

# **Dominican Family Day**

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*Master of the Order*

Following the suggestion of the General Chapter of Providence (ACG Providence, 2001, n° 429), the brothers are invited to celebrate annually a Day for the Dominican Family. The Chapter indicated 7<sup>th</sup> November, Feast of All Saints of the Order of Preachers, as an appropriate date and this feast now approaches!

On this date we celebrate all the saints of the Order. Of course, there are many we know well and have their own day in our liturgical calendar. But on this day of “all the saints” we also celebrate the memory of all those, known or unknown, who over the centuries have chosen to live visibly with the proclamation of the Gospel as their way of sanctification. Those who are among the multitude of brothers and sisters whom Dominic rejoiced to see, gathered to the Mother of God.

It is this communion in and through the same mission that unites us when we speak of the “Dominican family”. And this communion in the mission is sealed by the shared hope that the proclamation of the Gospel is the road on which we long to hear and welcome the promise of sanctity. And of course, this communion is experienced through our many collaborations and the works and projects undertaken in common. Over the course of my first year of “pilgrimage in the Order” (an expression I am pleased to borrow from fr. Timothy Radcliffe), I have had the great joy of seeing in so many places the numerous achievements of such a communion and to admire the Dominican Family in action. What a pleasure to meet brothers, sisters and laity sharing in the same joy brought by the encounter with Christ; by living in fraternity; by making the Word of Life known; by sowing hope in the heart of the world! Yes, the Dominican Family is not primarily a matter for definition, but it is constructed wherever we are learning together to live this joy of carrying the Gospel into the world, by preaching and contemplation; by our visible work and the more subtle human connections; by a common conviction that the world is capable of goodness and can be built up for God. The Dominican Family is formed wherever, in mutual respect for each one’s particular charism, we wish to proclaim the Gospel through the sign of fraternity.

It is this shared joy we are invited to celebrate by this Annual Day. Without doubt, already, initiatives have been taken in many parts of the Order. And if, in the approach to the Jubilee of the Order, we apply ourselves especially to the organisation of this Day, it would be a beautiful preparation for 2016, which will be an opportunity for all to draw once more from the source of our common mission. One day a year, when we invite all those who, in so many different ways, want to give themselves to this mission. To be creative together in imagining new collaborations, new ways of taking part in this “Family” in which our hope is to be made brothers and sisters by proclaiming the Word of God as Good News for the world.