

2009: *Saint Dominic, Preacher of Grace*



Important Dates for you to Remember

You are called to observe these days in the best way possible so as to create awareness on various social issues.

1 January	World Day of Peace
18 January	World Day of Migrants and Refugees
27 January	Holocaust Remembrance Day and Day to Combat Leprosy
11 February	International Day for the Sick
8 March	International Women's Day
21 March	International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
22 March	World Water Day
4 April	Day against Child Prostitution
22 April	International Earth Day
1 May	International Workers Day
3 May	World Press Freedom Day
5 June	World Environment Day
26 June	International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking
26 June	International Day in Support of Torture Victims
4 July	International Day of Cooperatives
1 August	Death of Pierre Claverie, OP (Martyr of Algeria)
6 August	Hiroshima Day
9 August	Nagasaki Day
9 August	International Day of Indigenous People
16 September	International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer
21 September	International Day of Peace
1 October	International Day for Older Persons
16 October	World Food Day
17 October	International Day for the Eradication of Poverty
24 October	United Nations Day
24 - 30 October	Disarmament Week
3 November	Feast of St. Martin de Porres (Patron of Social Justice)
11 November	Bartolome de las Casas Day
20 November	Universal Children's Day and Africa Industrialization Day
1 December	World AIDS Day
2 December	International Day for the Abolition of Slavery
10 December	Human Rights Day



Produced by the General Promoters of Justice and Peace.

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PREACHER OF GRACE, Luke 18: 35-43

Brian J. Pierce, OP

This year - 2009 - as part of our ongoing celebration of the Jubilee, we will focus our attention on "St. Dominic, Preacher of Grace." Dominic was a preacher of grace because Jesus was a preacher of grace, a preacher who communicated the gratuitous love of God. Jesus announced that all that we have it is a gift from God. This is grace, this is gratuitousness.

In this Gospel passage from Luke, we see that Jesus gives a perfect example of what it means to be a preacher of grace, and in this way Jesus models for us what it means to be a Dominican today. As he walked along the road toward Jericho - like a good itinerant preacher - in the midst of all the busy activity and noise, Jesus heard the cry of a blind man who was seated on the edge of the road. The Gospel of Luke tells us that, "Jesus stood still..."

"Jesus stood still..." - something so simple. In the midst of everything that was happening, Jesus was able to hear the desperate cry of the blind man and stop (In the Gospel of Mark he is called Bartimaeus). Jesus had within himself a deep interior silence that prepared him to be receptive and open to hearing the cries that no one else heard. He was able to hear the voice that was inaudible to the rest of the world. This is the sign of a true contemplative heart. Dominic also had a heart capable of hearing the cries of the world, symbolized so well in his encounter with the innkeeper in Toulouse.



After he heard the cry of the blind man along the road, Jesus asked him a question: "What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus' few words - so simple, yet so deeply human - were Good News for the blind man, that expressed profound theological concepts, but because they were words that allowed the blind man to discover anew his own dignity. No one had ever asked this man a question. No one had ever recognized that he was able to speak for himself. No one. He was simply an object never a subject, never a person. When Jesus asked him the question, he opened up the way for him to become a human being once again.

He was no longer just the blind man over there on the side of the road. He was a human being again. Was this not the famous cry of the first Spanish Dominicans who went to the Americas at the beginning of the 16th century: "Are these not human beings?"

What kind of words do we speak? Do we speak words at people as if they were ignorant? Do we speak words aimed at making ourselves feel more important? Or do we speak words that help the other person rediscover his or her own dignity as a son or daughter of God? To speak in this way is to announce the Good News of Christ.

To be a preacher of grace, it seems to me, means to speak words that express the gratuitous love of God. We live in a time in which we are inundated by words, but who will speak words of grace? Dominic spoke words of grace. It was grace, the gratuitous love of God, that gave new life to the blind man. He was healed, thanks to the words that Jesus spoke to him, words that allowed him to become a human being once again.

I think this is the grace of preaching that God gave to Dominic, and this is the grace that Dominic gives to us, his family.



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