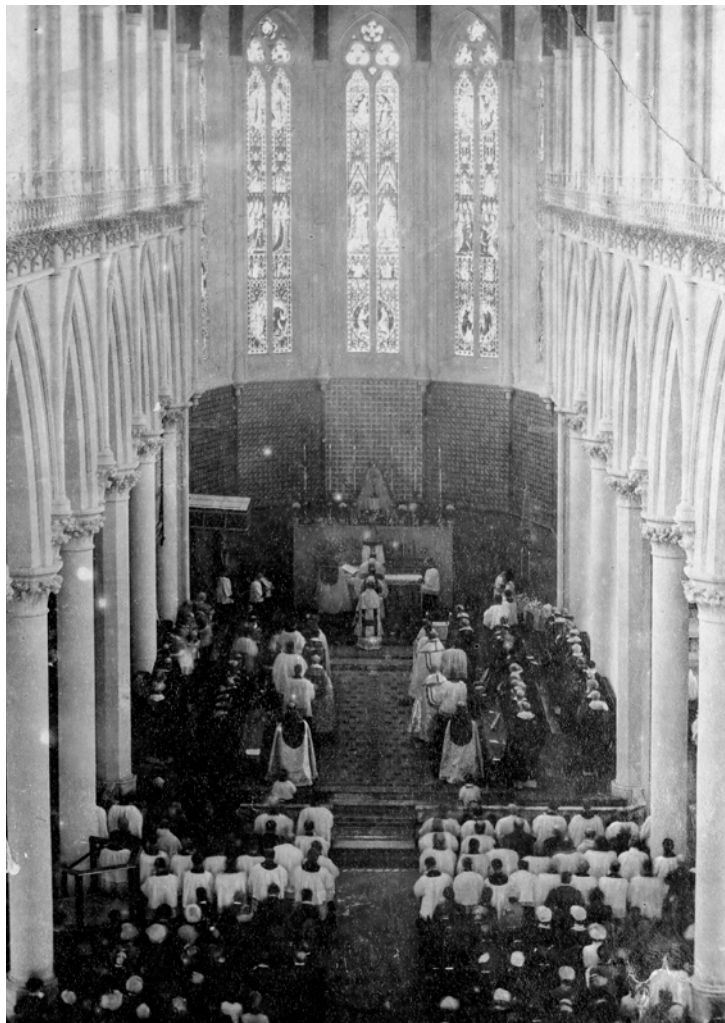
Lay Dominicans

The Lay Dominicans of Edinburgh are also thriving and are gaining new members. They held a very successful open day at the beginning of February. In March, Br Thomas Mannion OP led the Lay Dominican Day at Dunbar. Meanwhile, Fr Matthew continues to attend the Lay Fraternity in Durham monthly, while Fr Albert continues to look after the Edinburgh Lay Fraternity, as well as the Edinburgh Chapter of the Thomistic Institute.

In the summer Fr Albert will be moving to Cambridge to take up a new role as assistant chaplain at Fisher House. Our loss is Cambridge's gain. We thank him for all he has done in this past year and will miss him here. However, as soon as he is ordained, Br Thomas will be heading north to join us in Edinburgh. Our prayers are with him as he is ordained and as he takes up his ministry as priest among us here in this Chaplaincy.

Visit St Albert's online at scotland.op.org

From our Archives...



1 The first Mass celebrated at the opening of St Dominic's in London, on 31 May 1883. The Exposition Throne, the High Altar, and the Choir Stalls were subsequently installed as the funds became available. The church was only consecrated on 1 August 1923 by Cardinal Bourne, when all the final accounts for the cost of building the church were settled.



2 We learnt with sadness of the death of the last Dominican nun of the former monastery of Carisbrooke (Isle of Wight), Sr Mary John OP, on 22nd April 2023. After the closure of Carisbrooke, she had lived in the Dominican monastery in Fatima until her death. A fortnight before her death, the Mother Superior had written that Sr Mary John 'receives Holy Communion daily and keeps her Rosary near her... Sister still has a lively interest in the life of the English Province. I copied the brief talks given at the recent book launch and shared this with her. She was very happy.'

We pray for Sr Mary John's blessed repose, and we pray for the foundation of a new monastery of enclosed Dominican nuns in our Province.



3 'Lay brother' Br Bernard Stinger OP works in the boiler room at Hawkesyard Priory.

The 2019 General Chapter of the Order declared that the vocation of a vowed Dominican brother who is not ordained 'is a prophetic witness to essential aspects of our common vocation as friar preachers. The fraternal character of our vocation is represented by the co-operator brother. He reminds us that our apostolic life, rooted in our baptism and in our religious profession, is, in the first place, our way of living together. He reminds us that we are to create communities in which the Word is contemplated and mercy is shared. The brother makes an essential contribution to the particular character of our community life, strengthening it in fraternity, mutual service and tenderness.'

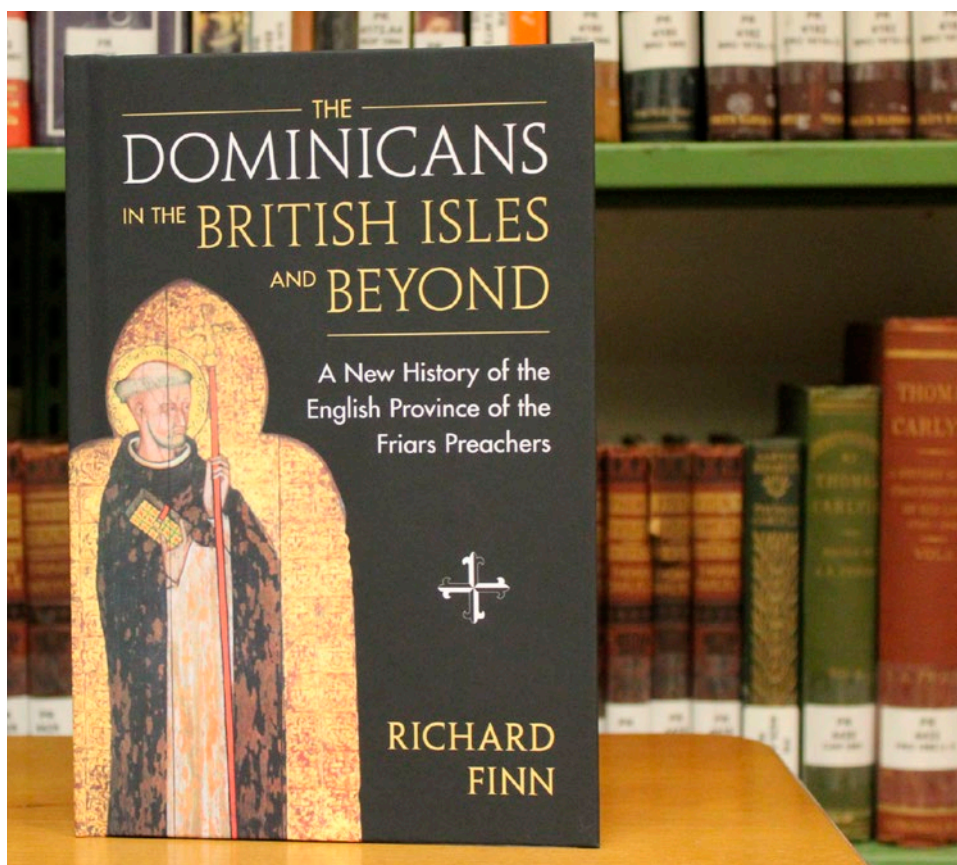
We pray for our cooperator brothers, and for an increase of vocations to this way of Dominican brotherhood.

Fr Lawrence Lew OP

A New History of our Province

In March, the new history of the Dominicans by Fr Richard Finn OP, *The Dominicans in the British Isles and Beyond*, was launched to an appreciative crowd at Blackfriars, Oxford. This new work was commissioned for the 800th anniversary of the Province in 2021, and involved detailed research into primary sources, allowing the author to correct, clarify and build upon previous histories by Dominicans from the last century. At the launch, addresses were made by the Provincial, Fr Martin Ganeri OP; by the editor, Alex Wright of Cambridge University Press; and by the author himself:

It is a century since Fr Bede Jarrett and his collaborators wrote a history of the English Dominican Province. My aim in writing a new academic history was not only to bring the story up to date, but to offer a critical reassessment of earlier accounts. For the medieval period, that meant not only drawing on recent archaeology, but shifting the frame away from a narrow view of what happened in England to a wider perspective on the Province as a multinational corporation. For the long period between the refoundation of the Province by Fr Philip (later Cardinal) Howard in the 1650s, and our flight from the Low Countries in 1794 after the French invasions, a return to primary sources has enabled a less hagiographical portrait of Howard; it has also highlighted the role of Fr Thomas Worthington, four times Provincial in the first half of the 18th century.



Studying the second refoundation of the Province, in the mid-19th century, has exploded the myth of a voluntary surrender of the Woodchester mission by the Passionists to the Dominicans, and emphasised the debt owed to the Master General, Fr Jandel, as well as to the Irish, Italian, and French friars whom he sent to strengthen a noviciate of strict observance there. For the 20th century, the challenge was to see both how Bede Jarrett and his allies developed the intellectual apostolate of the Province, but also what that cost the brethren when the Province was unwilling to cut back on other commitments in Britain, the Caribbean and Southern Africa. The new history also underscores how far the Province's survival and renewal in the 1960s and 1970s depended on men such as Frs Ian Hislop, Fergus Kerr, Simon Tugwell and Timothy Radcliffe.

Attention has been given to the lay men and women in every age whose support financed the English Dominican mission, and to those men who joined but later left the Province. The aim has been to note not just the Province's achievements but also the sufferings that frequently accompanied them, whether illness on Grenada or the prolonged anxiety experienced by some in fundraising and managing debt.

Fr Louis Gonin, Prior and Novice Master at Woodchester, and later Archbishop of the Port of Spain, once told the friars they should have the back of a donkey and the stomach of a pig. Resilience was essential for their work.

Piers the Plowman's Crede, a satire from the end of the 14th century, presents readers with an obese Dominican friar 'with a face as fat as a full bladder' seated on a bench in the refectory and puffed up with pride in the Order's men of learning and many bishops. It is my hope that this new history won't puff us up with pride but give us a realistic sense of what flesh and blood can do, with others' help and support, by the grace of God.

The hardback edition can be purchased at www.cambridge.org with a 20% discount if you use the offer code FINN2023





Ministry in Jamaica

Many do not realise that the English Province of the Order of Preachers also has care for communities in Jamaica and Granada. After his ordination in July, Br Thomas Mannion OP was sent to our house in Jamaica to gain pastoral experience as a deacon. Br Thomas worked alongside Fr Clifton Harris OP (pictured above) and Fr Peter Hunter OP (below) in a thriving ministry in the areas of social assistance, education, and pastoral ministries.

I was lucky enough to preach almost every day, including at my first funeral – a man who was only 25 when he died – but I was not limited to participating in

the sacramental life of Jamaica. I was also visiting the sick, assisting at the university Freshers' Week, and in the distribution of food. I was also very fortunate to be able to work with Sr Barbara SSps, the director of Catechesis for the Archdiocese of Kingston, helping with the revision of ongoing catechetical programmes and also delivering some training to catechists on childhood development and spiritual maturity. As you can imagine, although I was only there for two months, I learnt a lot from the personal encounters with the people and participating in the ministry of my brethren. What I have learnt from our brothers and sisters in Jamaica has shaped the kind of deacon I am and hopefully the sort of priest I will be; wherever I am assigned in the future will receive the benefits of the formation Jamaica has given me. Love, Evangelisation, and Mercy, that is what the presence of the Dominicans means in Jamaica. We love and we are loved. It is quite simple really.

The Dominicans have care of two parishes in Kingston: Christ the King, in August Town, and St Thomas Aquinas in Papine. In addition to the sacramental and catechetical work involved in parish life, the work of the friars in Jamaica includes food distribution, and applying for funding and grants to allow both

young people and adults to access education. Fr Peter teaches multiple classes at the seminary in both philosophy and theology. The classes at the seminary are not solely for the purpose of the formation of the next generation of priests, but also for the wider formation of the laity. Fr Peter is also the Catholic Chaplain to the University of the West Indies, the largest university in the Caribbean. The Dominican house is the closest to hospital and so the friars are often called upon to provide the consolation of the Church and the Sacraments to those who are sick, suffering, and dying. The friars also help people to access services such as procuring wheelchairs. The Dominicans are a much loved part of a rich tapestry of Catholicism in Jamaica, where Catholics are a vital and vibrant minority.

The work of our friars and their support for the needy in the Caribbean is supported by the Saint Martin's Mission Fund. As well as donations from friends of the friars in the UK, we make annual appeals in diocesan churches throughout England and Wales. We welcome donations via our website www.english.op.org/missions or use the form on the back page.



An English Dominican Home in Rome, Part IV

Fr Simon Francis Gainé OP

The English Dominican priory in Rome was to come to an end after a surprise visit to St John and St Paul from Pope Innocent XII in 1697.

Guaranteeing the English Dominican priory in Rome a future after the departure of its students to Bornhem had been no easy task. The prior, Edward ‘Captain’ Bing, had been sent away from Rome on business by the Master General in 1694, and in 1695 was appointed Provincial. Since the exile of the Catholic king, James II, and the arrival of the Protestant William of Orange, venturing into England was more of a risk. Though Bing was given permission to enter, a warrant was subsequently issued for his arrest. He who had eluded capture in the time of Titus Oates was now locked up in Newgate Prison.

The Master General took action to bolster the depleted community. Ambrose Grimes, now back in Rome, was appointed Vicar in charge of the priory on 26th November. The same day, Dominic Williams, who was pursuing advanced studies in Naples, was recalled to Rome. They would be joined by Thomas Worthington after his ordination as a priest at Naples, and Thomas Dryden.

On 9th December, permission was granted for Bing to receive visitors in prison, including a Mr Thursby, perhaps a relation of Fr Lewis Thursby or even the Provincial Bursar himself, who had previously lived at St John and St Paul. At any rate, Fr Thursby now managed Bing’s secret – and technically illegal – correspondence with the Master General and James II. A plan was formulated to staff the priory with Italian friars until English numbers could be restored. Bing was released, charged with high treason and then rearrested, but eventually found his way to Bornhem.

Plans for the new College of St

Thomas of Aquin, which was to be part of the University of Louvain, inevitably took precedence. By the end of 1696, Gilbert Parker was moving from Rome to teach there, and Williams was likewise appointed the first Professor of Philosophy. Ambrose Burgis was among the students summoned from Naples to the new college. It was in this context that Pope Innocent XII entered the picture.

The Pope had been approached by the Lazarists, an order founded by St Vincent de Paul, whose needs in Rome had outgrown their property, and he favoured moving them into St John and St Paul. James II attempted a compromise in favour of the English interest, where he would nominate English churchmen to share the buildings. The Lazarists agreed, but the Pope absolved them of the obligation.

The Master General still hoped not to lose the basilica and priory, and its Vicar petitioned the Pope. But when the Pope made his visit, he found only three priests – Grimes, Dryden and Worthington – and two lay brothers – Dominic Dye and probably John Melis – and no students. Despite his appreciation for the Dominicans’ gardens, the Pope’s intentions were confirmed. Since there was no training of Dominican students and no money, the Lazarists could surely serve the Church better there.

The Lazarists moved in, but the Dominicans refused to leave. They lived side by side for a few months. On 16th November, they were directed by the Master General to hand over the priory and depart. The nineteenth-century historian of the

province, Fr Raymund Palmer, credits Williams, ‘a talented but young Religious’, with having persuaded the authorities in Rome to make the handover ‘against the better counsel of older members of the Province’.

Palmer adds that when the brethren later tried to reclaim the priory from Cardinal Orsini, who was by then Pope Benedict XIII, the Dominican Pope reminded Williams who exactly had been the cause of the handover. The Province’s eighteenth-century historian, Fr John Martin, who had accompanied Williams, remembered the Pope’s remark. The Province’s petition was refused, but the Pope consecrated Williams bishop in his private chapel on the Quirinal, and he became Vicar Apostolic of the Northern District of England.

Some of the last members of St John and St Paul were among the first English Dominicans to publish modern books. Burgis saw through to publication Worthington’s *Introduction to the Catholick Faith by an English Dominican* (1709). Its introduction says that, while it is chiefly written for Protestants, whole chapters were penned ‘against the Atheists, Epicureans, Deists, and Antichristians’. Burgis himself authored works of philosophy and theology, together with a history of the early Church in five volumes. In an age of few numbers and threats of imprisonment for the faith, the English Province’s intellectual life and apostolate shines through.

The End



St John and St Paul



‘Caritas’ and Justice

Fr Luke Doherty OP, currently studying for an Advanced Masters in Theology & Religion (MRes) at KU Leuven, gave a talk on environmental justice at the Dominican Seminar earlier this year; this is an abridged version. Fr Luke is the Province’s Promoter of Justice and Peace.

In his encyclical *Deus Caritas Est*, Pope Benedict XVI emphasised that the Church must practise love of neighbour, to have a love of God. And this love of neighbour needs to be an ordered service to the wider community (*caritas*). The exercise of charity and the administration of the sacraments is essential to the preaching of the gospel. In administering charity for widows and orphans, prisoners, the sick and needy of every kind, the Church is involved in a type of work which cannot be delegated to the State.

On the other hand, from a Marxist perspective, the poor, those in need and the dispossessed need Justice, not charity. In this perspective, charity is just a way of the rich getting out of obligations to the poor and maintains a system of economic exploitation, perpetuating and enabling the excesses of profiteering. The Catholic Social tradition has had to respond to such critical perspectives since the industrial revolution. In *Caritas in Veritate*, Benedict XVI argued a union of charity and justice is complex, but also necessary. There was also a link to economics, as well as a mention of ecological issues and the need to strive for the common good as part of a love of neighbour.

Unscrupulous profiteering is something which the Catholic tradition opposes. The reasoning behind this was highlighted in a recent seminar at KU Leuven, in a discussion on the link between charity, justice and peace. True justice means rendering true judgements and charity to others, but also prohibits oppression of the widow, the orphan, the alien, or the poor. Arguably, one of the things to take away from the Catholic social tradition is that an individualised charity is seen as detached from true justice. But what does true justice mean in the context of environmental and social problems caused by economic systems?

The promise of a capitalist narrative is that through advancements in technology and a trickle-down effect of increasing wealth at the top, prosperity can be achieved for all. However, with more complex economic systems and an advancement of industrialisation with consequent damage to the environment, the problems in the realm of justice have grown ever complex.

As part of true justice, human rights can be linked to a political love or *caritas*. This encompasses the idea of restoring to the poor what already belongs to them, forming a basis of what constitutes ‘human order’. *The Universal Declaration on Human Rights* consists of freedom rights and socio-economic rights. Freedom rights include the right to life, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, the right to due legal process, freedom of movement, a right to privacy, the right to vote, and so on. Socio-economic rights include the right to property, healthcare,

education, housing, and the right to work. Also included are the right for access to an adequate standard of living (which can be taken to include adequate food, water and sanitation).

The encyclical *Pacem in Terris* (1963) gave support to socio-economic rights, in defence of human dignity. There are threats to socio-economic rights, and the very concept of development is geared towards addressing threats to human dignity. Such threats include: hunger, starvation, poverty, illiteracy, unemployment (and underemployment), lack of housing, and poor health (or advanced age). There is also the question of how families are supported in the context of raising children.

To ensure a basic human decency, this inevitably means the development of infrastructure, more intensive food production, chemical industries, and so on. The concerns surrounding the environmental impact of all of this were detailed in the 2015 encyclical *Laudato Si’*. In relation to development, the term ‘sustainable development’ is a concept used to balance the needs of human development with concerns over environmental issues. This also introduces a new dimension to consider in how human dignity is achieved through development: the ability of future generations to meet their needs. *Laudato Si’* signifies a shift in magisterial understanding of the human role in the created world: we are connected to the rest of creation and the environment which we rely upon for survival.

Human rights are often nowadays combined with the 17 UN Sustainable Development goals. This approach combines environmental concerns with the need for human development, a decent economy, the need for employment, and so on. Securing human rights is part of having a basic human dignity, and economic development is part of how to achieve this.

But what sort of development is going to be possible within ecological limits? A relatively new concept since *Laudato Si’* is the Planetary Boundaries model – a quantitative framework of boundaries, within which humanity can continue to develop and thrive for generations to come. The planetary boundaries include ‘safe’ limits but also an indication of when certain boundaries have reached a risk of

severe effects occurring to the environment on a planetary scale. Examples of boundaries include biosphere integrity, climate change, and freshwater use.

Despite recent international summits such as COP27 making some progress with promises on ecological restoration, there is no real movement on phasing out fossil fuels on a global basis. The trajectory is for an ever-increasing global consumption of fossil fuels and other non-renewable resources, meaning the safe limits on the climate system are likely to be exceeded. One of the discussions at the COP 27 summit was on establishing a fund for the Global South, to help nations adapt to the effects of climate change. The pursuit of meaningful justice in this case is linked to charity since it is through a redistribution of wealth where the Global South can receive support. There was no agreement on who would pay for such an adaptation fund. Also, the scale of environmental problems requires considerable technological innovation to reduce emissions and reverse environmental damage.

What is our role in contributing to a solution? The Church has a valuable contribution to make on human rights and the place of humans in creation. For those who are religious, there need to be signs in our times of the need for *caritas* in the context of finding just solutions to problems which developed nations have largely caused. We need the right sort of signs in our times for how Christians should respond to the challenges of planetary boundaries, when more pressures are being placed on the natural systems which sustain us all.



A Chinese proverb goes: “It is better to light a candle than curse the darkness”, and so we frequently light candles in churches and in holy places as a visible sign of our prayers directed, perhaps through a saint’s intercession, to Christ, the eternal Light. They are a sign of our hope in divine help, and our desire to be in communion with him so that we become a light in the world, and a sign of our faith that Christ will dispel the darkness we might experience, and bring his blessings and grace into a given situation. In the Rosary Shrine in London, we wanted to provide an opportunity for people to leave their prayers at the foot of the altar of Our Lady of the Rosary, the patroness of the Dominican Order, even though they

may not be able to travel to the Shrine to light a candle themselves. Through an online form at www.rosaryshrine.co.uk/lamps and also through a special virtual reality tour on our home page www.rosaryshrine.co.uk/ people from around the world can now make a virtual visit to the Rosary Shrine and offer a special votive lamp at Our Lady’s altar. These burn for a week, and the donor’s name or beneficiary’s name is written on the lamp. As the lamps glimmer in the darkness they are a beautiful sign of our union in prayer, and they illustrate Jesus’s words: “Let your lamp so shine before all, so that seeing your good works, they may glorify your Father who is in heaven” (Mt 5:16).

Privacy Notice – Communications & Fundraising

Version: LIT-5

This is a short version of our current Privacy Notice, explaining the key things we think you should know.

Our full Privacy Notice includes details of personal data we process, what we do with it, and why: we recommend that you read it. See www.english.op.org/privacy or write to us at the address below for a printed copy.

SECURE AND COMPLIANT

Your personal data are stored securely by us and used for communications and fundraising in support of our mission. We comply with current UK regulations on personal data, communications, and privacy. We only share personal data outside our organisation for specific and limited purposes, subject to strict safeguards (e.g. with printers, email service providers, statutory bodies). We use some secure third-party data processors whose servers store data outside the UK but fully comply with UK regulations.

HOW LONG WE KEEP DATA

We consider our relationship with friends, donors and supporters to be life-long and we will retain much of your data indefinitely unless you request otherwise.

YOUR RIGHTS

You can ask to view, correct or erase your data at any time, and are free to withdraw any consents you give. You can complain to the UK Fundraising Regulator if we fail to respect your rights. Please note that in some cases we may be unable to erase your data if retention is required to meet our legal obligations.

COMMUNICATIONS

Please opt in if you wish to receive news communications from us. We may send you occasional direct fundraising communications by post; you are free to get these by email instead, or opt out.

RESEARCH WE UNDERTAKE

We use internet searches to discover information relevant to our fundraising, in particular employment and any directorships held by our contacts, and any public philanthropy. This helps us to communicate appropriately for fundraising purposes. Any searches we make are limited to what is in the public domain, and we do not record any irrelevant or sensitive information.

CONTACT DETAILS

Got any questions? Feel free to contact the Data Protection Coordinator: c/o the Development Office at the address below or email development@english.op.org
Data Controller: English Province of the Order of Preachers, Blackfriars, St Giles, Oxford OX1 3LY.
Charity registered in England and Wales (231192) and in Scotland (SC039062).

Have you Written your Will?



Our Development Director, Richard Brown, reminds of the importance of writing one's Will

Recently, the Dominican Friars joined with other Catholic charities as a member of **Your Catholic Legacy**. This organisation encourages Catholics to help the future work of the Church by leaving a donation to a Catholic charity in their Will.

From a purely practical perspective, everyone should write a Will. Recently, a rather tragic story was told to me by one of the friars, of a parishioner with no surviving relatives who died without making a Will: all her property went to the Crown, and the friars were not allowed even to offer her a Catholic funeral. This is an extreme example, but it illustrates the importance of putting one's affairs in order, even if only for one's own peace of mind.

Gifts in Wills currently make up a fifth of the friars' annual income. One major legacy paid for the roofs and stonework restoration of Blackfriars priory in Oxford, but smaller legacies also give vital support. For this reason, I would encourage you, once you have taken care of the needs of family and loved ones in your Will, to consider including a gift to the Dominicans.

Free Will-Writing Service Now Available

If you would be interested in leaving a gift to the friars, but are not sure where to start, we now participate in the **National Free Wills Network**, and can offer a free Will-writing service to our supporters. Just drop me a line with your address and you will be sent information and a list of participating lawyers in your area. There is no obligation to leave a gift to the friars if you use this service, however they would of course welcome it.

What to do next

We recommend that you discuss a gift in your Will with either myself or the bursar of your local Dominican priory. We can advise on details to include, and how best to direct your support.

- **Information** on supporting the Dominicans in your Will can be found at www.english.op.org/wills or contact me to receive printed information by post.
- **Contact me** if you would like to use the Free Will-Writing Service, or to discuss your gift in confidence.
development@english.op.org / 01865 610208.

Donate to Support the Friars

Give now online: www.english.op.org/donate



snap this QR code with your smartphone camera to visit our donate page

My Contact Details

Title.....First Name.....Last Name.....

Home Address

Postcode Email.....

Telephone Send me this newsletter via ☐ email ☐ mail.

Do you have a connection with a Dominican house or church? If so, please tell us which:

Privacy Notice [LIT-2]

In returning this form you are sending us your personal data. Please read the Privacy Notice overleaf which describes what we do with your data and why.

Gift Aid Declaration

UK Taxpayer? Tick the box and add today's date to boost your donation by 25% via Gift Aid. Date: ____/____/____

Tick here: ☐ I want the charity The English Province of the Order of Preachers to treat all donations I have made for this tax year [and the four years prior to the year of this declaration]*, [and all donations I make from the date of this declaration until I notify the charity otherwise]*, as Gift Aid. *Delete as applicable.

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less income tax and/or Capital Gains tax in a tax year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all of my donations in that tax year it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Gift Aid is reclaimed by the charity from the tax you pay for the current tax year. Your home address is needed to identify you as a current UK taxpayer. Please notify us if your situation changes. The English Province of the Order of Preachers (the Dominicans) is a charity registered in England and Wales (231192) and in Scotland (SC039062).

My Donation

I enclose a gift of £

[cheque payee: 'The Dominican Council']

My gift is for

- ☐ General work of the Dominican Friars
- ☐ The Dominicans in
[insert name of location]
- ☐ Blackfriars Hall, Oxford
- ☐ I do not require an acknowledgement

Please send information on

- ☐ Making a legacy gift in my Will
- ☐ Setting up regular giving to the Friars.

ONLINE GIVING is a secure and easy way to support the friars. Follow the link above or look on the websites of our priories.

RETURN THE COMPLETED FORM with your payment to:
Development Office, Blackfriars, St Giles, Oxford. OX1 3LY.

If you would like to discuss your giving, contact Mr Richard Brown at our Development Office by email: development@english.op.org