



Preaching and Culture
Multicultural Intercultural

Our missionary charism has led us to live this rich historical reality of internationality and multiculturalism. We are in a world without borders and this is also our reality and challenge in integrating cultures, languages and fraternity and equality in everything and not just as rights.

Confer: Acts of the General Chapter 2013

Dear Sisters:

We send you the work for the year 2017. By way of reflection we would like to echo some ideas and give some guiding questions that may motivate the community meetings of the different quarters. As always, the most important thing is the community work and, also, the sharing with the rest of the Institute those ideas on actual and current issues that we consider to be important and that we are living in different communities and places of the Institute.

Resonances for our personal study

1. Our Congregation is in a historical moment in which the Lord is giving rise to new vocations for Dominican and missionary life. Young people from different countries are offering to participate in our mission. They are for us a reason for optimism and hope.
2. The fact of multiculturalism is not new to us. From its origins, the Congregation in its missionary trajectory, was open to diverse cultures and accept the native vocations. What is really happening among us is the return to the origins, recovering the roots and reviving the charism of the Congregation.

3. We are aware of the great difficulties and challenges facing the Congregation in the admission and formation of new candidates given the different cultural and linguistic backgrounds among them and the different levels of human and religious formation when they join the Congregation.
4. The phenomenon of multiculturalism affects us all the members of the Congregation, not only those who are in formation and the formators. We must ask ourselves to what extent we are sensitive and prepared to assume this new reality. Do we want to live this challenge from the Evangelical viewpoint? Are we willing to accept sisters who do not share our national, cultural and ethnic heritage? How do we move from multiculturalism to interculturality accepting the values that exist in all cultures?
5. The first, multiculturalism, means plurality of cultures present, each developing independently of the others. The second, interculturality involves living together in unity, it talks about journeying together towards unity without losing one's identity.
6. It is a process that calls us to a continuous conversion, pointing out aspects that we should correct. This requires humility, openness of spirit, generosity and sacrifice. This new reality asks and requires of us to accept the new situation, even going as far as to give up some of the ways in which we have lived, to bring the Word and be an example to society and the people to whom we wish to bring the message of Jesus.
7. The key to realizing this interculturality lies in wholistic formation. To achieve that life of intercultural community within love and unity, the role of wholistic formation can not be overemphasized.
8. We are called to follow Jesus and share in his evangelizing mission. It is the main and fundamental point that unites us as a community and as a Congregation. But the preaching of the Gospel is not a mere transmission of an ideal or teaching some doctrines but the transmission of an experience. That is why the missionary is not only a narrator of the fact of Jesus as Savior but also one who gives an effective testimony or witness of a life embodied in fraternal love.
9. Today, the evangelical mission that we share, as our common vocation, invites us to interculturality. It is an invitation to all the sisters to live together in unity and mutual acceptance on the road to authentic brotherly love in the midst of a world punished by divisions and differences, broken by excessive nationalism, ethnocentrism, racism, and other forms of discriminatory human relations. Living intercultural relationships is at the core of the mission.

10. Interculturality is also a challenge for our missionary work: our preaching is a manifestation of our life, not just our ministry. It entails a genuine dialogue in a spirit of openness and transparency. The best preaching we can do today is the one that comes from the testimony of unity in diversity. So that, like the first Christians, it can be said of us: "Look how they love each other."
11. Multiculturalism and inculturation are typical of today's world and culture. Migration, globalization, the mixing of cultures, religions, civilizations is a fact. That, in principle, should favor dialogue, but it is always difficult to admit the other, to change. On the other hand, when the assimilation happens through paternalisms or even by mutual agreement, wounds may remain that may appear later. The recognition of the values of the other and of all that he brings is not simply received, but takes time, even generations. And there is no doubt that among the positive values, there are always countervalores in the lot, cultural / religious vices of all kinds, that can be difficult to purify.

1st Quarter

Preaching and Culture



Are we aware of this new reality that the Institute has and that involves all of us and is in all the places where we are? We are never too old for our mission, we can always cast ourselves aside and live a community life with more conversion, more creativity, more witnessing.

We are working to strengthen ourselves more and more in our roots, therefore, we have to live with an open heart that is always restless: **What does God want us to do? What was the reason why I came to this Institute? Do I still feel for the Institute what I felt then? What charm can the young women see today in our Institute so that they can be attracted to choose our Congregation and follow the call of the Lord?**

Pope Francis tells us: *"Seek new methods of evangelization, bring the Gospel to the ends of the earth" ... "discernment is always performed in the presence of the Lord, without losing sight of the signs, listening to what happens, the feel of the people, especially of the poor. "*



It is not the same everywhere. Identify how we can bring the Gospel to actual needs in each case, in each place. What is needed in Europe, in the East ...? It is not the same in Europe where there is a Christian tradition, than in other countries where it does not exist. The tasks of conservation in new fields is not the same. How do we preach in each place and be meaningful today?

What do we have in common so that we can form a community with life, with energy, with hope and with questioning for those who sees us in this society?

Going back to the origins and roots of our charism as the Church asks us and Pope Francis repeats, we can drink again from that source of life that gave so much energy and life to our sisters at the beginning of our journey. Let us remember that the first communities of the Institute were formed by four different groups of sisters, nationalities and formation: The sisters of the Beaterio de Manila, the pioneer sisters from the Beaterios de Santa Rosa de Huesca and Saragossa, the sisters of our Madrid novitiate in Spain and the "agregadas", that came from different beaterios Dominicans. These four groups worked together from the year 1895 to 1933, which formed the Congregation. These sisters were the ones who laid the foundations, the roots giving all the best of themselves in every way.

Now we ask ourselves: What was the force, the motor that helped them live in those always difficult beginnings, like any other beginning, to carry out the foundational work of the Institute? What would be their goals, motivations, lever of support for those difficult and uncertain beginnings?

(Let us make a searching, loving and profound reading of the information we have from our sisters in those beginnings and we will know how to answer our questions. As the Pope tells us, we can "wake up the world" "be an outward-looking Church".



Is formation a necessity in sharing my life with all the sisters of whatever culture or race? Do I demand that others adapt to me and my way of life or try to understand where I am and accept other cultures as they are too?

Challenges for an international and intercultural context: Our prayer, life and work in common support us in our mission ... however, in being "religious missionaries" there is a tension that has not yet been resolved: the tension between "being religious" and "being missionaries," that is to say, the closeness to the people and the time spent in community life, the "smell of sheep" and the sisters, the risk of being close to the people and the risk of spending time with the sisters and vice versa.

We also have challenges for life in international and intercultural communities: sending young sisters to the aging communities in Europe ... learning to read the faces and minds of the sisters ... intercultural communication: Language problems: "That is not what I meant ... but that's what you said. "

Challenges in an international and intercultural context. Simplify life because "the complex minds of the men and women of the 21st century can only really understand very simple things."

Find a simple language: call things by name. Do not be too diplomatic.

An important issue is finding and preparing the best leaders for leadership in an international and intercultural context ... Identifying Leaders: When should it start? In the formative years? How does one prepare them for leadership in international and intercultural communities? Prepare all the sisters? To prepare only a few? ... The importance of continuity in planning ... Is our leadership in the Church / religious life too European? How to learn to work in international and intercultural teams? How to delegate? How to work with the laity? (*Message to the International Forum of Catholic Action of Pope Benedict XVI, August 10, 2012*)

4th Quarter

Community Life in a Multicultural Congregation



Respect the customs of sisters who are not of my culture: do I try to understand their way of being or do I consider it wrong those that does not fit my way of thinking and living? Do I feel that the new sisters in the Institute contribute values and enrich my life and preaching, or do we just believe they serve to maintain the Institute?

In this fourth quarter let us try to stick to some practical commitment, in every sense within our limitations, taken from those challenges that we see are most necessary. Let us begin to live them so that our community is a "house of preaching".