Sr. Cecilia Espenilla, O.P. has been appointed to DSI’s Office of the International Promoter of Justice and Peace for a three-year term (2017-2020). We are most grateful to her Prioress and the sisters of her Congregation for freeing Sr. Cecile for this mission. Sr. Cecilia is a sister of the Congregation of St. Catherine of Siena, Philippines. She is a former DSI Continental Coordinator and International Promoter for Justice & Peace for Asia Pacific. Sister begins her work with DSI on September 1, 2017 after serving her Congregation in various leadership capacities, apostolates in education, and the work of Justice and Peace at Congregational, Diocesan, regional and international levels. In recent years, she has become known best for her extensive work in the fight against human trafficking.

Sr. Cecilia holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Commerce – Accounting from the University of Santo Tomas, Manila, an Master of Arts Degree in Theological Studies from Ateneo de Manila University, and she is currently a Ph.D. Candidate in Department of Educational Leadership & Management at the De La Salle University, Manila.

DSI Welcomes New International Promoter of Justice and Peace

Sr. Cecile, on the behalf of Dominican Sisters worldwide!

Farewell!

With gratitude, sentiments of attachment and friendship, we bid Farewell to Sr. Celestina Veloso Freitas, O.P.

Many thanks to Sr. Celestina for the many gifts that she brought to the Office of the International Promoter for Justice and Peace during these past four years. The many whom she touched with her passion for justice and those with whom she collaborated will, I am sure, greatly miss her when she leaves us at the end of September. Our heartfelt gratitude to Sr. Natividad Martinez De Castro, General Prioress of Dominicas de la Annunciata (Sr. Celestina’s Congregation) for making Sr. Celestina available to all of our member congregations and the entire Dominican Family. Sr. Tina, we will continue to build upon this treasured investment that you have made in DSI, especially in your efforts at peace building and dialogue. We pray that the Lord continues to make the work of your hands and heart fruitful and bless you and your congregation abundantly.
Recognised by various signature slogans since the recent and gradual opening of its once closed doors, Vietnam is home to over two-thousand of our Sisters in nine indigenous and other Dominican Congregations, thousands of Lay Dominicans, Friars and Nuns. Many have kept the faith through generations of persecution, occupation by other nations and a tightly controlled communist society. A youth-filled country, Vietnam’s gradual openness to western and other civilizations seems to suggest the strengthening of a desire for a mutual collaboration towards social development for which education of its youth is of paramount importance.

Many conversations with the sisters during the time of the recent visit of DSI’s International Coordinator Sr. Marie Therese Clement, O.P. and Continental Coordinator for Asia Pacific, Sr. Bernadette Kiley O.P., underscored the Vietnamese sisters keen interest in and commitment to the education of children and youth. They place particular emphasis upon the integral formation of their sisters as a way of adequately preparing them for the preaching mission.

Like many non-governmental organisations, religious congregations are emerging from the silenced shadows of an exodus from the North of the country to its south and later the total isolation of both north and south from the rest of the world. The weight of this experience has left many dispossessed, wounded and, to build their resilience with the tools of hard work and determination, mindful vulnerability yet audacious faith in the Lord whom they have experienced as ever-present in their lives and who gives them the strength to conquer all things.

Working from a packed agenda of 23 days, Sisters Bernadette and Marie Therese first visited the Congregations in the North, the birth place of Dominican life and the origin of all the local Dominican Congregations of women in Vietnam, dated as early as 1715. The Congregation presently bearing the name, Congregation of Sisters of St. Catherine of Siena, Bui Chu is the parent group of sisters who were dispersed in various Dioceses from the north to the South in 1954. Scattered in several southern Dioceses, the hardships that the sisters faced were compounded by severed communication with the north. To a large extent, these resulted in the birth several other Diocesan congregations especially subsequent to 1975 when the communist regime from the north took control of the entire country.
Presently, with the increasing openness of the country to the external world, there are nine indigenous congregations who try to grow together in their self-understanding and in defining the mission of Dominican Sisters of Apostolic Life in their country. They of course, face many challenges such as the risks of further fragmentation and expressed, both their need for DSI’s continued support and their gratitude for the solidarity that they have experienced in DSI and the entire Order. They made special mention of the many Congregations that provide scholarships and housing for their student sisters abroad, those who sponsor the formation of sisters at home. Their gratitude to DSI member congregations both within and outside Vietnam that make themselves available to journey with them on matters such as the feminine apostolic expression of the Dominican charism, mission, formation, government and the construction of adequate spaces for formation, residence and missionary activities of the sisters was quite evident.

This year for instance, owing to DSI’s receipt of special donations for formation we were able to support the sisters’ formation at their Theological Institute in Ho Chi Minh City with the sum of US$15,000.00 and hope to be able to do the same next year.

The sisters mission areas in the south are predominantly with children and youth in the cities and in the countryside with indigenous Vietnamese communities whom they teach, house, feed and care for in hostels, orphanages, clinics of natural medicine and at home. The apostolates in the north are more modest since there are still several restrictions curtailing fuller exercise of the sisters’ mission. Many communities are involved in various types of farming to both feed themselves and generate income, others make religious
vestments, articles and hosts; they work with the poor and others who are vulnerable such as the handicapped (children and adults), elderly and lepers. The sisters of St. Rose of Lima for example, have a health care apostolate with a large community of lepers in the Vietnamese Highlands.

Sisters Bernadette and Marie Therese received a bountiful taste of Vietnamese hospitality in each community that welcomed them. The sounds of drums, music, songs, dance, clapping and offerings of gifts and beautiful floral arrangements defined the ambiance of each community encounter during which rich exchanges about the Sisters lives and mission and the mission of DSI were shared. The many expressed recognition of the potential of DSI to unite Dominican Sisters wherever they are in the world was demonstrative of the sense of belonging that especially the leadership of Congregations experience in DSI. Several sisters, especially the youth, asked questions about how to become more involved in the life of the movement.

Although this visit was considered to be short and rushed by many of the Vietnamese communities, all agreed that it was mutually beneficial. The e-mail messages received subsequent to visit are all punctuated by expressions of gratitude for the time taken to visit them in their local context. For Sr. Bernadette, this first insightful visit to one of the countries of her vast Asia Pacific Continent, contextualised the sisters’ apostolate. Sr. Marie Therese gained a better understanding and appreciation of the complexities that sometimes limit the sisters’ active involvement in DSI at international and sometimes continental levels.

The final days of this trip were spent on a short visit to one of our two congregations in Cambodia, the Missionaries of St. Dominic and the Marynoll Sisters of St. Dominic. Unfortunately owing to the beginning of the rainy season...
nd the far physical distance there is between the
convents and missions of the two congregation,
we were not able to visit the Marynoll Sisters.
The mission of the Missionaries of St. Dominic
Sisters consists largely in a close collaboration
with the Diocese through parishes. The four
sisters present in this mission, provide very much
needed basic education to children between the
ages of 4 - 7 who would otherwise be unschooled
during this period of their lives owing the ex-
treme poverty, scares transportation which their
parents can ill-afford and great distances
between the homes and schools which are for the most
part in urban areas. The sisters also work with
the older siblings and parents of children whom
they teach and offer guidance, educational sup-
port, share tips on hygiene, nutrition and to
those who express the desire, initiation in the
faith.

The small assistance which they receive
from donors, allow the sisters to provide some
basic learning materials, a daily meal, a small stipend
to some teachers, ancillary personnel and youth who
work in the project with them. They also provide cloth-
ing, items for personal hygiene and sanitation and
receptacles for catching rain water, to especially
families in communities that live in mangrove
areas with little fresh water supply.

It is hoped that these pictures from both Vietnam
and Cambodia and this brief account, speak
more than “a thousand words” about the condi-
tions of life in the sisters’ missions, their joyful
service, the resilience of the local people and the
hope that the sisters’ presence and apostolate
represent. To God be the glory for the good
work that he has started and continues to do in
us. 
Cont’d THE PRIDE OF ASIA, A DIFFERENT ORIENT ...

*Rural Community where Sisters work & one-room school house, Cambodia*
On Sunday morning, March 19, 2017, the Master of the Order, Rev. Fr. Bruno Cadoré, OP. celebrated the Thanksgiving Mass on the occasion of the 50th year of The Province of Our Lady Queen of Martyrs in Vietnam at St. Martin de Porres Pastoral Center, with the attendance of a great number of the Dominican Family members.

In the late afternoon, Fr. Bruno Cadoré, together with Fr. Gerard Francisco Timoner III, the new Socius for Asia Pacific, and two former Socii: Fr. Vicente Ha Vien Lu, Fr. Kevin Toomey, were guided by Fr. Joseph Nguyen Duc Hoa, the Prior Provincial coming to the Motherhouse of the Congregation of Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine of Siena, Thanh Tam, Xuan Loc. This location is far from Hochiminh City about 40km eastward.

The ceremony of Blessing the new Nursing Home for Elderly Sisters was officiated by The Master of the Order, Rev. Fr. Bruno Cadoré, OP. at 7:00 PM. After the ceremony, the Master and his companions greeted all the elderly and sick sisters one by one; these warm fraternal greetings brought much joy.

This new Nursing Home has been completed after more than one year of construction. It is dedicated to our Lady of Assumption as a reminder to
the sisters to lift up their eyes to heaven towards the end of their earthly journey.

In the congregational hall, Sister Mary Magdalene Pham thi Huy, Prioress General of the Congregation expressed words of gratitude to God for giving us grace to construct the new nursing home. She also thanked deeply, Fr. Bruno Cadoré, the Master of the Order and his confreres for their special presence among our sisters. She emphasized that, the presence and blessings of the Friars are eloquent symbols for the spirit of unity that our Holy Father St. Dominic has bestowed on the Dominican Family. She recalled the event in November 1958, a month after the congregation was officially affiliated to the Order of Preachers, the sisters were blessed with the visit of Father Bruno’s predecessor, Rev. Father Michael Brown. At that time, the Congregation had only a handful of sisters and one hundred aspirants while at the present time, 59 years later, the Congregation has flourished with up to 440 sisters (108 of whom are Juniors), 32 novices, 22 pre-novices and 82 aspirants). The Congregation is present in Vietnam (27 communities in 9 dioceses), and in USA (a Province with 8 communities, 93 sisters, 4 novices). Sister Mary Magdalene mentioned that, having elderly sisters means we have a treasure of Witnesses of faithful Dominicans. For that reason, when the Master blesses our elderly sisters, at the same time, he encouraged the young sisters to be faithful too.

In his speech, Fr. Bruno Cadoré encouraged us to live the consecrated life joyfully, take good care for the elderly sisters humanly and spiritually. He also reminded that, we are used to asking the old sisters to pray for us, but the aged and retired sisters do need us to pray for them too.

The new Home for Elderly sisters is a dream of the congregation turned into reality.

This work does not only attain the completion of the building, but it has really touched each heart of our sisters because it has shown how we care for one another and share together all aspects of our life in the congregation.

A Big Thanks to all those who have supported us to complete this construction. May God bless us all in the Dominican Charism and spirit.

The ceremony concluded with a thanksgiving meal and fraternal sharing. 

Cont’d DOMINICAN BLESSING OF THE NEW NURSING ...
From March 6-31 this year, 43 Dominicans responsible for the formation of young religious in their congregations gathered at Caleruega, the Dominican retreat centre in the Philippines for the ninth Dominican Formators Course. 28 sisters, 3 nuns and 12 friars from various parts of the Asia-Pacific region spent four weeks learning with and from each other, and reflecting on formation for preaching. Topics covered in the course included mission today in the Asia-Pacific region, preaching, intellectual formation, psycho-spiritual development, justice and peace, and the Dominican Family.

I was invited to join the group during the last week of the course to facilitate two days devoted to considering human and sexual development. It was a privilege and a delight to meet the participants and the workshop organisers in the stunning setting at Nasugbu, Batangas. It was only my second trip to the Philippines and the first to a location outside of Manila. It was one of the most beautiful places I have ever visited – grand mountains, lush, green valleys planted with peanuts, pineapples and bananas – so different from the landscape of my home country, as this photograph shows.

I was very aware that I came to the group as someone from a western culture who was interacting with people from so many different places in our region and therefore from many different ways of thinking and of being in the world. This was quite a challenge in terms of the topic of my two days.

I had spent considerable time before the workshop researching various views of human and sexual development as these are understood in different places of our region, such as in the Philippines, Indonesia and Vietnam. Because we view aspects of sexuality differently, and it’s not always easy to articulate how we feel about such personal aspects of our lives. However, I admired the way in which all participants entered into the small group discussions and often in the larger group when ‘brave ones’ ventured a comment it opened up the conversation for others to contribute. I was amazed at the level of energy and commitment, even in these
final days of the course – and we had lots of laughs!

It was clear that while we came from very different places, we shared common concerns about human and sexual development and its central place in understanding the young religious with whom we work. While some of the issues we raised seemed daunting, the commitment of these Dominican formators was always obvious to me. They clearly wanted to do the best they could for the religious in their charge.

It wasn’t all work! We enjoyed each other’s company at a hilarious games night during which winning was paramount and had to be achieved at all costs! On my final day at Caleruega I joined the group on a visit to Escuderra, a remarkable nature reserve several hours drive from the retreat centre. If you’ve never had lunch sitting at a table in a fast-flowing (shallow) river, then you must go to Escuderra!

Many thanks to Sr Esther and Fr Florentino for welcoming me to Caleruega, and to the participants who made my time there an absolute pleasure.

COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN
Sixty-first Session
13-14 March, 2017
A Recapitulation

Did You Know…?
- That 60% or more of chronically hungry people are women and girls although they are responsible for 60 - 80% of food production in the Global South?

- That in some countries women make up 85 percent or more of the pesticide applicators on commercial farms and plantations, often working whilst pregnant or breastfeeding?

1 "Women - Food Security - End Hunger - Political Will & Public Will" by WUNRN - Women’s UN Report Network, CSW , 17 March 2017
2 A Guide for NGOs and Women’s Human Rights Activists at the UN and CSW 2017, p. 20
Somewhere today, babies are born with birth defects because their moms suffer from systemic gender inequality at their work. What word do we need to hear preached in the midst of veiled injustice?

A DOMINICAN GATHERING — FAMILY
When one woman suffers, we all suffer with her. Her experience heard deeply makes us reach into our own realities and be touched by the same lament and hope — that together, and only together, we can change things. To forge such solidarity, we need to connect. Such global connection happens at the annual sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in which sisters from different continents are invited by DSI, Dominican Sisters International, to participate. For this year’s CSW 61, we came from Vietnam, Ireland, US, Pakistan, Nigeria, Columbia and Mexico. As it often happens at Dominican gatherings, though as strangers we had come, we quickly found home with one another. Margaret, our Dominican Sister representative to UN, and Katt and Holly, two vibrant Dominican volunteers took care of every detail so that we could do what we had come for. To rest up each night, our Dominican Sisters of Hope welcomed us into their retreat center by Hudson River in Ossining, New York, a perfect place to rest and shift through the conversations of the day. Despite substantial walks between the sessions during the day, most of us gained some pounds at the end of the gathering. Delicious meals, though healthy, were to blame.

Since I accompany the Tsotsil speaking Mayas in the Highlands of Chiapas, Mexico, my interest at CSW 61, perspectives and this recapitulation of the session are influenced by my ministerial experiences with our people here. I offer my summary reflection in gratitude for the opportunity of participation and with the hope of being an instrument of further conversations so that together we can work for a just and sustainable world of work. My reflection will proceed with a brief description of context for CSW 61, present condition of work for women, two structural barriers to gender equality, some proposals for change that were made, and our task of preaching as Dominicans in light of gender inequality in the world of work.

THEME OF CSW 61, SDG
The priority theme at this gathering was “Women’s economic empowerment in the changing world of work” to be discussed in view of the sustainable development goals. We have come to see that a genuine transformation of our world, a real peace and well-being of all, cannot happen without protecting our Mother Earth. Also recognizing that “eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions is an indispensable requirement for sustainable development,” on September 25, 2015, countries adopted a set of goals, called the Sustainable Development Goals, to be achieved by 2030. Its Goal 5, “Gender Equality,” intrinsic to human rights, is key to sustainable development. For example, reducing or eliminating gaps in access to resources, such as male-dominated land tenure structures throughout much of the world, would enhance women’s ability to respond to climate change impacts and help reduce the number of hungry people over 15% according to the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO). Technology is again changing the conditions of work globally, not necessarily for the better for women and the poor. To name such reality and to advocate for women’s agency, freedom from violence and equal access to resources and power — three markers of gender equality — in the world of work, women around the world gathered this past March.
PRESENT CONDITIONS OF WORK FOR WOMEN

Fast evolving technology has been changing the world of work dramatically, favoring the young and educated in middle and higher income countries. The old, poor, rural and low income economy populations stand to lose. The preparatory report for CSW 61 concluded that in all three major sectors of work — agriculture, manufacture and service — “women continue to subsidize the market economy through their unpaid care work and through their undervalued, precarious and insecure paid work.” The majority of women do not benefit from economic, social, cultural and political development to which they contribute.

TWO SALIENT STRUCTURAL BARRIERS TO GENDER EQUALITY IN THE WORLD OF WORK:

Beneath the gender inequalities in the world of work that were presented at this CSW, two fundamental structural barriers to gender equality are observable: unpaid care work and denial of women’s right to land.

• Unpaid Work and Unpaid Care Work:

Care of the children, elderly and the sick is “assumed to be a normal part of women’s responsibilities and thus is not considered an important economic issue” although its value is estimated to be roughly US $10 trillion, or 13 percent of global GDP. Women’s unpaid work means not only economic hardship. It under-privileged women systematically, especially in education and work, compromising the safety, agency and conditions for women to enjoy their full human rights and live fully who they are meant to be. We know by name women who never learned to read because their externally obligated and internally assumed priority in life was to care for their families.

• Denial of women’s land right:

Women grow more than half of all food in the world but they are typically dispossessed of land. Women’s right to land is a human right and key in fighting global poverty, decreasing violence against women, ensuring food security, increasing participation of women in household and communal decision making, and improving care for their families and land, among others. Women are denied of land by gender biased laws, prevalent patriarchy or other local customs. This denial to land is a denial to food. It is a structural violence that negatively intersects multiple rights, ultimately denying our fundamen-


4 “A Guide for NGOs and Women’s Human Rights Activists at the UN and CSW 2017,” p. 27. A report from OECD Development Centre states, “Overall, women spend more time on unpaid care activities than men representing on average two to ten times that of men’s” resulting into “double burden” of work for women. (From “Unpaid Care Work: The missing link in the analysis of gender gaps in labour outcomes”, December 2014)

5 The FAO states, “Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.”
tal right to sustain ourselves with dignity. It is a breach of our common responsibility to care for our Common Home.

For our indigenous sisters, their right to land is also about reclaiming their cultural identity and undoing historical effects of colonization on their people. With so much at stake, their right to land is further jeopardized by international economic policies that ignore or even favor land grabs by transnational corporations or governments.\(^6\) Despite international mandate for adequate consultation and the prior, free consent of the people, the extractive megaproject operations that result into displacement of people from their lands happen often insidiously without the required, transparent dialogues and become the breeding ground for conflicts and insecurity.\(^7\)

Maria is a Mayan young woman who weaves because weaving is a legacy of her grandmothers and a way to earn money for the necessities. Her story drives home the importance of land. She earns in average $16/day in Mexican Peso (about $0.83 in US Dollar) for her backstrap weaving.\(^8\) It is not enough even for one meal. But she, her mom and sister don’t go hungry because they have land to grow food. They are self-sufficient. This parcel of land that allows them to live with dignity even in the midst of poverty was left to her mother by her deceased father. Whether she and her sister will have a parcel when her mom dies is in question.

**TOWARD GENDER EQUALITY IN THE WORLD OF WORK**

- Not only “green economy” but also “purple economy”.

Where women and girls shoulder a disproportionate share of unpaid care work, advocates assert that we need to invest in the care economy as a shared social responsibility, reduce and redistribute the cost of care in the economic system and regulate care work.\(^9\) In agricultural setting, we are to organize with other women in order to

---

\(^6\) Up to 2.5 billion people depend on indigenous and community lands, which make up over 50 percent of the land on the planet; they legally own just one-fifth. The remaining land remains unprotected and vulnerable to land grabs from more powerful entities like governments and corporations. (from [http://rightsandresources.org/en/publication/global-common-ground/#.WSxajslOneQ](http://rightsandresources.org/en/publication/global-common-ground/#.WSxajslOneQ))

\(^7\) ILO Convention 169 and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People declare indigenous people’s right to self-determination, to own the land they live on and use, to consultation and to “the free, prior and informed consent” regarding their land.

\(^8\) Her name is changed here. She makes $0.83 / day when she sells her weaving through her cooperative or to a fair trader. When she sells her weaving to the vendors at tourist markets because of an urgent need, she gets paid around MX $230/huipil and MX$15/small purse. Subtracting the cost of yarns she buys for weaving, she is left with $168 for the month, it’s about 5-6 pesos (US$ .26-.31) per day. 1 kg of tortilla cost MX$14, and a family of 3-4 eats about 1 kg each meal.

“visibilise women farmers”. When we say, ‘farmer’ we should think, ‘HER,’ as well. Togeth-er, we need to ensure her right to seeds, water, land, capital, and market among others. Her tradi-tional ecological knowledge should be at the core of the sustainable development. And, as it is in urban settings, we need to reduce and redistribute her unpaid care work.

• Toward Full Rights to Land
On behalf of the indigenous women, recommen-dations that resonate with the conversations at CSW 61 were presented at 16th Session of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, 2017.
April 27, 2017. To promote self-determined eco-nomic empowerment of Indigenous women that would lead to women’s political empowerment, recommendations include:
• the promotion of indigenous women’s access to and management of resources based on their own knowledge and needs,
• the establishment of a monitoring mechanism for ensuring free, prior informed consent in development process with active leadership by local women.
A recommended study on the impacts of climate change on Indigenous women for the 17th Session in 2018 complements with the priority theme for CSW 62 next year on gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls. It’s noteworthy that if these recommendations are well implemented, they could take us beyond the gender equality in land rights. They seem to be ultimately about just access and sustainable cultivation of land for the well-being of the planet and her inhabitants.

WHAT DO WE, DOMINICAN WOMEN, PREACH THEN?
If the fundamental reason for our existence as Dominicans is to collaborate in the mission of Jesus for the fullness of life for everyone, in the face of the “systems and relationships of exclu-sion and inequality” that generate so much suf-fering, our preaching has to speak for a just and sustainable economic order. “It’s time to say ‘NO’ to the economy of exclusion that kills!” However, before that ‘NO’ to structural perpetuation of injustice or that “YES’ to just and good life for all is uttered, we must let ourselves be confronted by the reality of our sisters who suffer, reaching down into our own as well. It’s because only the word born out of life’s suffering can offer a hope-ful alternative. Before we preach, with our sisters, illumined by the Word, we need to rethink the meaning of work, sustainability and empower-ment so that together, we can envision a way of relating — economically, politically, socially — that is consistent with God’s dream for our world.

Dialoguing about Work:
Our definition on work shapes how we work. Having listened to the reality first, by engaging indigenous wisdom about work and biblical wis-dom on sabbath in our reflection about work, we

10 Sejal Dand, “Defense of Land and Water: Economic Empowerment for Indigenous Women” at CSW 61, 21 March

11 “First Ibero-American Meeting of Theology BOSTON DECLARATION” at the Primer Encuentro Iberoamericano de Teología (Feb2017, Boston College Boston, Massachusetts )

12 Quoting Pope Francis, a presenter made this remark at “Women Doctors: Economic Empowerment and Social Determinants of Health” sponsored by Medical Women’s International Association, 15 March 2017.
may come to agree on an alternative meaning of work to today’s consumption driven wokholism and economy.\textsuperscript{13} How might we work differently with one another if we were to understand work to be more than the production of goods or services to be used by someone?\textsuperscript{14}

Angelina is a local Mayan potter. Before she turns the pottering wheel, she climbs high up the mountain to dig out the mud, goes down the river for the sand and from the forest, she carries wood home to make fire. If we could picture that as we hold a pottery, if we could see the whole fabric of life behind a “product,” would not our habits of buying and using things be transformed? Would we not demand a different kind of economy perhaps?

Dialogue about sustainability:
A common and shared responsibility, sustainability is more than an “ecological balance,” argues Markus Vogt. It is not a mere “juxtaposition of ecology, economics, and social concerns.” Rather, it is a systemic, interactive relationship whose principle ought to be the fourth complementary principle for catholic social ethics.\textsuperscript{15} The spirit of these principles are already present in diverse efforts to bring about gender equality and sustainable development. We can both learn from them and inform them further with our reflection on sustainability from the perspective of faith.

With the Whole, as a Whole as the Mode:
Intersectionality was a buzz word at this CSW 61. It is about asking deeper questions that intersect diverse and interwoven facets of our life because systemic injustice and social inequality occur on a multidimensional basis.\textsuperscript{16} Related recognition of interconnectedness of our lives also generated hope in our common search for solution to our global problems: by working on one transversal issue such as water, we can actually address other issues that intersect, reducing the seemingly intangible vastness of the problem into concrete and workable issues. There is no excuse not to do my part. Most hopeful of all is the surging global solidarity. At CSW 61, I heard women say that we are not okay when someone whose story is different from our own is absent in the circle. It echoed what our women here in Chiapas had said: ‘As long as there are others who are suffering, I am not content.” In our willingness to ask, “What privileges can I set aside so that others without privileges can participate as co-creators?” another world becomes possible.

\textsuperscript{13} Some profound reflections on work and sabbath that I have encountered are: To work and to Love by Dorothee Soelle with Shirley A. Cloyes, Sabbath as Resistance by Walter Brueggemann, The Greatest Payer by John Dominic Crossan, The End of Work by John Hughes among others. It may also help to reflect on “Economía Solidária”.

\textsuperscript{14} ILO (International Labour Organization), defines work as “any activity preformed by persons of any sex and age to produce goods or to provide services for use by others or for own use.” According to ILO, decent work “delivers a fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in the decisions that affect their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men.”

\textsuperscript{15} Markus Vogt, “Sustainability and Climate Justice from a Theological Perspective”, p. 5

\textsuperscript{16} “Individuals can face multiple threats of oppression when their identities overlap in a number of minority or marginalized categories such as race, gender, immigration status, religion, age, class, ethnicity, health, and others,” at Bridging the Divide: Uniting US and Global Women’s Agendas Through Intersectionality and Inclusivity by YWCA USA. CSW 61
As preachers in Latin America and the Caribbean:
In the region that continues to be the most unequal although Latin America and the Caribbean are no longer the poorest in economic terms, what word must be preached? Our theologians concurred on ceasing different forms of domination. For that, they identified “new contextual theologies, like those practiced by indigenous and Afro-American women, which highlight the experiences of subjects who have been marginalized in their social and ecclesial life” as key. The lives and the experiences our women need to be at the center of our communal reflection for preaching.

A CONCLUDING THOUGHT
Even before the CSW 61 began, the word “empowerment” raised questions. Is it about someone with power “permitting” others without power to have it? Or is it about accessing what’s already within? Can an individual be empowered in isolation from the community? Antonio Gutiérres, the Secretary General of UN, defined empowerment as removing structural impediments. As he acknowledges rightly, women already have power, the capacity to act and effect changes necessary for the good of all. Together, could we not clear structural barriers? Going beyond, with one another, we may dare to shift our paradigm and create an economic order where everyone can exercise the power already within for life.

AS SUBJECTS FOR CHANGE
Next year, women around the world will gather to dialogue on “Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls”. So that our local women’s lives and experiences with land can speak for themselves at this global conversation, what if, as Dominican women, were to convoke women who work with land to a space of reflection and conversation? So that our rural, indigenous sisters who have been marginalized on multiple levels could be at the center, changing a conversation about them to a dialogue with one another?

17 “First Ibero-American Meeting of Theology BOSTON DECLARATION” at the Primer Encuentro Iberoamericano de Teología (Feb 2017, Boston College Boston, Massachusetts)

18 At the opening session of CSW61, Antonio Gutiérres remarked, “in a male dominated world, the empowerment of women must be a key priority. Women already have what it takes to succeed. Empowerment is about breaking structural barriers; men still dominate even in countries that consider themselves progressive; male chauvinism blocks women and that hurts everyone…”
DOMINICAN SISTERS WHO PARTICIPATE IN THIS EVENT, REPRESENTING THE FIVE REGIONS OF DSI
JUSTICE AND PEACE PROMOTER’S UISG MEETING
This Meeting took place in the UISG Headquarters in Rome on 07 June 2017
Theme: Experiences of non-violence regarding the planet and evaluation of the course

UNION OF DOMINICAN SISTERS OF ITALY AND MALTA (USMID)
Council Meeting representing all General Prioresses of Dominican Congregations in Italy. Fruits of the Meeting: Preparation for upcoming General Assembly; Positive Feedback and new learning from presentation of the Friars Formation Ratio; Exploration of a joint apostolate among members of the Dominican Family in Italy; Positive response to the Friars invitation to have a sister to participate in each of their three Provincial Chapters in early July 2017.

CODALC: JUSTICE AND PEACE SEMINAR (MEXICO)
The theme: "Reasons for, and Challenges to our Commitment to Justice and Peace at this present juncture the Americas." It was conducted by The Commission for Justice and Peace accompanied by Dr. Darío Salinas Figueredo, expert in Political and Social Analysis of the Universidad Iberoamericana.

DSA - PLANNING MEETING FOR CONTINENTAL ASSEMBLY, AFRICA (Nairobi, Kenya)
It brought those with key leadership roles in the Continent together to plan for their General Assembly slated for 2018. In addition to the usual review of the mission, inter congregational collaboration and planning for the future, the Assembly elect a new Continental Coordinator for Africa for confirmation at DSI’s General Assembly of 2019

THE “INTER STREET” INTERNATIONAL MEETING (Rome)
Monthly encounter of a group of International Religious & Laity in view of creating a world-wide network. These meetings’ Venue is The Dicastery of Rome

FORMATION MEETING OF THE DOMINICAN FAMILY (Cameroon)
Organised and implemented led by the International Promoter of Justice and Peace, Sr. Celestina Veloso who will also visit the Justice and Peace missions of the various congregations in Cameroon.

RETREAT - GROUPEMENT FRATERNEL (Dominican Congregations in France and Belgium)
Venue: Benedictine Sisters of Montmartre, Paris on the theme “The teachings and Pedagogy of St. Dominic through his nine ways of prayer. It will be animated by Sr. Catherine Aubin, CRSD, Professor of Spirituality and Sacramental Theology at the Angelicum University, Rome
**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**August 14-17**

**CODALC - DOMINICAN VOCATIONAL PASTORAL WORKSHOP (Paraguay)**
Joint Sisters, Nuns and Friars initiative for Vocations Promoters in Latin America and the Caribbean and coordinated by the Dominican Family in Paraguay.

**Scheduled activities:** Shared experiences of best practices of formation (Expo-Charisma), Presentation of "Paraguay's Vocational Networks," Adjustments to material received in São Paulo, BR; Dimensions of work, Personal and Vocational Accompaniment (criteria, framing, processes, problems) by Fr Rafael Colomé Common vision and Directives for Formation in Latin America, Pastoral Plan for Vocation Ministry

**September 15 – 17**

**CODALC - MEETING OF JUSTICE AND PEACE, (Cochabamba, Bolivia)**
Theme: "Water." Significant venue since the first war for water was in Bolivia. Invitation to all members of CODALC.

**September 20 – 24**

**CODALC- MEETING OF ARTISTS - "EL V PREDCARTE" (Asuncion, Paraguay)**
Artists of the Dominican Family of Latin America and the Caribbean (painters, sculptors, musicians, etc.) under the theme: "And truly, I say to you, wherever the gospel is proclaimed in the whole world, what she has done will be told in memory of her." Mc.14:9.
**Focus:** To foster joint reflection, sharing and the production of art around shared values on women in the history of Paraguay. This is in line with CODALC’s priority - “From our identity as Women Preachers, we make a preferential option for vulnerable women and girls.”
**Final Product:** Preaching through the Joint creation of a permanent mural in a public space.

**September 22 – 24**

**DSE - SMALL CONGREGATIONS PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE (Oslo, Norway)**
Invitation to small congregations to a first forum for conversation among congregations in Europe with a membership of fewer than 100.
**Criteria for participation:**
i. Member of DSI
ii. Membership fewer than 100
iii. Main presence in Europe with no dynamic mission in other territories
Have some Sisters who are 60 years of age and younger
**For more information / registration contact:** Sr. Else-Britt Nilsen at e.b.nilsen@mf.no
**MISSION BRIEF**

**January - March 2017**

---

**Cont’d... UPCOMING EVENTS**

**SEDEP - VI MEETING OF DOMINICAN SISTERS (Madrid)**
Theme: “Praise, Bless and Preach, Together and ... revolt?” towards a common vision as Dominicans. **Venue:** Casa de Oración de las franciscanas (fmmdp): C/ Sta. Engracia 144, Madrid. Metro Cuatro Caminos

**REGIONAL COLLOQUIUM ON PREACHING OF THE DOMINICAN FAMILY IN ASIA-PACIFIC,**
DSI’s Continental Coordinator for Asia Pacific, Sr. Bernadette Kiley will participate and present a paper at this Colloquium.
**Focus:**
- To further the conversation on Dominican Preaching in the context of changing realities in Asia-Pacific;
- To bring into discourse the experiences and reflections of Dominican friars, Sisters and the Laity, arising from their preaching mission in the midst of the great religious cultures of Asia-Pacific;
- To offer a venue for emergent and divergent voices of Dominican preachers in Asia-Pacific.

---

**UPCOMING GENERAL CHAPTERS**

**July 16 — 30**
Congregation “Dominicaines Missionnaires de Notre Dame de la Délivrande”

**July 18 — Aug. 10**
Congregation “Romaine de Saint Dominique”

**July 29 — Aug. 25**
Congregation of “Santo Domingo”

---

**DOMINICAN SISTERS INTERNATIONAL**

**Director**
Sr. Marie Therese Clement

**Page Layout:** Elizabeth Perugachi I.

**DSI office - Convento Santa Sabina** - Piazza P. d’Illiria, 1 - 00153 Roma - Italia Tel: +39 06 57940658
Mob. + 39 3897930104 - dsi@curia.op.org - www.dsiop.org - FB: DSI DominicanSisters