

## TEXT RESPONSES FOR FUTURING CHARISM QUESTIONS

(42 yellow=DWA / 11 aqua=additional Dominicans / 9 green=lay partners)

- Questions:
1. What engages and inspires me about our Dominican life and mission is...
  2. My hopes and dreams for the future of Dominican life and mission are...
  3. I believe the Spirit is calling Dominican women in the US / Africa to....

Texts are not listed in any particular order.

### #1 **Lilly Fitzpatrick (MSJ)**

**What engages and inspires me about our Dominican mission today is....**I feel we are out there on the margins with those we are called to serve, the young, the poor and the vulnerable. We are interested in the political scene and how we can make a positive difference in the lives of those who are being underserved.

**A dream I have for the future of Dominican life and mission is....**That we can empower the laity to join us and together we can make a difference.

**I believe the Spirit is calling us, Dominican women, to....**Remain open to change, and not worry about dwindling numbers and no one entering, and willing to serve wherever we are called.

### #2 **Sister Rose Marie Dischler, Racine, WI Dominican**

**The dream I have for the future of Dominican life and mission** is communities contemplating the Word of God in the Scriptures, reflecting in groups on the life and work of people around them as they minister. At the same time keeping in mind the care of Earth as outlined in Pope Francis' Laudate Si.

Please work out means of communicating with all your Dominican Sisters and Brothers around the the world.

### #3 **Suzanne Noffke (Racine)**

**What engages and inspires me about our Dominican Mission** today is that it coincides with a more general social phenomenon of the "power base" of service/influence expanding to embrace the gifts of more and more people rather than just a few elected or appointed "elites." This is an invitation to each of us to examine the gifts we have to bring and to find ever new ways to bring them to the betterment of our world. I believe we are also being called to encourage and nurture each others' gifts so that voices not heard up to now may be heard, gifts not fully used up to now tapped.

**A dream I have for the future of Dominican life and mission is...** that it may become more visible and so more effective in the wake of the "Pope Francis phenomenon." I also believe we have to embrace the decline of our historic congregations and the concomitant rise of the laity as a positive evolution, doing all we can to promote the mission **and leadership** of a "lay Church."

**I believe the Spirit is calling us as Dominican women to...** intentionally embrace and promote this evolution.

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### **#4 Sr. Bibiana t. Colasito, OP (Adrian) Twelve (12) years professed**

#### **1. What engages and inspires me about our Dominican mission today?**

The work for justice and peace; human trafficking, environmental issues engage and inspire me about our Dominican mission. Here in the Philippines, we have so many issues on justice and peace, where the poor are at the receiving and losing end of political conflicts. Our political realities now are heart breaking; added into these is then environmental issues that we do have which in effect is crucial blunder to living a peaceful and normal life.

#### **2. A dream I have for the future of Dominican Life and Mission...**

I believe that going out of our “comfort zones” will give us the true vision of our calling as Dominican missionaries – this is my dream. It’s alright to have familiar and loved environments in order to live our life as religious, but the Gospel is constantly challenging us to “go beyond” what is comfortable and easy. In my work with the Family

Life ministry of the Diocese of San Jose, it breaks me to see children suffer because of the physical world around them: parents, social and political realities, media and so on. I dream further that our Dominican Life and Mission will make more space for those who are in the peripheries, and action is better than bright ideas, because suffering is a reality which we can deal also through realistic and collective efforts.

#### **3. I believe the Spirit is calling us, Dominican women, to ...**

Engage more in the mission of Jesus for the “Anawim” not only to the person with a face but also to Mother Earth who is crying in despair for comfort from destructive elements and healing for the damages humankind has inflicted on her. I came from the central part of the Philippines which was ravaged by typhoon Haiyan on 08 November 2013. Imknow how it feels to lost properties and livelihood because of greed of so many who has only their “personal gain” in mind. Environmental issues are real, and it’s detrimental to depend only on the promises of so many politicians, else, our “Common Home” (Laudato Si) may be too late to save.

### **#5 Paula Marie Jarosz (Racine)**

**I am engaged and inspired** about our Dominican Mission today because of the excellent interest in the subject, the fine value of the topic and by my Faith which says, “More things are wrought by PRAYER than this world dreams of.”

**A dream I have for the future of Dominican life and mission** comes from the tremendous accomplishments of the Dominicans who came before us. God will not be outdone in generosity and we need to be happily open to new dreams and difficulties and the graces poured out so lovingly.

**I believe the Spirit is calling us** to look beyond the present, be unafraid of the future and learn to notice the great strength we have as followers of Dominic, Catherine and all the unheralded saints we’ve lived with and honored.

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#6 **Carla Mae Streeter** (Racine)

### **What engages/inspires me...**

The Dominican charism brings an intelligent edge to the emotional and the devotional. It brings critical analysis.

### **A Dream I have...**

That the women of the Order obtain from the pope the explicit permission to use the preaching canon allowing laity to preach.

### **The Spirit Calling Dominican Women ...**

To creatively unite, using their voice globally.

#7 **Linda Gibler, Houston Dominicans** 31 years ago.

**What inspires me about our Dominican mission** is the joy of our sisters as we engage the various aspects of our mission. With few exceptions, I experience our sisters as fully alive, engaged, and compassionate as they face the challenges, difficulties, and joys of the work we are called to. That joy tells me that we are energized and ready to face the worrisome reality of our times and whatever the future brings.

**The dream I have for the future of Dominican life and mission** is that we equip our youngest members to take on the challenges of tomorrow. With an uncertain future, I feel that we need to give our youngest members the skills, patience, time, and whatever resources they need to discern the future of Dominican life. We can see that our communities and our world are changing. We only have hints of what the future holds. I believe that part of our gift to them is holding all doors open so that they can more clearly see the need as time moves on.

### **I believe the Spirit is calling us, Dominican women, to...**

I believe the Spirit is calling us Dominican women to an ever greater capacity to care for the Earth and all her inhabitants. A false notion of the value of the created world and the devastating effects it had on individual people was one of the realities that impelled Dominic's mission. A similar misunderstanding of the sacredness of all creation in relationship to the common good of all species is driving much the current ecological and human suffering. We are called to care for children of all species today and into future generations.

#8 **Cathy Arnold, OP (PEACE)** Dominican Sister for 15 years.

**What engages and inspires me about our Dominican mission today is ...**the openness of our Sisters and Associates to engage in prayer, study, and action to listen, learn and participate in addressing the needs of the people and of Earth today. We continue to work to build community by practicing good communication skills, providing welcoming spaces, and working to bring about peace, justice, and reconciliation in the places we are, beginning with our own ongoing conversion.

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**Cathy Arnold, OP** continued

**A dream I have for the future of Dominican life and mission is...** to continue wholeheartedly the Dominican tradition of looking to the needs and signs of the times and addressing these needs in the light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Gospel of Incarnate love. I think it would be so cool if every person on Earth had the opportunity to have a retreat every year, just to reconnect with self, God-Love, and the persons in their lives. How will we in Dominican life participate in God's mission of love in the world today?

I believe the Spirit is calling us, Dominican women, to... ongoing conversion into the peace of Christ, holding all as sacred, loving beyond our current capability, and living the Gospel fully. We are called to use the best of technology, systems thinking, and intercultural living skills to be present to each other, to those around us, and to Earth.

**#9 Kathleen Marie Raya, OP MSJ** (Professed 41 years)

**What engages and inspires me...**

ENGAGES: Our common prayer and our common contemplative prayer give strength, support and awareness of world issues. It sets a tone for discernment when responding to a call from our God. This prayer brings us together to give thanks and praise to our God.

There has been continued growth in the Congregation to broaden the understanding of the ministry of education.

We have a sense of claiming our past, who we are now and looking forward to what surprises God has for our future.

INSPIRES: The lives of our founding Sisters and the history of our Sisters in Mexico during the persecution truly inspires me! They had such a spirit of passion and determination under incredible circumstances.

**A dream I have...**

My dream desires to keep widening the vision of inclusivity even if that means being independent from those who govern us in the United States and those who lead us in an institutional and hierarchal Church. This vision would always be pastoral, sensitive and loving. It would be realized in the compassion of Jesus, Dominic, Pia Backes, Pope Francis and this vision would be realized in us. My dream invites us to keep asking: What do the People of God, especially those who are poor and oppressed, need right NOW? Who is not at the Table? This may be calling us to a different Church...

**The Spirit is calling us, Dominican women...**

To be open to questions and possibilities. This allows for a creative response to new invitations of ministry. We hold new ventures with total trust in our God. A great example would be this new project with our Sisters in East Africa. We join together, with the intention of living our Dominican Charism and to design concrete actions, especially for the poor and oppressed. I find this so exciting!

We are called to be of service...to be a witness...to be Eucharist...to be hope...and give glory to God.

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#10 **Sister Mary Yun, OP**, a Dominican Sister of Mission San Jose. I made my first vows in 2010 and final vows in 2015. In total, I have been professed for the last seven years.

**What engages and inspires me about our Dominican mission today** is our continuous efforts to study and to share the fruits of our studies and contemplation in our communities and ministries in our preaching. Studying has been an integral part of my life and continues to be something that nurtures me and my understanding of everything.

**A dream I have for the future of Dominican life and mission is** that we get to know each congregation in the U.S. better. As a Vocation Director, I am not sure if I know enough about each Dominican congregation in the U.S. to refer someone if she is more compatible with another congregation than of my own (MSJ).

Given that our current demographics represent mostly aging sisters with only a few newer members in most of our congregations, I wonder how the newer members are getting prepared to carry on when our older sisters pass away.

**I believe the Spirit might be calling us** to be more collaborative and inclusive. Are there any ministries that we can collaborate together? Are there things that we can learn from each other?

#11 **Sister Dulce Sarai Aguilar Rodríguez, O.P**, a Dominican Sister of Mission San Jose. I made my first vows in 2009 and final vows in 2014.

**What engages and inspires me about our Dominican mission today is...** the call to remain faithful to God wherever we might be or might be doing. For example,

I am transitioning from being a student to a full time teaching ministry. I took my years as a student very seriously because I knew that study would give me the tools to accompany the demands of my ministry, which would allow me to serve to the best of my abilities. I was also conscious of the need to be ready to support my congregation and all the new vocations that might be coming in. It is in this co-responsibility that we can continue our mission. I am now getting ready to join Saint Vincent's de Paul Elementary School in San Francisco, where I will be teaching Spanish to students from grades K-8<sup>th</sup>. I ask God to be with me, as I share my life with my students, parents, and staff, that I may be an avenue for understanding, peace, and joy.

**A dream or hope I have for the future of Dominican life and mission is** to have an increase in vocations, women and men willing to share God's joy, love and forgiveness with our world, which is thirsting for God, for meaning, for justice.

**I believe the Spirit is calling us, Dominican women to...** see life with fresh eyes, to live out of a grateful attitude, and to continue to preach God's love, joy, and forgiveness with our lives.

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#12 **Kathleen McManus, OP** (Blauvelt) – 32 years in Dominican Life

**What engages and inspires me about our Dominican Mission today** is its resonance with the original emergence of the Order. We know that the structures that defined Dominican Religious Life in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century are falling away, and we cannot ‘see’ what the future form of our life will be. Neither could Dominic in the 13<sup>th</sup> Century ‘see’ what would become of his Gospel response to the needs of his times, and his faithfulness to the relationships that formed around the Preaching Mission. We are newly conscious of the ways in which the charism is evolving through us in response to the hungers for truth in our world today, and, like Dominic, we are itinerantly free to obey God’s beckoning Spirit.

**A dream that I have for the future of Dominican life and mission is** that we will deepen our bonds of relationship with one another across all the branches of the Order throughout the globe on behalf of the marginalized, the vulnerable, and all who suffer oppression and injustice, including the earth itself. The diversity of cultures, gifts, ministries, and even the theological diversity that exists among our members constitutes a rich resource for growth beyond our experiential and intellectual borders. We are uniquely situated to witness to the power of communion across difference in the service of Truth, a witness direly needed in the larger Church and in our world.

**I believe the Spirit is calling Dominican women to** preach truth in the face of the fragmenting heresies of our time, to claim for ourselves the unprecedented global magisterial authority that the Order was granted in Toulouse in 1215-16, and to exercise it in braiding a bridge between manifold church and world “peripheries” and the ecclesial “center.” As Dominic felt compelled to “save the Gospel for the Church,” we are in a sense being called to “save the Church for the world,” a world in pain and needing precisely what the Church most truly is in its sanctifying, healing, unifying role

#13 **Gina Cilibreto** Digital Journalist Dominican Sisters of Hope

**What engages and inspires me about our Dominican Mission today is...**

The joy that was always part of the Dominican charism still remains! There is a flexibility to adapt to the needs of the times and truly listen to the cries of the poor. Dominicans are no longer expected to be teachers or nurses. Now, they’re deaf ministers, carpenters, directors of organizations, artists, writers, beekeepers, gardeners, activists, etc. Even the ethos of theology has changed as they move toward a higher consciousness and a better grasp of the Universe Story.

Being a Dominican is about truly listening to what the world needs and responding with one’s own gifts and talents.

**A dream I have for the future of Dominican life and mission is...**

That Dominicans help do what parishes have largely failed to do: that is, engage the laity in a spiritual life. In an understanding of New Cosmology. In justice work. In the widening of the tent, the welcoming at the table, rather than the ethos that there’s a “right” way to be Catholic and YOU probably don’t fit it. Dominicans have

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**Gina Cilibreto** continued

the power to welcome, to exemplify joy, to preach, to be educated yet radical. Stop associating only with religious and do major outreach to new spaces. The world needs your gifts!

**I believe the Spirit is calling us as Dominican women to...**

Model with grace the embrace of an entirely new reality that's outside of what was anticipated or even desired.

**I believe the Spirit is calling us as Dominican women to...**

respond with joy, gratitude, and unabiding faith to whatever happens next.

**#14 Elizabeth O'Donnell (MSJ)**

My name is Sr. Elizabeth O'Donnell. I am a Dominican Sister of Mission San Jose, California. Each day in my life, I experience God's love, forgiveness, and healing. This gives me deep joy and impels me to want to share that love and that truth with others. In my ministry, whether one-on-one, or with a group, I have the freedom to share this good news. I believe our world today greatly needs to know God's love, compassion, forgiveness and healing. Our Dominican mission is freedom. It is call. It is inspiration. Our Dominican mission...and I am so grateful to share in this gift with my sisters and my brothers. To share God's love with others.

**#15 Regena Ross (MSJ)**

**What engages and inspires me about our Dominican mission today?**

I chose to become a Dominican because I felt this was the most natural way for me to be an instrument of Jesus. I know that I preach through my actions on a daily basis but God has also given me the gift of preaching with words and song and the ability to articulate whatever it is that Jesus wants me to share. Jesus inspires me in every day opportunities whether I'm prepared or not. I have a gift and a responsibility to allow God to work through me.

What inspires me on a daily basis is seeing and hearing about the many lives my sisters have touched by their very being. I feel that I am meant to continue living in a way that allows me to make a difference in the lives of other people by helping them to learn who Jesus is through my words and actions. God's Spirit also inspires me and the grace of God allows me to respond whether I'm prepared to do so or not. I've learned from experience that God's grace is sufficient in any situation.

**A dream or hope I have for the future of Dominican life and mission is....**

I really haven't thought much about the future in terms of being a Dominican. I usually think about how I can be an instrument of Jesus as a Dominican of Mission San Jose. I hope and pray that I can attract vocations by how I live my life and how I share the Good News. So in saying that, I hope that all of our Dominican congregations will attract more vocations to religious life or some other form of Dominican way of living. We

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**Regena Ross** continued

have to invite people to collaborate with us in some form. Maybe we can have a Dominican Young Adults Conference with preaching, praying, sharing and socializing.

As time goes on, it feels as though there are many things to accomplish in terms of sharing the Good News in our ministries and communities but there doesn't seem to be enough time to do it.

**I believe the Spirit is calling us, Dominican women, to . . .**

set the world on fire with our enthusiasm, creativity, and zest for religious life!

#16 **Marie Rachael Guevara** – Grand Rapids

**What engages and inspires me about our Dominican Mission today is** our on-going efforts even thru retirement we continue to witness who we are as a religious Congregation. We volunteer in so many ways and in areas of need. We are still vibrant and involved women who witness who we are as Dominicans....to serve others with our many varied gifts given to us.

**A dream I have for the future of Dominican life and mission is** that we as Dominicans continue to witness to our church and the people of God that love and caring charism of our Congregations are on-going as long as we are here.

**I believe the spirit is calling us as Dominicans women to be engaged in** all aspects of the church-no matter how little we can or cannot actually do physically but prayer is always an important option we have. We must also be inclusive of those who we work along side of but most especially our **Dominican Associates** who want to be a part of our on-going Congregational charisms. Their gifts, talents and willingness to serve along side of us is a great support to all we serve in the church as Dominicans.

#17 **Elizabeth Lee** (MSJ)

"The hope I have for the future of Dominican life and mission is that we continue to involve in education for the poor and vulnerable through Dominican tradition of preaching both in Words and deeds. The path of Dominican preaching walks inside of the convents, to cities, to countries, and around the world. That way we continue to connect to the world and respond to the needs of the people of this time. It is important that this tradition be shared with newer members, our lay partners and Dominican volunteers."

#18. **Mary Virginia Leach, MSJ** I offer the same response to all 3 questions (in reverse order)

**i believe the Spirit is calling us as Dominican women to:**

More fully embrace the invitation of Jesus (and Dominic!) to be disciples of the Word, missionaries of HOPE for the Kingdom.

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**Mary Virginia Leach**, continued

**The dream i have for the future of Dominican life and mission is:**

That we encourage creative ways to more fully embrace the invitation of Jesus (and Dominic!) to be disciples of the Word, missionaries of HOPE for the Kingdom.

**What engages and inspires me about our Dominican mission today is;**

That we continue to be open and willing to embrace the invitation of Jesus (and Dominic!) to be disciples of the Word, missionaries of HOPE for the Kingdom.

**#19. Cecilia Canales, MSJ**

**What engages and inspires me about our Dominican Mission today is...**the world's need of our preaching.

Truth never loses its relevance and our contemplative approach to decision-making is a witness to the centrality of God.

**A dream I have for the future of Dominican life and mission is...**that we will create a narrative of communion among us and with the world. We are worldwide; what couldn't we do if we were united in our efforts?

**I believe the Spirit is calling us as Dominican women to...**give witness to our communion in Christ Jesus and to be women of peace and justice in the world.

**#20. Dee Joyner (OP Associate)-- ADRIAN**

My name is Dee Joyner and I am an Adrian Dominican Associate from St. Louis, MO.

I first became acquainted with the Dominicans in 2004 when I joined the Board of Trustees of the Aquinas Institute of Theology. I was drawn immediately to the Adrian Dominican Sisters on the faculty there. I sensed in them a joyful spirituality deeply committed to preaching the gospel not only with words but with the way they lived their lives. I saw strong women who spoke truth to power when need be and who were committed to tackling the root causes of social and environmental injustices. When the Sisters asked if there would be an interest in forming an Associates group in St. Louis I was one of the first to join in 2008.

As I have come to know the Sisters even better I have deepened my regard for their willingness to invest their time and resources in tackling challenges such as immigration, climate change, environmental sustainability, poverty, and initiatives to help communities become more resilient and inclusive. My dream is that these ministries can continue for many years to come and that we will see substantive changes in our neighborhoods, communities and the world at large as a result of this important work.

I believe to achieve this dream will require not only collaboration between the Sisters and their lay partners in ministry....but also among congregations of Dominican Sisters and other women religious. It is only by working together to confront the injustices of our times that we can sustain the progress that has been made by Sisters in the past and to build on those successes for future generations. In the process, I look forward to deepening

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### **Dee Joyner continued**

my own spirituality and formation as an Adrian Dominican Associate so I can be a worthy partner in mission and ministry.

**COMBINED RESPONSES** from: Gloria Switzer (#21) / Elaine LaBell (#22) / Mary Brigid Clingman (#23) / Lucille Janowiak (#24) Zulema Moret, Associate (#25)

**What engages and inspires me about our Dominican Mission today is...**The inspiration and passion that inspires me and fills me with great hope for the fulfillment of our Dominican Mission today starts with these words from a Community Chapter in 2012, "Inflamed with contemplative love, we die and are reborn, as we walk together preaching justice." I believe many many people, regardless of where they live on this Earth, their religious orientation (or not) or the culture they were born into, are desperate and thirsting for spiritual guidance from people who love unconditionally. I believe people are desperately wanting to be loved and acknowledged and want someone to show them how to care for the most vulnerable in our societies. I think people are desperate to meet others who dare speak truth to power, who strive for justice and for peace in a world where justice and peace is lacking. And I believe that deep down, most people want to witness real live examples of people who put their feet where their heart lies; people like those Sisters and Associates of Dominican Congregations through out the world who live, love and witness to others by living and being the examples of the best lover ever, Jesus the Christ. I believe the Holy Spirit is calling Dominican Women and Associates to a greater examples of "loving" outside the boundaries of religious traditions and dogmas.  
Gloria Switzer

Our true desire to collaborate with other sister congregations. I have observed this happening in the recent program for enrichment for those aspiring for retirement. The ForMission program for Directors of Formation has proven to me successful as well. Peer supervision has also been an effective vehicle of mentoring each other as formation leaders. Elaine LaBell

What engages and inspires me about our Dominican Mission today is the concerted and collaborative efforts of the various congregations to our commitment to the Dominican Call to Justice in its many articulated forms.  
Mary Brigid Clingman

### **A dream I have for the future of Dominican life and mission is...**

A dream I have for the future of Dominican life and mission is a greater understanding and appreciation for the global reality of who we are and how we are meant to be universal and interdependent.  
Mary Brigid Clingman

**A dream I have for the future of Dominican life and mission is** that we support and form theologians who are dedicated to developing a strong theology that is based on the new Cosmology that science has provided us with over these past 50 years and that this theology will become integrated into the Church, its spirituality, religious education and beliefs and practices. Lucille Janowiak

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### **Combined Responses continued**

#### **I believe the Spirit is calling us as Dominican women and Associates to...**

work together collaboratively and open our heart and spirit to other cultures, to include in our mission more diversity. As Pope Francis has written in “Aparecida” we need to go out to the margins, we need perhaps a deep debate on which are our margins: Local? Regional? International? As Associate I emphasize my commitment with DCM, to contribute in this mission: to be attentive and awake to the needs of the others wherever they are, in dialogue with the Dominican mission and “charism”. We need to keep our pillars with open eyes to all kind realities as we do. Zulema Moret.

I believe the Spirit is calling us as Dominican women and Associates to look beyond our local reality for the vitality of the Order in order to embrace the mystery of our future. Mary Brigid Clingman

**#26. Sister Jane Marie Estoesta**, Dominican Sister of Mission San Jose. professed for 15 years.

**What engages and inspires me about our Dominican mission today is...**One thing that inspires and engages me about our Dominican mission today is our ongoing and widening inter-congregational collaboration and connection, which also includes our alliance with lay partners – our ministry colleagues, donors, and supporters. It is exciting that we are going beyond our congregational, generational, and cultural boundaries in embracing the Dominican charism and heritage, as together, we face whatever the future holds for us. Secondly, I am inspired by our growing consciousness of the benefits of contemplative listening and dialogue, a way of deeper noticing and paying more attention to our encounters and experiences with others, our global environment, and world events. This practice enables and positions us to give voices to those who are disadvantaged in light of the Gospel message, and in the name of justice and peace.

**A dream I have for the future of Dominican life and mission is to** ever expand our network of collaboration with our lay supporters and to involve them in our discernment processes. Our associations and fidelity to mission and ministry with others require of us to listen to the voices of all those who participate and join us. In addition to our prayer and study, let our listening and learning from one another be another backbone that supports and provides us with the creativity and dynamism that we need for our life and mission.

**I believe the Spirit is calling us, Dominican women, to** spearhead the surge and movement to “Oneness,” – a way of raising one’s consciousness that begins with our intentional awareness of and deep respect for our neighbors, including all sorts of living organisms on our planet. In so doing, this drive for “Oneness” will usher us in sustaining our efforts and endeavors to do justice and work for peace. Likewise, it will make a significant impact on our church, economic, environment, political, and social realities.

**#27. Mary Therese Perez**, Dominican Sister of Mission San Jose, Temporary Professed, 5 years

I am inspired by how alive our charism is today and how greatly needed is our mission to preach the truth of God’s love. As stated in paragraph 72 of the Acts of the General Chapter of Bologna, “Dominican preaching, as with Dominic, must pacify wounded relationships and bring peace to the world.” Our preaching of God’s mercy and love is desperately needed in this world of divisions and injustices.

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### **Mary Therese Perez continued**

Dominic's intuition to preach and to gather a family of preachers was rooted in deep encounter with the living Christ. As Dominican women, I believe the Spirit is equally calling us to encounter Christ in contemplation, in our relationships in the Dominican Family, and in the wounded of the world. I dream that we will grow in relationship across congregations and in encounter of each other's realities, that we collaborate in study and the Holy Preaching across the Dominican Family, and that we live a global sisterhood, engaged with other charism families, offering the unique gifts of our Dominican Life and charism to meet the needs of our world.

### **#28. Beth Murphy (Springfield) professed 1985**

**What engages and inspires me about our Dominican mission today is....** The international character of the order; the fact that it embraces ordained, vowed, lay, women and men; that Dominic's vision includes a foundation in community, contemplation, study and action. It feels to me that our charism and history contain everything the universe needs to face the challenges of the new millennium!

**A dream I have for the future of Dominican life and mission is....** That 100 years from now we are still preachers of the absolutely vulnerable Word of God. That we will have contributed to the study, contemplation, and preaching that allows the human species—consciousness of the universe—to imagine the power of evolutionary science, quantum physics, and the new anthropology that arises from them, to build “a new heaven and a new earth” in the way that our brother Thomas Aquinas' understanding of Aristotle shaped the moral and theological universe of the past 700 years.

**I believe the Spirit is calling us, Dominican women, to....** In the words of one of our senior sisters, I believe the Spirit is calling us to be “the new women of Prouille.” To embrace our place in the chaos of the times as those who are brave enough to give birth to a new form of religious life that transcends and includes, sustains and heals, challenges and opens all of humanity to accept the challenges we face to evolve in consciousness, live sustainably, and witness to the power of relationship to heal.

### **#29. Carol Dempsey (Caldwell)**

Hi, I am Carol Dempsey, Professor of Theology (Biblical Studies) at the University of Portland, in Portland, OR. I have been a member of the Sisters of St. Dominic of Caldwell for the past 42 years. Currently, I teach Biblical Studies courses to undergraduate and graduate students, and I have authored 8 books and edited 10 books. My area of research and writing is the Prophets, also with biblical ethics, gender studies, and environmental concerns. I recently published an article that re-reads prophetic texts in relation to climate change. I serve on the editorial board for the new Wisdom Commentary Series (Barbara Reid, OP is the General Editor), the editorial board for the new Paulist Press Biblical Commentary in progress, and the Theology in Dialogue Series with Orbis Books. I lecture nationally and internationally and am currently working on two commentaries on Isaiah, one for the Wisdom Commentary Series and one for the Berit Olam Series, both being published by Liturgical Press. In May I will travel to Germany to present some of my research on Isaiah at an invited international conference on Isaiah. I will be speaking on a new vision of leadership and global world order that can be found in the Book of Isaiah.

## TEXT RESPONSES FOR FUTURING CHARISM QUESTIONS

(42 yellow=DWA / 11 aqua=additional Dominicans / 9 green=lay partners)

**Carol Dempsey** continued

**What engages and inspires me about our Dominican mission today....**is that we are becoming more and more internationally connected to one another as Dominicans, and we are becoming more deeply involved in the major justice issues facing life on our planet, especially climate change along with immigration and human trafficking. I love being a “global” Dominican.

**A dream that I have for the future of Dominican life and mission is....**that we become even more interconnected. We talk about One Sacred Presence, One Planet, so why not One Dominican Global Sisters formal Union instead of individual congregations. We say we are the Dominican Family, but I would love to see all Dominican women throughout the world joined together. How exciting that would be, and what that could do for future vocations when young women today are already global citizens. That is how they are being educated and trained in universities and colleges that are forward-thinking.

**I believe the Spirit is calling us, Dominican women, to ...**be less focused on our own future as we age and more focused on our life together in and for mission, regardless of age. I do think the Spirit is calling us as Dominican women to become strong leaders who lead in all public arenas, be it in scholarship, health care, immigration, education, politics, economics, church and world. Dominic was called “Light of the Church.” He cut new pathways; I think the time is now to do the same in our church and world.

**#30. Christina Elena Araujo** (Sinsinawa)

**I am Christina Elena Araujo OP.** I live on the island of Trinidad in the republic of Trinidad and Tobago where I was born. In 2006 I made profession as a Dominican sister of Sinsinawa and sealed this with final profession in 2009. (In 1967 I had made temporary profession as a Dominican nun in the contemplative monastery in Trinidad but left the monastery without making final vows and set out on a journey of trying to discover what it means to live my baptism as an ordinary member of the People of God.)

**What engages and inspires me about our Dominican mission today?**

Not only is it rooted in Dominican life going back 800 years to Dominic and his companions but it goes even further back to Christ and His group of men and women disciples... and **it is relevant today**  
Our commitment to TRUTH. We are continually being challenged and challenging each other to reflect on our commitment to TRUTH, to look at the real issues of life today and to respond to what TRUTH is calling us to do now.

Being family...The concept of Dominican family, that goes beyond vowed members of our communities, became specially evident during the recent Jubilee year journey which we celebrated as family...cloistered nuns, Dominican friars, sisters of the 2 Dominican congregations here, and our lay Dominicans (the various chapters of lay Dominicans from different parts of our twin-island republic) as well as our own Sinsinawa Dominican associates and our co-workers.

Ministry as family. Since the end of the Jubilee year some vowed religious and lay Dominicans in Trinidad have formed themselves into preaching teams, who offer retreats for groups.

## TEXT RESPONSES FOR FUTURING CHARISM QUESTIONS

(42 yellow=DWA / 11 aqua=additional Dominicans / 9 green=lay partners)

**Christina Elena Araujo** continued

**A dream I have for the future of Dominican life and mission is....** Teams of Dominicans working with others, inviting others, building up a whole network of people reaching out to invite others into fuller life as God's people, even as they challenge and invite us to grow and become who we are.

#31. **Mary-Han Nguyen** Dominican Sister of Mission San Jose, and this is my 11th year living in this Congregation.

**What engages and inspires me about our Dominican mission today is....**

The Dominican Order came to existence because Dominic was called to preach the Truth to the heretics, and in order to be effective in the preaching/teaching mission, the Dominicans need to have QUALITY life in study, prayer and community. Following these guidelines, the Dominican Order has remained strong and together for 800 years. **PREACHING THE TRUTH or GIVING QUALITY EDUCATION**, which we have been given in our variety roles and ministries, has been engaging and has inspired me.

**A dream or hope I have for the future of Dominican life and mission is....**

In everything we do, I hope we always pay attention to the QUALITY of our life in study, prayer and community. I dream that our Dominican Women should work together as good stewards of God's gifts and resources. In the last six years, I have had the opportunity to attend DWA, immersion trip and joint formation in Mexico, pilgrimage to the Holy Land, International Young Dominican Pilgrimage in the Footsteps of St. Dominic, and a month of Dominican life and ministry in Vietnam. My heart is burning with a desire that we, the international Dominicans, can mission together.

**I believe the Spirit is calling us, Dominican women, to....**

I deeply appreciate the abundant blessings we receive in the U.S. with quality education and abundant resources. We are gifted. We have so much to share! On the other hand, some other countries have rich resources of "manpower." I believe that the Spirit is calling us to be "in action together!" Perhaps we can open a Dominican International English Language Learner and Ministry Centers/Institutes in the U.S. with boarding and learning the American economy and culture program and/or an International Dominican Charity for Better Education and Career for underserved youth. With these ministries, we can strengthen the relationship and ministries of the Dominican Family of the Sisters, Associates, Dominican Volunteers, Dominican Youth Movements, and so on...

#32. **Donna Maria Moses** (MSJ)

**What engages and inspires me about our Dominican mission today is....**

That we have moved beyond the model of mission that would have us filling slots in institutions  
That we are doing more than just trying to keep things going the way they always were  
That we have a new model of mission that is more collaborative, creative and globally interconnected.  
That the boundaries between congregations, nations, religions and generations are being renegotiated.

## TEXT RESPONSES FOR FUTURING CHARISM QUESTIONS

(42 yellow=DWA / 11 aqua=additional Dominicans / 9 green=lay partners)

That the mode of defending one's own belief system and stacking its accomplishments against others is no longer a valid or acceptable way to promote our faith or our charism.

**Donna Maria Moses continued**

**A dream I have for the future of Dominican life and mission is....**

That we will adhere to the essential truth of our tradition that we are preachers of a loving creative God who is continually incarnated in our daily lives

That we will take the time to understand our own history, to learn from it, so that we can evaluate our current station in the world with honesty and humility.

That we will find new ways to listen to people on the margins, to share our stories outside our own familiar situations, so that we can work together to transform the world in ways beyond our present understanding.

**I believe the Spirit is calling us, Dominican women, to...**

Help others to identify our own God-given talents and find creative ways to use them to meet the needs of the people in our own local area.

Encourage others to keep a positive attitude and hold onto hope

Comfort the sick, the sorrowing, the aged and the dying

Listen to the cry of the poor and the call of justice and to promote peace.

More than anything else I think our world needs peace, and we know how to be people of peace, to go where others might not have the courage, the connectedness, the tenacity to stay and work for peace.

**#33. Lorraine Reaume (Adrian)**

**Greetings!** I am Sister Lorraine Reaume, OP, with the Dominican Sisters of Adrian, Michigan. I am originally from Canada, and came to the United States at the age of 33 to enter the congregation in 1997. I have been professed for seventeen years.

I want to preface my comments by saying that we each live Dominican Life from our unique context and respond to the world that we encounter. How I and we in the U.S. are called to respond to and challenge our cultural reality is not the same as how Dominicans in other parts of the globe are called to preach the truth. We have much in common, but also much that is distinct. So, right now, I am responding from the context of living in the U.S. with it's own distinct social, political and religious life reality.

**What engages me about our Dominican mission today** is that the world always needs to hear a word of truth spoken and that there are many false messages we need to counter. We do need to join our voices and actions with others to preach for the dignity of every human person and all creation and to preach against the message that that global market economy requires that some stay mired in poverty and that we sacrifice our planet. In the U.S. the valuing of actual truth is under attack and we need to find ways to preach and witness to the value of truth, recognizing that we never have the full truth.

## TEXT RESPONSES FOR FUTURING CHARISM QUESTIONS

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**A dream I have for the future of Dominican Life and Mission** is that, while we become smaller in certain areas, we will become more focused and bold. I see us forming cores of small houses of the Holy Preaching in various cities from which we go out to serve and preach and protest and to which we invite different groups  
**Lorraine Reaume continued**

for true dialogue. I dream that we all choose to focus on non-violent dialogue so that we can help ourselves and others to have honest and difficult conversations. I dream that we be and live the charism in how we interact so that our being is just as core a witness as our doing.

**I believe the Spirit is calling us, Dominican women, to** hang in there as we live into a new way of living Dominican religious life – not primarily as a workforce for the church, not as very educated professionals breaking glass ceilings (both of those have been done), but rather as small communities of mustard seeds or leaven that witness to something small and new that can lead to great changes. We do not neglect the outer ministries, but our core gift is in our essence. That is what will call others into being who God calls them to be.

### #34. **Gail Jagroop (Sinsinawa)**

Hello. My name is Gail Jagroop. I am a Dominican Sister of Sinsinawa and I am 7 years professed. I live and minister in Trinidad and Tobago.

**What engages and inspires me about Dominican mission today** is the myriad ways in which the one mission is continually being adapted to meet the present needs of our world. Our men and women Dominicans are not afraid to heed the Spirit's call to go where the work is great and difficult, using every means, even virtually, spanning every field - economics, health care, education and church - speaking out against the injustices of poverty, racism, immigration issues, human trafficking - working on the fringes to preach the gospel, and saving souls by helping people to realize their fullest human potential in Christ.

**A dream I have for the future of Dominican Life and Mission is** that we would collaborate more among ourselves as Dominicans and with other religious congregations, and dialogue more with other people of good will, to address the pressings problems of our times. That we would use the many opportunities for personal development that we have received as religious, to develop others - to be salt and leaven - infiltrating our world from within, to nourish lives, to raise up those who are bowed down, to liberate people, and to proclaim to all that our God reigns forever and always!

**I believe the Spirit is calling us as Dominican Women to** remain true to who we are as religious, to the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, radically simplifying our lifestyles so as to become more authentic witnesses of the Gospel - models for social and economic justice in our world - and so deeply contemplative, that our consciousness expands, and we move out of our puny superficial worlds to embrace with compassion, the whole universe. Then we help others to do the same. Who we are will perhaps be a more effective witness to transformation that what we do.

### #35. **Elyse Marie Ramirez (Springfield)**

## TEXT RESPONSES FOR FUTURING CHARISM QUESTIONS

(42 yellow=DWA / 11 aqua=additional Dominicans / 9 green=lay partners)

**What engages and inspires me about Dominican mission is...** Is that by being centered in/on the Word and the Word Made Flesh- it is all God's. It's not ours. 800 years proves it! It's not Dominic's. It's not mine. It's not Springfield's. It's not San Jose's, San Rafael's. It's not Central Province's. It's not Dominican Sister's in Africa or

**Elyse Marie Ramirez continued**

the Dominican Sisters in Iraq. It's God's. That inspires me.

**A dream I have for the future Dominican life and mission is...** That we will stop being afraid of selling the entire field. We can let go of our entitlement, our need to be right and to look good - so that we might continue becoming who God needs us to be for each other in right relationship. That is a dream I have that we will look for the needs, hungers, joys, tragedies, sufferings, beauty, and let it all be consumed in self-effusive love.

**I believe the Spirit is calling us, Dominican women...** to be a sign - a sacrament - of God's presence now. That we will wash feet, invite people to the table, everyone to the table and there is always enough, more than enough. That we will cross the boundaries and engage encountering the "other" and eventually we will find how we belong to each other.

**#36. Jennifer Schaaf (Blauvelt)** (currently in temporary profession)

**What engages and inspires me about our Dominican mission today** is that due to globalization, which certainly has negative effects, we can share in our preaching mission without Congregational or national boundaries. As our national leaders talk about building walls, we fly over them, break them down or go around them for the sake of bringing and being Good News to and with each other, and to the places where people are most in need of hearing the Good News.

**#37. Mary Soher (Adrian)**

Hello, I am Mary Soher, a Dominican Sister of Adrian, MI. I made profession in 1999, last century!

**What engages and inspires me about our Dominican mission today** is the concept of family, being members of a global family that offers the charism, the Dominican path of knowing and loving God, to a wide variety of family branches. When I say family, the members that come to mind are the sisters, the nuns, the friars and the laity, but we also have associates, Dominican Volunteers both within the United States and internationally, and the Young Adult movement. Our charism reaches out to all ages and all walks of life.

**A dream I have for the future of Dominican life and mission** is to deepen or develop networks to strengthen our preaching mission within the family for the good of the world. We have wonderful women and men of all ages engaged in preaching the Gospel of God's love and mercy, but how well do we share our stories or rather do I pay attention to those seeking to share their stories of preaching? I pay better attention to those I know or have a relationship with. My dream is for stronger and deeper family ties.

**I believe the Spirit is calling us, Dominican women,** to deepen our sisterhood; to schedule time to meet each other in face to face encounters, which can happen in person or via technology, but with enough time to share

## TEXT RESPONSES FOR FUTURING CHARISM QUESTIONS

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our stories and passions and see where passions connect for further synergy. We are called to share how each of us answers the call to mission, to why a particular mission gives us the energy to leap out of bed each day and to share how we are sustained by our relationship with our God.

#38. **Sr. Maria Chuc Vu OP**, one year of profession as a Dominican Sister of Mission San Jose.

**I believe the Spirit is calling us, Dominican women** in the United States this time to do three things:

1. To become one in organization.

2; To continue our charism by our life in our time and the same time pass it on to the next generation who are lay people.

3. Care for the earth and human being, who are poor and venerable people in the United States and some places in the world where need our hands.

#39. **Sr. Gladys Echenique, OP** a Dominican sister of Saint Catherine of Siena of Oakford Natal, South Africa. I made my first profession on August 10, 1997. This year I celebrate twenty years of my first profession.

**What engages and inspires me about our Dominican mission today is....**

In the words of our big Sister Catherine of Siena what engages and inspires me about Dominican mission today is that: "To the servant of God ... every place is the right place, and every time is the right time..." I believe that we live in a time where our witness as missionary disciples are more than ever in demand. What engages and inspires me every day about our Dominican Mission is that I want to be that fire of Love and share that fire with the people I encounter every day.

**A dream I have for the future of Dominican life and mission is....** that through our four pillars of Dominican Life: Mission, Community, Study, and Prayer we can become more open in reaching out to others, to invite the excluded, to offer mercy, and to experience the joy of being a blessing for others through our call to be a religious sister in our world at this time.

**I believe the Spirit is calling us, Dominican women**, to recognize that we have received many blessings and now are called to share about these blessings with others through our witness. I believe that the Spirit is calling us to celebrate the wonders God has done in our lives. I believe the Spirit is calling us, to be a sign of unity in our broken world.

#40. **Sister Jodi Cecilia Min, O.P.** Dominican Sisters of Oakford 23 years professed

**What engages and inspires me about our Dominican mission today is....**

...that the charism that impels us to preach the Good News of the gospel is as relevant today as it was when the Order was founded by St. Dominic. Individualism, consumerism, classism and addictions to pleasures like alcohol, drugs and technology are all examples of "modern day heresies" that leave God's people feeling empty and hungry for the Truth. Dominicans fill an invaluable need when we remind people of the gift and sacredness of their lives and the realization that they are deeply loved by God.

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### **A dream I have for the future of Dominican life and mission is....**

...that it will continue to be a shining light of truth that dispels the darkness that envelops so many and showers people with the love of God.

### **Sister Jodi Cecilia Min, O.P. continued**

#### **I believe the Spirit is calling us, Dominican women, to....**

...return to our roots of religious life by being of one heart and one mind, living simply and sharing the fruits of our contemplation through action. When reflecting on the state of life in first world countries especially, I believe the component of contemplation is the greatest gift we have to offer societies that elevate the value of “doing” over the value of “being,” consequently equating the worth of a person based on what they accomplish or produce. While being women of action is important, it should never be at the detriment of our time spent with Christ. We need to witness to others that they are worth much more than what they do.

### **#41. Teresa Montes Lara (Tacoma)**

#### **What engages and inspires me about our Dominican mission today is....**

At the beginning of the Dominican Order, the focus was on preaching the word of God and the salvation of humankind. What inspires me “here and now” is a new understanding of this foundation that is re-awakening the capacity that we human beings have to “do something” for the salvation of the other. This is very important for me, because the other is requesting a clear commitment to participate in life. It is connected with our Christian faith—re-appropriating, re-naming the meaning of community, re-defining the task of preaching, re-imagining God. And really believing that this can be done only through relationships among us. It is a new way of visioning the ministry (service) of the Word.

#### **I believe the Spirit is calling us, Dominican women, to....**

I believe that the Spirit is calling us to open not only our hearts but also our hands and commit ourselves seriously to collaboration. The need for the other is the need for God in a concrete expression of solidarity, care, and love. In the Dialogue, Catherine hears in her heart, “You need the other because the other and I are the same thing.” Are we listening?

I believe that the Spirit is calling us to consider a particular way of relationship that can evoke an equilibrium with the other. The Dominican mission can be reality only in the communion of the whole.

### **A dream I have for the future of Dominican life and mission is....**

What is the dream of God? The dreams that emerge from the depths of our hearts are inspired by the Spirit, and we should not be afraid to pursue them even when we make mistakes. My dream for the future of Dominican life and mission revolves around three “c’s”: community, consensus, and collaboration. These three c’s converge with our historical charism of contemplation and sharing the fruits of contemplation through preaching. The Spirit is moving us into a new global reality. This so obviously affects our lives as Dominican women. We can no longer stay simply within our own local Dominican community. The local communities must network and share. What does it mean to be Dominican women in this new context of globalization, with its lights and also with its shadows? In this networking and sharing, we express a special

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solidarity with the poor, with poor women, and with all creation. This enriches the entire Dominican family, the people of God, the poor, and the universe.

#42. **Wanda Szymanko** (MSJ) professed for 11 years.

**What engages and inspires me about our Dominican mission today is....**What engages and inspires me about our Dominican Mission today is that we are world-wide order~ our life and charism expands to the four corners of the world and encompasses lay men and women, religious sisters both apostolic and contemplative, and priests/brothers. Together we are working to bring God's gospel message of peace, hope, love and reconciliation.

**A dream I have for the future of Dominican life and mission is....** My dream for the future of Dominican Life and mission is for a stronger and more intentional collaboration with our lay partners and congregations throughout the world on specific projects~ that we work with one another more closely, learning about each other's cultures, beliefs, and values in order to expand one another's understanding of the other's world view so that we can better serve God's people. I also dream that through our work together more people will join us.

**I believe the Spirit is calling us, Dominican women, to....**To be united and work together, sharing our gifts, resources and talents to go to the marginalized within our geographic locations and beyond our borders in an effort to reach out to them... As Jesus's disciples, the spirit is calling us to help people, especially the vulnerable, live life to their fullest potential and to flourish as children of God.

#43. **Aneesah McNamee** (Adrian)

My name is Aneesah McNamee and I have been finally professed with the Adrian Dominicans for 15 years, at my Reception it has been 21 years! I am originally from Germany, came to the US when I was 6 and lived all over the country. I have lived in Southern California and for the most amount of time in Santa Cruz, California for almost 25 years before entering the Adrian Congregation in Michigan.

**What engages me about our Dominican mission is** the diversity in which we all PREACH and share the good news. Our Dominican Family is engaged in so many areas sharing our gifts with each other and with the people we serve. One of my gifts is connecting with other Dominicans online and through social media. I have met so many with whom I feel connected through our common Dominican Life. This is inspiring to me.

**A dream I have for the future of Dominican life and mission is** while we become more global and move in more collaborative ways -- my dream would be that we would be united as Dominican Sisters USA and even Dominican Sisters International.

**I believe the Spirit is calling us to** exactly that... to be Dominican Sisters International...imagine the voice we would have in the world if we were united as one. Thanks so much!

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#44. **Joan Ebbitt** (Adrian Associate)

**What engages and inspires me about our Dominican mission today** is the desire and courage to search for truth and justice I see evident in all who live some form of Dominican life. These women continue to expand on their knowledge and understanding of the new cosmology in light of the invitation that seems apparent in

**Joan Ebbitt** (Adrian Associate) continued

our Universe. Even as traditional vowed Dominican members live through these, at best, uneasy times, i.e. aging, financial challenges, uncertainty about the future, I see openness, curiosity, excitement, wonderment and wisdom about looking ahead.

Dominican Associates are deeply engaged in the pursuit of these same truths and endeavors. Through shared spiritual longings we invite each other to wonder about the Holy Mystery that **Karl Rahner** so aptly calls, **not the Supreme Godhead but the God up ahead!**

Making sustainability a high priority, the evidence of permaculture and “greening” can be seen all around the Adrian Dominican campus. Associates and friends of the Adrian Dominicans also talk about practicing more sustainable and green ways of living in their homes. Working together, Adrian Dominicans, Associates and friends of the Adrian Dominicans routinely serve the needs of the suffering. They volunteer to help when needed, give financial aid, provide space for shelter, educate as called upon, and hold those who are distressed in their hearts and prayer.

**A dream I have for the future of Dominican life and mission** is to broaden the ways that people are connected to and live the Dominican charism. As a former vowed member of the Adrian Dominicans (1963-1973), I always carried the charism in my soul. In 2005, I invited former members and friends of the Adrian Dominicans to join a group of us who were/are soul-connected to this Dominican community. At the time we were not interested in becoming Associates but together, we wanted to pursue a spiritual, Dominican community/charism where we would share our hearts in the spirit of living Dominican life. Currently vowed members were also invited to join us in sharing a mutual pursuit of this Dominican spirituality. We were pleased when some did join us!

We named ourselves Companions in the Dominican Crossthreads, after an article by **Edward Schillebeeckx** discussed **the rich beauty of a tapestry when the various threads cross into each other and become one.** We meet for a day of spiritual reflection and consciousness raising two-three times a year with the intention of soul-sharing, learning and pursuing the truth of our hearts. This loose connection to our vowed Dominican sisters is a way to stay close to the greater mission as most of our members continue to lend spiritual and volunteer support along with ongoing financial contributions to the community. (We number about 130 by email and 12-20 various members who are able to regularly attend our gatherings.)

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Since joining our Dominican Crossthreads group, several of our members (myself included) have entered Associate Dominican Life and continue to remain active members of the Dominican Crossthreads. As our imaginations grow, so do our ways of being Dominican!

**I believe the Spirit is calling us, Dominican sisters and lay partners to** listen to each other without judgment and to mutually share our concerns, dreams, ideas, and desires of our souls. This will foster ongoing imagination and creativity as we find our way into the future. Teilhard De Chardin reminds us that **Our duty,**

**Joan Ebbitt** (Adrian Associate) continued

**as men and women, is to proceed as if limits to our ability did not exist. We are collaborators in creation.** This is our call! New life comes out of imagination and collaboration. We must use our imaginations and collaborative efforts to create, and to create and to create!

**45. Jean Ferstl, OP** Racine Dominicans (Wisconsin)

**What engages and inspire me about our Dominican Mission** today is the great need in our world now to bring people to an awareness of God's presence in their/our lives, especially in the United States. This requires the sharing of our faith, opportunities to be with others, to get to know them, to welcome them, to engage them in conversation, to listen to them, to affirm them, to challenge them in the best sense of the word, and continue to engage them in conversation, sharing our values, always with an openness to hearing about what they value.

**A dream I have for the future of Dominican life and mission is:** If I were able, I would like to go with another Sister to walk the streets of downtown Racine, the halls of the Mall, and/or the streets of different neighborhoods of the city. We could go into stores, taverns, and restaurants to talk with people. We could stop to talk with people in neighborhoods, wherever we met them, getting to know them and perhaps be invited into their homes to visit. We could invite them to our Siena Retreat Center and/or our Siena Center home for conversation.

**I believe the Spirit is calling us as Dominican women to** spend time in study, in community prayer, and in contemplative prayer, keeping our minds and hearts open to the Spirit. With openness to the Spirit, we could be inspired and be led to ways of being in touch with a variety of people, sharing the Good News of the Gospel with them. We could attend the liturgies in different congregations/parishes in our city, engaging the members in conversation after the Service, asking them how and with whom they are sharing the Good News and sharing with them ways this could be done.

**46. Susan Leslie** (Peace)

My name is Susan Leslie, and I have been living Dominican life for 37 years.

**What engages and inspires me about our Dominican mission today is** that we are consciously rekindling our contemplative tradition both personally and communally; and that we seem to have really embraced our preaching mission in the context of Gospel justice.

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**A dream I have for the future of Dominican life and mission is** that we break down the barriers that still exist in our family, so that we can have a more genuine collaboration, as equals, among all the branches of the family, affirming and using the preaching gifts that we discover there, regardless of gender or life-commitment choice. What a model and gift that would be for our church!

**I believe the Spirit is calling us, Dominican women, to** trust our own experience, to think outside of the box, to go out to the margins, and to dream big!

47. **Susan Nchubiri** (Maryknoll)

My name is Susan Kanuu Nchubiri MM. I am a member of Maryknoll Sisters of St. Dominic Inc. I was born and raised in a rural village in Kenya, East Africa. I joined Maryknoll in 2004 and made my first vows in 2006. My Maryknoll missionary journey has brought me from Chicago to China, to Haiti and to New York. I have been enriched by each mission experience I have had, and learned much from those with whom I was missioned as well as from the varied cultures to which I was exposed.

**I would say that what inspires me in our Dominican mission today is** the awareness that we need to build networks and collaborate with each other as Dominicans and also with others in mission. Our ever searching and listening to where the Spirit is calling and moving us to be and become is a source of anchor for me. The Dominican Spirit of Contemplation in action and most recently the engagement in Contemplative Dialogue compel me to listen and **to** be open to what's happening around me.

**I dream of a Dominican life and mission** without borders or congregational attachments. By this I mean the Dominican family being missioned together. For instance, if there is a need to begin a new mission somewhere, that we share personnel and resources. I dream of a Dominican religious life and mission that is totally immersed in and with the peripheries.

**I believe that the Spirit is nudging us Dominican Women to** continue listening deeply to the Spirit and courageously responding to God's promptings. I believe we are being invited to a deeper and meaningful collaboration and networking with others who share a similar vision and mission. Our memberships are quickly decreasing. No one congregation can accomplish much on its own. However, as we open ourselves to the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, we need to be aware of being trapped into the "doing" and forget that **our call is "to be"**. The question we need to ask ourselves and each other is "how am I being with others in community and those to whom I am missioned? How are you being with the people?" Not "what are you doing" or what are you going to do"? May we let the fire of the Spirit to burn in us.

48. **Mary Brenda** (Houston)

**What engages and inspires me about our Dominican mission today is....**

I'd have to say, that every time we start a conversation about MISSION... it is always followed up by an encouragement or a challenge to take an ACTION.

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So stretching myself to “take action” is one way that I can authentically make God’s Word flesh in my life... it makes MISSION REAL to take those steps... and then it causes me of course to be engaged and accountable to actually living my faith. And when we do this collectively, I am INSPIRED by the many ways I see God’s Love at work in our world...through the hands, hearts, and contemplative prayer of our Dominican Family.

### **A dream I have for the future of Dominican life and mission is....**

I think that it might be that we could find more ways for young people to experience mission with us. Because when I talk to young adults today it seems to me that they are taking advantage of good opportunities available for ...prayer groups, and spiritual direction, and praise and worship gatherings, and making retreats.

### **Mary Brenda continued**

But they are still hungering for something more. And when I talk to them they express that “hunger for something more” as a hunger to make authentic and purposeful meaning to their day to day living. And so with the 4<sup>th</sup> pillar of our Dominican way of life being Mission, it seems to me that we might want to shine more light on that pillar... because our work is not just a job, it’s mission. It’s mission with purpose. It’s the shared fruit of our contemplation, our prayer, our study, and our commitment to relationship with others, for the sake of a deeper relationship with Christ. So I could give energy to a dream that gives our world’s future generations a holy purpose to their living.

### **I believe the Spirit is calling us, Dominican women, to....**

Be faithful stewards of our preaching charism.... By building relationships that not only share the fruit of our reflective living with others, but also to build relationships which mentor and empower future generations to respond to God’s Word in a world which is ever changing. The world may always be in flux .... But this way of life .... Of STUDY, PRAYER, COMMUNITY, and SERVICE will always be relevant and timely to MISSION.

### **49. Lisa Zuccarelli (Peace)**

My name is Sister Lisa Zuccarelli and I have been a Dominican Sister for 42 years.

**What engages me about the Dominican Mission is** that it never get old. There is always an opportunity to preach love and peace. God continually calls us into being as an Order and sets before us a constant call to holiness.

**A dream i have about the future is** that the Order would set up a worldwide communication network - TV, print, radio, internet that would spread the the good news.

**I believe the Spirit is calling us, Dominican women, to** be stronger preachers of the truth. One of the greatest dangers in the world is fundamentalism. It goes against the love and generosity of God and reduces God's plan for us to a set of rules. God is love, we have been saved. this is Good News. Alleluia.

### **50. Manuela J. Crisólogo González (Peace)**

Translation from Spanish to English of Manuela Crisólogo Gonzalez’s reflection.

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### **What engages and inspires me about our OP life / mission is...**

Both now and in the past, what attracts me to our Dominican mission is the search for truth and making it known by assuming the challenges and difficulties that this means today:

- Showing with our lives the deep respect for each human being in contact with us.
- Living our gift of freedom with full responsibility, whether in community, at work, or in other areas where we live and serve.
- Living what we say in our preaching of the Gospel, assuming our qualities, gifts, potential, and also our limitations and weaknesses. Continue to sow the seeds of the Good News with the generosity of Jesus, and care for the growing seeds with the necessary delicacy and patience.

### **Manuela J. Crisólogo González continued**

- Continuing to be sentinels of the good that has been built, and leaving it with open mind, ear, and heart.

### **My future dream is:**

- Continue to build peace based on truth, making the God's justice possible among the human beings of our common house. Overcoming the fatigue that entails. It means being-myself, feeling happy and making others happy.

### **I believe that the Dominican women the Spirit is calling us to:**

- Continue to be truthful, with the generosity, responsibility and full freedom required to respond to the voices of brothers and sisters who cry out for love, for peace, for life in all parts of the planet. Thus, offering ourselves with our weaknesses and abilities, gifts and personal charisms.

**51. Margaret McCarthy** Dominican Sisters of Mission San Jose, Mission Advancement Director, 6 years  
Educated at a Dominican elementary school 1-8<sup>th</sup> grade

### **What engages and inspires me about our Dominican mission today is....**

I've been working for six years with the Dominican Sisters, coordinating the congregation's communications, capital fund raising and mission outreach. Despite this close association as a Catholic, lay colleague and employee, I often find myself working without a clear sense of "our Dominican mission today."

Intuitively I believe the congregation is called to an evolving and shared mission - one that is welcoming and inclusive, just and committed to improving the lives of "the young, the poor and the vulnerable." Yet these groups identified at their founding are encountered in different ways today and in our work with regional and global communities, living on a fragile planet.

Today's Dominican mission must bridge difference, create community and affirm VERITAS, living the truth with love. It's a broad and expansive call that needs the energy of many people – sisters, youth, men, women, believers and unchurched and churched people of little, some or no faith who recognize the call to collaborate

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and create the common good. This is the collective with the reach make a difference and form communities in a world of poverty and promise.

### **A dream I have for the future of Dominican life and mission is....**

There is an urgency to break down circles that define and divide us. Dominican life in the future depends upon developing new models that honor the Dominican “pillars” in new ways, incorporating hospitality and purpose as we pray, study, serve and create community. Historic founding missions offer a guide and a witness, but need to be translated to address today’s needs and opportunities.

How can a congregation founded to serve the Catholic educational needs of immigrant youth in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century form its followers and apply its resources today? Can a congregation honor their historic Dominican

### **Margaret McCarthy continued**

roots and dynamic Bay Area location, embracing the energy and creativity of a diverse high tech region that’s overly connected and spiritually impoverished?

### **I believe the Spirit is calling us, Dominican sisters and lay partners to....**

Collaborate, collaborate, collaborate! We need to work together with respect for the wisdom of lay colleagues and women religious. We need to take risks, apply technology and create new models. We must embrace a future that isn’t confined to one congregation’s founding mission if it fails to meet today’s needs. I don’t have the answers – but I believe this is the new ground and journey that awaits us.

### **52. Jocelyn Pierre-Antoine (Lay Partner with MSJ)**

Hello my name is Jocelyn Pierre-Antoine, and I’ve been connected with the Dominican Sisters of Mission San Jose since 1982 when I was a 1<sup>st</sup> grader here at St. Edward School in Newark, California. Then in 2001 Sister Johnellen Turner hired me as the third grade teacher here at St. Edward’s.

**What engages and inspires me about the Dominican mission** and charism today is that we have an opportunity for lay people to take a more active role in the Church and to empower lay people to believe that their contributions in the Church are equally as important as those of vowed religious and that the Dominican charism applies to not only those who wear a habit but everyone religious and lay who follow in the footsteps of St. Dominic and are committed to prayer, study, community and ministry.

**A dream that I have for the future of Dominican life is** that sisters, Dominican sisters continue to partner closely with lay people in schools-that includes the teachers, the staff, the school families, and especially the students so that we as lay people who are partnering with the Dominican sisters believe in the value of the Dominican charism as a way to actively live out our faith and preach God’s Word in what we say and what we do.

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**I believe the Spirit is calling us, Dominican sisters and lay partners to** transform our way of thinking, to be very intentional in the ways that we partner and minister alongside each other, to think of creative ways to have shared leadership, to make sure that we voice the importance of partnering together in schools, in churches, in local and global settings so that we continue to seek truth in a world that is in such need of God's light and love.

### 53. **Tim Szarnicki** (MSJ Lay Partner)

My name is Tim Szarnicki, I've been connected to the Dominican Sisters of Mission San Jose for 8 years through my work with ICA Cristo Rey in San Francisco.

**What engages and inspires me** about our Dominican mission today is that ICA Cristo Rey is led by a clear mission that powers our thinking and decision making. Many institutions suffer from a lack of direction or focus. Because we let our mission lead us, the entire ICA Cristo Rey community benefits from a purpose that brings meaning to our work each day.

### **Tim Szarnicki** continued

**A dream I have for the future of Dominican life and mission** is we form more leaders who are led by mission. Mission led leaders will listen deeply, be unafraid of lovingly looking at what is real, and answering the call to do what is most necessary.

**I believe the Spirit is calling us, Dominican sisters and lay partners,** to fully invest in veritas. We must welcome the Spirit into our hearts with the request to point us toward the truth of the matter and guide us to act so that the truth comes into being. We must also ask for the courage to go and do it. As Fr. T. J. Martinez, the founding president of Cristo Rey Jesuit in Houston said, "we do the impossible immediately and the difficult shortly thereafter." Together we must come together to do just that for those around us. We must be fearless leaders who bring love to life.

### 54. **Margaret Uche** DWA Apostolic novice, Dominican Sisters of Peace.

**What engages and inspires me** about our Dominican Mission today is our involvement with the global community. I am encouraged by our mission to promote education by bringing Sisters from Africa to go School here in the United States. These African Sisters go back to their prospective countries and empower their own people. Our Sisters also promote peace and justice through our solidarity with those who are marginalized especially women and children, and working together with others to transform oppressive systems. A lot of our sisters are involved in human trafficking and immigration issues and working to promote conflicts resolution and transformation. These are issues in our world today.

**A dream I have for the future of Dominican life and mission** is we continue collaboration with other communities here in the United States and in other countries in peace and justice issues and being the voice of the poor. Empower those in need especially women and children by supporting their work by providing resources where needed whether here in the United States or getting in touch with those oppressed in other countries

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especially third world countries.

**I believe the Spirit is calling us**, Dominican women, to be open to where the Holy Spirit leads us, focus on the need of our time, and be witness to the love of God by working together with one another and others in our world.

**55. Jennifer Hunter** (Lay Executive Director of Campus Services for the Adrian Dominican Sisters in Adrian, Michigan. I have served in this role for 5 years.)

**What engages and inspires me about our Dominican mission today is....**

I am given the opportunity to be a part of something that is so much bigger than just me and my efforts. My role as a partner in mission with the Dominican Sisters and serving the campus as Executive Director, I feel as though I am right where God wants me to be. The Sisters have been so instrumental through the years to encourage change, goodness and inclusion in their ministries all over the world, this is my contribution toward the mission. It is the very least I can do...and at the same time, it creates a desire to do more.

**Jennifer Hunter continued**

**A dream I have for the future of Dominican life and mission is....**

That hearts and eyes may be opened to the needs of the greater community and the world. Through that insight, the desire to partner in ministry is realized and explored. My hope is that others could experience the power of the Dominican Sisters charism through their desire to want to do more and in turn they step up and show up to help.

**I believe the Spirit is calling us, Dominican sisters and lay partners to....**

Be leaders and continue to spread the mission through collaboration, partnership and educational efforts. The need for goodness and love in such an uncertain world right now is greater than ever. As Ghandi states, "be the change you wish to see in the world." We have a responsibility to leave this world a better place and we will get there a lot faster if we work together.

**56. Joel Henricks- Lay Partner** -- Director of Facilities & Grounds for the Adrian Dominicans for 2.5 years

**What engages and inspires me about our Dominican Mission today is:**

Throughout the world we up against some of the worst faces that humanity has to offer. Issues such as large racial divides, nuclear war, genocide, and the pollution of our home planet seem to dominate the headlines today. With the rest of the world seemingly headed for destruction, the message that resonates here is so much different. It seems that "out in the world", people look for reasons do be discontent. The Dominican message that I hear is one of positivity, acceptance and love. The overall desire and willingness of the Mission to make a positive change in the world sends a wonderful message to me about how to live my life.

**A dream I have for the future of Dominican life and mission is:**

To spread to word! This sounds strange, but here in Adrian, Mi, the Adrian Dominican Sisters is one of the best kept secrets around. We have hundreds of wonderful Sisters here on campus, and almost no-one in the surrounding community knows about it. The wealth of knowledge and voices that are present cannot be

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measured. But, they can be used as a powerhouse for both voters and candidates come local election time. I would love to hear that if you want to hold a local office, you must first pass the muster with the Sisters. What a powerful tool this would be when looking to the future for positive changes.

### **I believe the Spirit is calling us, Dominican sisters and lay partners to:**

To engage the leaders of today as a team to affect change. When we approach our public officials and business leaders as individuals, our message may get lost in the shuffle. However, when we are engaging the public together with a unified voice, it becomes amplified. Starting on local levels, we have the ability to make our voices be heard to deal with issues like; homelessness, drug abuse, immigration, and pollution. I believe it is critical to start on smaller levels and keep pushing for change. For one, it can make the task less surmountable, but often the small changes help to initiate larger ones.

### **57. Barbara Kane (DWA ---PEACE)**

I am Sr. Barbara Kane. I have been a Dominican Sister for 13 years. I'd like to start with this question: What inspires me about our Dominican mission today. The world really needs to hear and be able to discern the truth; especially, as it relates to Jesus' message of love, compassion, mercy, and inclusion. A dream that I have for the future of Dominican life and mission is that we will find creative ways to engage all people – men, women, adults, children, sisters lay people, you name it, in our mission of preaching and to invite them to be a part of us whether it's for a day, a week, a month, a year or their entire lifetime. I believe that the spirit is calling us to preach, to preach, to preach... about Jesus' love for us, about peace, about nonviolence and especially, to give voice to those who are marginalized in our world today.

### **58. Connie Schoen, OP (PEACE)**

**What engages and inspires me about Dominican life today** is that Dominic's vision is as relevant today as it was 800+ years ago. He understood the power of truth. He listened to his Gospel, his home, when Jesus speaks "you will know the truth and the truth will set you free." I believe our preaching the truth, our seeking and ongoing search for the truth is as vital today as it ever was.

**A dream I have for Dominican life** and the whole Dominican family is that we never lose sight of the fact that our primary home is the Word of God; that we continually return home and stay in the home wherever we are; that we can speak truth and also recognize in the lives of others and be present and authentic to others; that we can name the grace that is present in the compassion and mercy of God.

**I believe that the Spirit is calling Dominican women today** to a radical transformation, both personally and communally, that we are willing to risk our lives, quite literally, for what we know is true; that the world will understand and come to experience, both the compassion and mercy of God in such a way that violence and hatred have no place, cannot survive in the midst of that love.

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Four more DWA responses are not transcribed from videos. You may find their messages on the google drive at [opfuturingproject@gmail.com](mailto:opfuturingproject@gmail.com).

- 59 Diane Trotta
- 60. Bea Tiboldi
- 61. Janie Keenoy
- 62. Cathy Murray