

JUSTICE
& PEACE

EUROPE - MIDDLE EAST

NEWS

10/2020

EDITO

In the October 2020 newsletter you can read :

- A meditation on our relationship with Creation
- An update from Belarus
- Justice and Peace in Ukraine
- Annual meeting of the Dominican International Commission for Justice and Peace

From 1st September to 4th October the Church celebrates the Time of Creation. Every year Christians of all denominations join together to pray to the Creator and to act together to care for and protect creation. This year, the motto of the Time of Creation "Jubilee for the Earth" leads us to reflect on the deep meaning of the Sabbath, the sacred rest, using the experience we have had due to the unemployment forced upon us by the global pandemic of the Covid-19. In the next few days Pope Francis will sign a new encyclical entitled "All Brothers" at the tomb of St. Francis in Assisi. While we are preparing this Bulletin we do not yet know its contents, but it will probably be a valuable contribution to the Social Doctrine of the Church with a strong call to fraternity. For us Dominicans, fraternity is the ecosystem of common life, gift and task from which to embrace in Christ the whole human family.

Five years after *Laudato Si'*, we continue to invite the Dominican Family in Europe and the Middle East to embrace "ecological conversion". Living and preaching with more simplicity and mercy, more aware of the consequences of our spirituality, choices and lifestyles.

In this context, in many parts of the world the Dominican Family is responding to the challenges of the pandemic with signs of communion and fraternity: with prayer, shared reflection, hospitality, comfort for the sick and their caregivers, solidarity for those who cannot work or feed their families.

Let us open the doors of our hearts and convents to hospitality and brotherhood with those who suffer most. During the plague in Palencia, Dominic sold his books, but he did not remain on the sidelines, not even in prayer, but committed to solidarity with those affected. This pandemic is not yet over; it leaves a trail of poverty and inequality in Europe and the Middle East. This inequality is further increased by conflicts, wars or disasters like the one in Beirut. In the midst of all this, where and how can we go to meet the human family? What more can we do to "take care of the world", sowing brotherhood as a seed of the Gospel? The mystic St. John of the Cross wrote: "in the evening of life, I will be examined for love. It is time to activate a proactive love, made of clear choices, like that of Dominic in Palencia.

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A MEDITATION ON OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH CREATION

Pau Cardoner

*Member of the Working Group on Ecology and Justice
(Axis of Integral Human Development)*

We invite you to read this text that tries to adapt the Jewish sense of the Sabbath in today's world and that puts us in the spotlight of internal and external ecological conversion:

Fleeing forward

We ran forward. This is our tendency. Let's face it, whether we are Christians or not, whether we are environmentalists or not, whether we are the ones who talk about slow life or not. Running forward, the faster the better, as far as possible. Without getting distracted, without asking ourselves where we are going. We run away.

We want more. We all want more. There are those who want more clothes or more money or more likes or more efficiency in working hours, in electricity or in advertising for one or another cause, whatever it may be. Always more.

And, indeed, we took more. Because we can afford to satisfy our whims more easily than ever. And because the Earth has never said no to a hectare of forest, to an endangered species, to an oil or precious metal deposit. It has always given itself to us generously.

The depletion of the Earth

But the earth is exhausted, God is tired and we are exhausted. The earth does not have much more room for generosity: it fears that one day we will take away from it what it needs to welcome and nourish life.

God is tired of calling us and not receiving an answer. Of looking for our eyes and finding our backs. Christ, present in the poor and in our neighbors, is tired of seeing how we ignore Him by turning our heads.

And we are exhausted. Pursuing desires that do not satisfy our hunger leaves us breathless. Nailing our eyes over and over again to possessions, benefits, ideals and goals that never return what they promise us, has emptied us of meaning.

The sign of the pandemic

This year, we have seen what seemed unstoppable stop. A wheel as huge and as inert as the consumer society has been slowed down by a tiny, insignificant virus. As soon as we retreated from the streets of the city, from the roads, from the seas, from the sky and from the mountains, the animals, fish and birds that had been displaced regained their ground.

This episode has been a small rest, a small jubilee for the Earth and its creatures. Small enough that it has only served as a sign of the message that the earth sends us: Let me breathe!_

Let us not forget that this respite from the pandemic has been only collateral damage to the management of the pandemic. It was neither desired nor profound. It was purely logistical. Can we imagine how the earth could be revived by a purposeful rest born and rooted in our soul? Can we imagine the life that can blossom from an appeasement of our worldly ambitions?



A Jubilee for the Earth

The Earth needs a Jubilee. So do we. In this fragment of the encyclical *Laudato Si'* we see it: the restoration of humanity (in Noah's time, but also today) requires rediscovering and respecting the rhythms inscribed in nature by the hand of the Creator (LS, 71):

On the seventh day, God rested from all his works. God commanded Israel that each seventh day should be celebrated as a day of rest, a Sabbath . . . during which the land was given complete rest, no sowing was done, and only what was necessary for survival and hospitality was harvested. Finally, after seven weeks of years, that is, forty-nine years, the Jubilee was celebrated, a year of universal forgiveness and "of liberation for all the inhabitants". (LS, 71)

Let's imagine that we apply this legislation in today's world. It would be crazy! But it could be said that it would involve such a great material renunciation that perhaps it would educate us to ambition and help us to recognise - not only with our lips - that the fruits of the earth are for all people (LS, 71). The respite we would give to the Earth would have splendid fruits, but nothing compared to the fruits it would have for our spirit and for the new relationship we would establish with Creation. It was not in vain that this was a command from God.

We will probably not be able to apply this law in today's world. But perhaps we can be inspired by it: we can live the Sabbath if we know, from time to time, to set aside our worldly goals and praise the Lord. We can live a Sabbath year if we learn to renounce that which seems indispensable to us (think of the Jewish renunciation of the harvest). We can live a Jubilee if we make *tabula rasa* and re-establish our relationship with Creation.

Today, this means seriously questioning our lifestyle (how do I move, where do I live, how do I consume?) but also our inner gaze (do I have ecological obsessions? Am I avoiding the gaze of my brother or sister? Am I listening to the voice of God?) A good combination of external and internal conversion will be the key to success.

Let us hope that we can take advantage of the occasion and that the Jubilee for the Earth will help us to live convinced that God alone is enough.

AN UPDATE FROM BELARUS

Following the presidential elections in Belarus on 9 August 2020, thousands of demonstrators took to the streets to reject the results of the elections as they were considered to be manipulated, leading to violent clashes with the country's security forces. The disproportionate violence deployed by the Belarusian authorities is reported to have cost at least two lives and injured hundreds. Some 6,000 protesters have been arrested, and many of those released later bear the marks of having been tortured. In addition, repression of civil rights and freedoms has intensified. This alarming situation poses a serious threat to justice and peace not only in Belarus but in the whole region .



English Version

JUSTICE AND PEACE IN UKRAINE

Fr. Xavier Gomez and Sr. Marie Monnet, op
Promoters JP for Europe and Middle East

In preparation for the Dominican Month for Peace 2020, we present the tasks that fr Petro Balog, JP Promoter and his brothers are carrying out in their country. Recognizing the work of one of our brother promoters can be inspiring for all of us. In each Bulletin we will try to bring the reality of some Province in our region closer to you: Bro Petro Balog collaborated in the promotion of the Dominican Month of Peace: India, during December 2019. He gave a lecture on "Ecology and the Church" during Laudato Si' Week, May 14-24, 2020.

With regard to continuing education, he offered some courses at the Institute of St. Thomas Aquinas in Kiev on the social teaching of the Church and catechetical preparation for lay chaplains who are serving in Eastern Ukraine.

It has also promoted the Catholic Social Doctrine, initiating the educational programme at the Kiev Institute, "The School of Social Leaders", based among other things on the Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church.

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Institute organized online classes for the Institute's students, where courses for family counselors are also offered.

On February 6, 2020 a meeting was organized in our Institute with Goran Bozicevic, a peacemaker from Croatia, who has been carrying out the activity for reconciliation between Croatia and Serbia for more than 20 years. His book translated into Ukrainian, "Building Dialogue", was presented. As a contribution to the care of Creation, they have installed separate rubbish bins for recycling at the Institute.

Together with the head of the Ukrainian Penitentiary Chaplaincy, Fr. Konstantyn Panteley, they organised a conference for prison chaplains in our Institute in Kiev.

In Ukraine, work is being done on internal migration caused by the war in Eastern Ukraine. The rehabilitation centre of St. Martin de Porres in Fastiv has opened its doors hospitably to children whose childhood has been poisoned by war.

Finally, as part of the Salamanca Process in the Ukraine there is a permanent collaboration between the Institute of St. Thomas Aquinas in Kiev and the House and Centre of St. Martin de Porres in Fastiv. One of the Centres whose work we will get to know during the Dominican Month for Peace.



ANNUAL MEETING OF THE DOMINICAN INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE

Fr. Xavier Gomez and Sr. Marie Monnet, op
Promotors JP for Europe and Middle East

This year the ICPJD was scheduled to meet from 1-5 October in Geneva and Estevayer-le-Lac. However, because of the pandemic we will have these meetings online to assess, plan, share challenges related to our preaching in each region and branch of the FD. They will be six intense days of exchange and planning which we will report on in the next newsletter.

ONLINE COURSES

These 100% online courses are offered in collaboration with
DOMUNI-UNIVERSITAS, the Dominican international university

www.domuni.eu

Click on each title to access online the description of each course.

FRENCH COURSES

**DROIT INTERNATIONAL
HUMANITAIRE**

**LA NON-VIOLENCE, HISTOIRE,
THÉORIE ET PRATIQUE**

**DROIT INTERNATIONAL DES
RÉFUGIÉS**

**A LA SOURCE DU DROIT
INTERNATIONAL**

**LES THÉORIES DE LA
RECONNAISSANCE**

**LA JUSTICE SOCIALE CHEZ LES
PROPHÈTES**

**INITIATION A LA DOCTRINE
SOCIALE DE L'EGLISE**

**DROIT INTERNATIONAL DES
DROITS DE LA PERSONNE**

**DROIT RÉGIONAL ET
INTERNATIONAL RELATIF AUX
DROITS DE L'ENFANT ET LA
MISE EN OEUVRE**

**LA PROTECTION DE
L'ENVIRONNEMENT DANS LES
CONFLITS ARMÉS**

DOCTRINE SOCIALE DE L'EGLISE

**LES FEMMES DANS LES
PÉRIODES DE POST-CONFLIT :
ANALYSE DES GRANDS ENJEUX**

**CE QUE LES PHILOSOPHES
DISENT DU VIVRE-ENSEMBLE**

ECO-THÉOLOGIE

**HISTOIRE ET ENJEUX ETHIQUES
DE LA MONDIALISATION**

DROIT INTERNATIONAL PÉNAL

LA LIBRE CIRCULATION

**INTRODUCTION AU DROIT
INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC**

DU DEVOIR DE DÉSOBÉIR

DIEU MIGRANT



ENGLISH COURSES

**HUMAN RIGHTS 1
INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP RIGHTS**

**HUMAN RIGHTS 2
A CHRISTIAN VIEW**

SOCIAL POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

**CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE
MODERN THEORY OF HUMAN
RIGHTS: LACK OF A COHERENT
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

**INTRODUCTION TO
INTERNATIONAL HUMAN
RIGHTS LAW:
THEORY AND PRACTICE**

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL LAW

INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC LAW

**INTERNATIONAL
HUMANITARIAN LAW**

**JOHN LOCKE'S EPISTEMOLOGY
AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY**

**POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY: AN
INTRODUCTION**

**INTRODUCTION TO
PHILOSOPHY OF LAW**

ITALIAN COURSES

In partnership with the Faculty of Social Sciences of the Angelicum in Rome

**INTRODUZIONE ALLA DOTTRINA
SOCIALE DELLA CHIESA**

**INTRODUZIONE ALL'ETICA
POLITICA**

ETICA DELLE MIGRAZIONI

I DIRITTI UMANI

**ETICA DELL'INTELLIGENZA
ARTIFICIALE**

ETICA DELLA CURA

ETICA ECOLOGICA



SPANISH COURSES

DOCTRINA SOCIAL DE LA IGLESIA

LA TEOLOGÍA DE BARTOLOMÉ DE LAS CASAS

FILOSOFÍA MORAL Y POLÍTICA

**LOS DOMINICOS Y AMÉRICA:
ALGUNOS PERSONAJES
DESTACADOS**

LA ESCUELA DE SALAMANCA

MISIONOLOGÍA DOMINICANA



REGISTRATION

Dominican participants may receive bursaries to attend courses and seminars.

Thank you for writing to **JPIC@domuni.eu**



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