



VERITAS + SEARCHING FOR TRUTH + VERITAS + HEARING ALL SIDES + VERITAS + LISTENING DEEPLY+ VERITAS + SEEKING GOD IN ALL THINGS

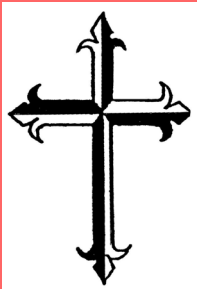
Lord Jesus Christ,

Today, once again, we claim You as the Way and the Truth that leads to the justice and peace of God's reign.

Help us to be open to listen deeply to all that surrounds us. Give us the courage and strength to search for you in all the events of our lives.

We pray we may be honest and respectful in our conversations that the truth of those with whom we differ may be heard. May understanding lead to mutual respect and an end to violence.

Send us your Spirit to guide our search for Truth now and always. Amen.



For Reflection:

- In what specific ways do we already foster deep listening to all sides in our ministry? In our homes? In our families? In our lives?
- What can we do to further promote deep listening with mutual respect in our ministry? In our homes? In our families? In our lives?
- What must I/we do, perhaps differently, in order to make that happen?

Every day we are bombarded with information. We are interconnected on a global scale yet we ask what is the truth? We wonder if we can find it.

Truth. Veritas. This motto of the Dominican Order proclaims a dedication to a common search for truth. From their foundation, Dominicans have believed that God is revealed in every nook and cranny of the cosmos.

One of the early stories of St. Dominic is that of an all night discussion he had with a heretical innkeeper in Toulouse. He listened and heard God in what mattered to the inn keeper. It was in the deep listening with warmth that "multiplied the discussions" so the Spirit of God was revealed to the man.

Disputatio or honest discussion listening for the spark of truth in even opposing arguments that the fullness of Truth may be revealed. Dominicans often practiced this in regard to the scriptures and theology for God's loving presence revealed to us through Jesus Christ is the deepest truth. Yet it led Saints Thomas Aquinas, Albert the Great and Dominicans through the ages to study all of life and the cosmos.

Today Dominicans, vowed and associate members, Dominican volunteers, Dominican Youth Preachers and the whole Dominican family continue the search for Truth in mutual respect, honesty, and *disputatio*.

This search calls Dominicans to credibility in their ministry in parishes, schools, retreat houses, hospitals, nursing homes -- anywhere they are called.

Veritas has led Dominicans to ministry in special missions in Puerto Rico, Jamaica, Colombia, Pakistan, Peru and the Dominican Republic to name a few. It has led sisters to visit Iraq, Israel, the Palestinian territories, and the UN in a search for the truth on a world stage. It has led us to look at our lives in terms of the ecosystems of the planet and to discern the use of lands held in common.

Finding the truth is one thing, owning our foibles, doing something about our own errors and sinfulness is another. Proclaiming it and standing for the truth calls for courage and humility.



WHAT DOES VERITAS MEAN FOR THE WORLD?

Just as Catherine of Siena found truth called her to speak in ways she never dreamed. So the truth calls Dominicans to speak and move into new ministries when the needs arise. We have taken corporate stances as a congregations against Nuclear War, the Death Penalty, the War in Iraq and other issues. We have sponsored ministries when needs beckoned and only God knows what the future holds.

The truth brings us to face hard questions in mutuality and solidarity with the poor and marginalized of the world. It is not always clear or easy. We do not always agree. But in the struggle the Preaching Continues . . .

What if we all were open to deep listening for the truth in mutuality and respect? How might our world be different?



What is one aspect of your life in which you might search for truth in collaboration with others?

Prepared by Barbara Schwarz, OP, Amityville 2004 revised 20014,



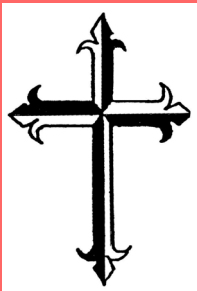
TO PRAISE+ LAUDARE+ TO BLESS+ BENEDICERE+ TO PREACH + PRAEDICARE

Lord God,
We praise you, Our Creator,
who filled the universe
with mystery and wonders
to be revealed.
We pray
that we be a blessing
to all on this planet.

Help us to hear your Word
and proclaim it with justice
and mercy that all may come
to know the Good News of
Jesus Christ.

You can do more than we can
imagine with even the
smallest of gifts we offer.

May your Spirit give us the
courage to live justly and with
eager longing for the pres-
ence that is You, both now
and forever. Amen.



For Reflection:

- In what Specific ways do we already foster living life in a wholistic balance, - work, play, study, and prayer ?
- What can we do to further encourage and praise the gifts of each individual, who comes in contact with us as Dominicans?
- What must I/we do, perhaps differently, in order to have priorities that lead to a healthy life that can give witness to God in the World?

We want to be with those we love. We are willing to do anything to be with them. How are we willing to be with God? Laudare, Benedicere, Praedicare: the call to praise, to bless and to preach is the way of Dominican Spirituality.

LAUDARE TO PRAISE

As a child is drawn through wonder to get to know something, the wonder of God manifest in all of creation draws us to know the cosmic song of praise.

Dominican life joins in the contemplative act of the universe in allowing God to draw us to the center of all life. It is a gift given. From the attentiveness to the One who loves us all into being, we are moved to be transparent witnesses to the fire of love that is God. Our very being becomes an act of praise.

BENEDICERE TO BLESS

In contrast to our cultural norms, our value lies not in what we do but in who we are. To be a blessing calls forth our recognition of the Divine Presence in our very being as it is. It is not a matter of doing but of existence in the presence of God who is Love.

To bless another is to place the presence of God into the light of the other's eyes. It is to pour forth from our hearts God so as to meet God in the other.

PRAEDICARE TO PREACH

We are not graced by God for ourselves but for mission that the gift of love poured out on us might be shared in the Holy Preaching. When Dominic founded the Order over

800 years ago at Prouihle, it was the community of women, men, nuns, friars, and laity together that grounded the preaching in reality and truth.



WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR THE WORLD?

"If the demands of the apostolate mean that we have no time to pray and eat with our brothers[sisters], to share their lives, then however busy we may be we will not be apostles in the full sense of the word. Dominic was a preacher with all his being."

- Timothy Radcliffe, OP

Our society rewards us when we work too hard. Our church does so when we minister and minister. "Ask a busy person" or so the saying goes. But that fails to keep a balance in our lives.

Laudare, Benedicere, Praedicare remind us that there is more to Dominican life than work. We are called to be with and for each other. These words remind us to pay attention to the mystery of relationship with God and in God through others and all creation. We are not to be judged by our doing but by how we are human beings. Attending to relationships is what makes our preaching authentic. It is how we become living Words of God.



Prepared by Barbara Schwarz, OP 2004 Amityville, revised 2014.



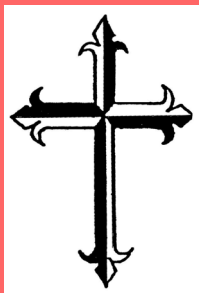
+ PILLARS OF DOMINICAN LIFE +
 PRAYER + STUDY + COMMON LIFE
 + MISSION + PILLARS OF DOMINICAN LIFE +

Lord Jesus Christ,
 You emptied yourself to be open to the fullness of life and love. Show us the way to empty ourselves in prayer so as to be full of your presence.

Open us to the wonders of all creation that in our study we may ponder your incarnate Word.

Give us the strength and patience to be vulnerable enough to live our common life in mutuality, service of the Gospel and love in your name.

Give us the passion for your people that sends us forth in mission so your holy preaching may continue to those most in need of the Good News. Amen.



For Reflection:

- In what Specific ways do we already foster prayer, study, common life and mission?
- In what specific ways do we collaborate with others to make that happen?
- What must I/we do, perhaps differently, in order to have priorities that lead to a balanced witness to the four pillars in our lives that we may more effectively preach the love of to God in the World?

The Dominican Life at its foundation is based upon what we call the four pillars of Dominican Life: Prayer, Study, Common Life and Mission. These fundamentals are key to understanding the Dominican Charism and Spirituality.

PRAYER

At the heart of Dominican Life is prayer. While we are called “to share the fruits of our contemplation” private prayer has traditionally found its counterpart in common prayer, especially the Liturgy of the Hours and Eucharist. It is from our prayer that all life and ministry flows.

Dominican spirituality recognizes that each person is unique and has a special relationship with God. shaped by our own personality and giftedness. Meditation and contemplation will take different forms for each person.

STUDY

Dominic said, “Always study!” The one thing that is never looked upon as a luxury are the books of a Dominican. They are tools for the holy preaching.

Dominicans believe that God’s revelation takes place in all of life. To study is to find God. Dominicans especially study the Word of God. Dominic always allowed his followers the principle of dispensation so that the practices of the Order would never get in the way of study for the preaching. Common study was fostered from the beginning of the Order.

Initially common study took the form of the readings at table. Today media and technology make study possible through the web, video, i-tunes and dvd. We also take time to allow the earth to teach us our place on this planet

COMMON LIFE

We do not learn to walk alone, we do not learn to pray alone, we cannot fully know the mystery of God in isolation. We need each other. The Common Life challenges us with interdependence and diversity. The common life opens us up to others and calls us to

grapple with differences. From the beginning in 1206, Dominican life has not been about uniformity but a celebration of unity in diversity. Today that continues in the Dominican family of sisters, friars, nuns, laity, associates, Dominican Youth and Dominican volunteers. It raises the question -- what is the common good?

In our living the vowed life in obedience to God’s call, voluntary poverty, and consecrated celibacy we are opened to new ways of loving. Associate and lay members open us further in their sharing of the charism.

MISSION

Prayer, study, and the common life give us the confidence and direction necessary to be sent forth in mission. No one is given the gift of God’s presence for themselves alone.

Dominicans are impelled to the mission of the holy preaching in many forms: teaching, nursing, administration, retreat work, pastoral ministry, social work, parish outreach, advocacy, earth centered ministries as well as pulpit preaching. The preaching is most profoundly who we are as persons and who we become.

WHAT CAN THEY TEACH THE WORLD?

We can do more together than we can alone. God’s unique presence in each person is gift for all to be recognized, celebrated, fostered, and cherished. We share this planet. We raise the question: What is the Common Good? Our struggles to live a common life, recognize unity in diversity, and live with a lighter touch on the planet’s resources may begin to show the way for a future full of hope.



Prepared by Barbara Schwarz, OP 2004, Amityville, revised 2014.

The Order of Preachers sharing the Gospel with those who need it most for over 800 years.



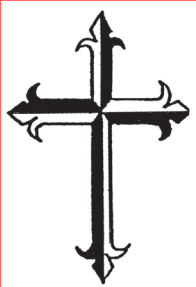
PRAYER + CONTEMPLATION + PRAYER + SHARING THE FRUITS OF CONTEMPLATION + PRAYER + COMMON PRAYER + PRAYER +

Everloving God,
You call us by name and
invite us to know you.
Time and again you show us
your presence.

Help us to believe in You
who seek only to love us
Who want only that we grow
to be ourselves in You.

Be with us
in our dark times
and in our joyful times.
Give us the openness
to allow You to love us
as You do all creation.

We know this because
Jesus the Christ has told us.
May our common prayer
unite us in the Holy Spirit,
both now and forever. Amen



For Reflection:

- In what Specific ways do we already foster times of prayer and contemplation? In my own life?
- In what specific prayer forms do we pray in common or with others?
- What must I/we do, perhaps differently, in order to have my mission flow from deep prayer and contemplation?

At the heart of Dominican Life is prayer. Unbelievers may find this a waste of time, but do we not waste time on those we love? Prayer has no tangible by-product — there is only a growth in relationship with God. That relationship by its very nature extends to others and to the world, For as Jesus said, “You must love one another as I have loved you.”

Dominican spirituality recognizes that each person is uniquely created in love by God. Each person has a special relationship with God shaped by their own personality and giftedness. Dominic called his followers to pray constantly that their very lives may be prayer. Meditation and contemplation will take different forms for each person.

Dominican mission flows from prayer. The love of God received is the impetus to preaching and ministry.

CONTEMPLATION

As Dominic walked with his companions from town to town he called them to meditate. His meditation was often on the Scriptures which he knew by heart. He spent long periods in prolonged prayer each night.

Contemplation is a gift of God's presence revealed. Basically it is the work of the Spirit. We can only wait on God with desire. Meditation can be an active means of waiting on God.

Lectio Divina is a movement to contemplation through the reading of the Scriptures followed by meditation and prayer allowing God to move us beyond ourselves. It has a special place in Dominican life. There is a long Dominican tradition of the arts as meditation and preaching from the works of Fra Angelico to Dominicans today.

SHARING THE FRUITS OF CONTEMPLATION

We are not given the gift of God's presence in contemplation for ourselves but that we

might share the love God has bestowed on us. Dominicans share this gift in the mission of the holy preaching and common prayer. It is from prayer that ministry flows.

COMMON PRAYER

The Liturgy of the Hours and Eucharist are traditional forms of common prayer for us as Dominicans. The Liturgies of Morning Prayer and Vespers provide a natural setting for Lectio Divina.



WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR THE WORLD?

Dominic's contemplation included those he passed on the road. It opened his heart to the afflicted and the needy beyond compassionate understanding to solidarity in suffering. Contemplation is the ground of preaching justice and mercy. It can lead us to struggle with the truth of our experience on the way and the demands of the Gospel.

Prayer and contemplation are not escapes from the world but rather the transformative work of the Spirit. They not only lead to inner knowledge and growth as Catherine of Siena knew in her “Dialogues” but to love that moves one to act on the behalf of the voiceless. The Vision Statements of most Dominican Congregations illustrate that movement and struggle.

Prayer is our relationship with the God who calls us into being. God seeks to love us into the fullness of being and in doing so to lead us to new life in the world.

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The Order of Preachers sharing the Gospel with those who need it most for over 800 years.



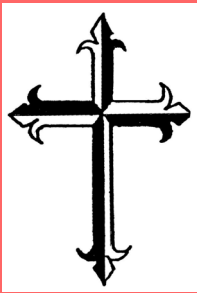
STUDY + LEARNING + STUDY + LISTENING + KNOWING THE WAYS OF THE WORD AND THE WORLD + STUDY + DISPUTATIO + STUDY +

Creator God,
You, who know all things,
May my study reveal your
presence so I may come to
know the truth and allow it to
transform me. May I become
a word of mercy and justice
for our troubled world.

Help me to recognize the gift
given by those who challenge
my thinking. Gift me with peo-
ple open to study that I may
test my learning and ideas.

Grant me the humility to know
my limitations and allow the
Gospel to take root in me.

Spark in me the courage to
seek and speak the truth in
and out of season. fired by
your love and the Holy Spirit,
both now and forever. Amen.



For Reflection:

- In what Specific ways do we already study?
- In what specific ways do we encourage study in one another? How do we study in common/with others?
- What must I/we do, perhaps differently, in order to grow and study the scriptures and the needs of all planet earth?

For Dominicans study is not an end in itself but a search for the presence of Christ in the world. Study is a common search for the truth that sets us free.

Study opens one to new possibilities of being surprised by the wonders of God to be found in all life and creation. Common study is part of the authentic struggle and search for truth.

Timothy Radcliffe, OP writes: "We can never build community unless we dare to argue with each other. ...One struggles with one's opponent, like Jacob wrestling with the angel, so as to demand a blessing....The other person always has something to teach us."

Our troubled world demands we do theology and study together to find hope in how we have found God's presence today.

THE WORD

How can we know the Christ except through a knowledge of the Word of God? Study of the Word of God has a priority in the Order of Preachers such that from the beginning of the Order the principle of dispensation was given that no practice may get in the way of study for the sake of the preaching.

From the early constitutions of Bologna, Dominicans were to be taught "how they should be intent on study, so that by day and by night, a home or on a journey, they should be reading or reflecting on something; whatever they can, they should try to commit it to memory." Dominic could recite much of the scriptures by heart.

THE WORLD

One cannot converse with others or dare to preach in any form without knowing the world. Thomas Aquinas took the works of Aristotle which shaped his world and used that as a frame of thought for his Summa. You find pictures of St. Albert the Great not with a globe in his hand but the stars and the cosmos. Education is very important to Dominicans.

Today Dominican study takes place not only in classrooms and libraries but in NY and Geneva at our offices in the UN. It takes place as we journey from the Philipines to Bagdad from South Africa to Oxford, from the US to Israel. It takes place in our organic community supported agriculture and learning from the land as we find our place in the ecosystems of our planet. It is from the context of a web of communications on the internet and through the many media that can express the experience that Dominicans as they dare to speak the Word of God to our world.

Since the beginning of the Order of Preachers in the community of Prouihle 800 years ago, Dominicans shared their study that the Gospel might be proclaimed where it was most needed and in a manner grounded in the realities of their day.

In this technological age we must ask ourselves with what do we nourish our minds? Where do we seek the truth? With whom do we test it? At www.domlife.org we find the fruits of that search from many perspectives..



WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR THE WORLD?

If we are serious about our desire for peace and justice, we must enter into open and respectful dialogue that we may know the gift of truth to be gained even from those with whom we disagree. Study can bring us hope for God is present in our world. We have only to see.

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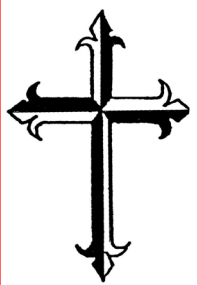


COMMON LIFE + RELATIONSHIP + COMMON LIFE + POVERTY + COMMON LIFE + CHASTITY + COMMON LIFE + OBEDIENCE + COMMON LIFE + LIFE ON THE PLANET + COMMON LIFE +

Lord Jesus,
You gathered all sorts of people, -- ate and drank with them. You gather us: Saints and sinners alike. Be with us as we rejoice in each others gifts as we struggle through our differences as we suffer our losses and pain.

Give us the courage to speak the Truth in love. Give us the patience to respect what we do not understand. Make us persistent in the search for truth that your Word may be known.

Together, we can do more than alone. Love us into joy and hope as a people made one in You that the world may know the Good News. We ask this confident in the Spirit You have sent to be with us now and forever. Amen.



For Reflection:

- In what Specific ways do we recognize that life is interconnected and concern must be given to all in the common good?
- In what specific ways do we encourage decisions to be made for the good of all?
- What must I/we do, perhaps differently, in order to grow and foster the sustainability of life on our planet earth?

As God said to Catherine of Siena in her Dialogues: "I could well have made human being in such a way that they all had everything, but I preferred to give different gifts to different people, so that they would all need each other."

In a culture where individualism and consumerism are valued, Dominicans sharing the Common Life through profession of their vows or bonds of affiliation are clearly going against the norms of our society. We look at life through the lens of the Common Good for ourselves and our world.

OBEDIENCE

For Dominicans obedience is a promise to be faithful to the deep listening for God's call. Once heard, obedience requires that we act upon it. The vow is received in mutuality for the call must be submitted for discernment not by the member alone but in terms of the common call of the Dominican community, church and the world. Obedience demands prayer and willingness to put our very lives at the feet of another for the sake of mission. Again and again we are called to the obedience of going to meetings so we can seek the truth of the common good in prayer and contemplation.

POVERTY

Dominic recognized that the mission of the holy preaching in his day had often been hampered by the scandals of wealth and power in the Church. As an itinerant mendicant Order, Dominic sought that his followers put their trust in God's providence and live voluntary poverty.

CONSECRATED CELIBACY

Chastity or Consecrated celibacy recognizes the testament of God's love and a call to love beyond ourselves with faithfulness. To be fully lived, this vow calls for an integration of our whole person including our sexuality.

Dominican life is not an escape from the world but an immersion into it. Through

prayer, contemplation, and study in common one is brought face to face with the truth. The celebration of the founding of the Order of Preachers 800 years ago has renewed the call to collaboration of the Dominican family in all its members: sisters, nuns, friars, laity, associates, youth preachers and volunteers. The diversity of members open us further as we share our understandings of the charism and live out our baptism calling.



The Common Life challenges us with interdependence and diversity. It challenges us as it opens us up to others and calls us to grapple with differences. Dominican life is not about uniformity but rather is a celebration of unity in diversity. It raises the question of the common good in all areas of community life and in the community of this planet.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR THE WORLD?

The Common Life calls us to create a world in which all flourish. How do we live in terms of the common good of all?

The vows of Marriage taken by some of our lay associates have their own forms of obedience, poverty, and chastity. The Dominican Life calls all to examine our lives in terms of our openness and recognition of our interdependence with all on this planet.

If we do not have time for one another, if we do not know those with whom we live, how can we know and proclaim God's presence to the world? The Common Life calls us to be faithful to the search for truth in prayer, study, mission, and our lives together.

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The Order of Preachers sharing the Gospel with those who need it most for over 800 years.

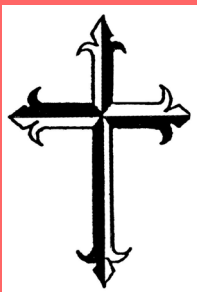


MISSION + MINISTRY + MISSION + PEACE AND JUSTICE + MISSION + MERCY + MISSION + PREACHING + MISSION +

Passionate God,
You call us forth for mission
to proclaim the Gospel
with mercy and justice.
You send us
that all might know
your love and compassion.

Give us the courage we need
to speak:
Words of hope to the troubled
Justice and mercy to all
That through us, your Spirit
may sow seeds of transforma-
tion and promise, peace and
healing on our planet.

Give us the energy and hope
to realize your kingdom pres-
ent in us a little more each day.
We ask this in the name of
Jesus, who shows us the way
now and forever. Amen.



For Reflection:

- In what Specific ways do we recognize all are part of the family of God on our planet?
- In what specific ways do we foster respect and forgiveness?
- What must I/we do, perhaps differently, in order to grow and foster mercy toward others and respect for the earth in how I live?

“Dominic was a man of the gospel in Word and deed. He had only one passion,-- to know and to experience the Word of God in truth and from this experience to announce the compassion of God to men and women.”

Prayer, study, and the common life give the confidence, support, and direction necessary to be sent forth in mission. No one is given God’s presence for themselves alone.

When his fledgling Order gathered, Dominic sent out friars two by two to the cities and universities all over Europe. For some it seemed a foolish move as they were a young community. But Dominic insisted that good seed is not meant to be hoarded and so he sent them forth.

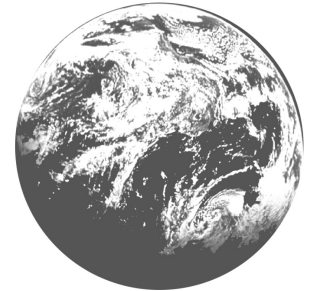
Each of our Congregations have a unique story of founding. Today we continue the preaching mission begun 800 years ago. We believe in a future full of hope and collaboration with one another as a Dominican Family, as members of the Northeast 6, Midwest Alliance, Cluster or Federation of Dominican Sisters USA. The future is not about survival but about the continued mission of the holy preaching.

MERCY

Dominic sought that all would know the justice and mercy of God,-- that the Truth of God’s love would be manifest to those who most needed to hear it. He was concerned about the confusion, scandals, and hopelessness of people and their relationship to God and the Church. Through his deep listening, his warmth, and prayer Dominic realized a need and founded the Order of Preachers.

PEACE AND JUSTICE

During the early settlement of the Dominican Republic at the time of the Conquistadores,



Anthony Montesino, OP preached complaining about the treatment of the native peoples: “Are they not human beings? Have they not rational souls? Are you not obliged to love them as you love yourselves? Do you not understand this? Do you not grasp this?” His words brought protest from the governor to the Prior who replied that when one of us preaches, we all preach. The friars stood in solidarity with the marginalized. Today Dominicans continue to stand for the voiceless.

PREACHING

Dominicans are impelled to the mission of the holy preaching in many forms: teaching, nursing, administration, retreat work, pastoral ministry, social work, earth based ministries, advocacy for the marginalized and poor through parish outreach programs, advocacy in immigration and health care services as well as the courts for the poor, children, and elderly. As we respond to the signs of the times our preaching will take new forms.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR THE WORLD?

God’s mercy and love are for all. Dominicans have struggled to preach that Good News and to make it the priority of their lives. The preaching continues in discerning how we live and for what we will give our lives.

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