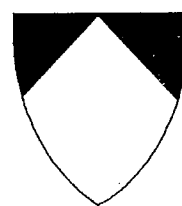


DECLARATIONS, RULE AND CONSTITUTIONS

OF

THE ORDER OF PENANCE OF SAINT DOMINIC



VERITAS

NOTICE

These Declarations, Rule and Constitutions of the Order of Penance of Saint Dominic, called also the Dominican Third Order of the priory of la Haye-aux-Bonshommes, are published *ad experimentum* for three full years,

on the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of God, September 8, 1991.

Declarations, Rule and Constitutions of the Order of Penance of Saint Dominic, called also the Dominican Third Order of the priory of la Haye-aux-Bonshommes.

DECLARATIONS

SERMON OF ARCHBISHOP LEFEBVRE : APRIL 27, 1981

In order to understand the establishment of this Dominican Third Order and its legitimacy, it is indispensable to read the homily which follows. It was delivered on the occasion of a friar's perpetual profession April 27, 1981, by His Grace Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, in the church of the priory of la Haye-aux-Bonshommes.

"In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

My very dear friends, my very dear brothers,

It is with great joy, great satisfaction, that we find ourselves today in this church in order to bear witness to and affirm the resurrection — if one may so call it — of the Dominican Order in our land of France.

We are under an obligation to recognize — without launching, nonetheless, into any bitter criticism — just, quite simply, to recognize the facts. Competent authorities tell us that today, alas, the religious Orders are totally destroying themselves, are completely decadent. Why? Mainly because they have abandoned the bases and the very foundations on which the prosperity of their Orders rested. The particular grace of the founders, such as Saint Dominic, Saint Francis of Assisi and Saint Benedict, enabled constitutions, statutes, laws to be drawn up, which established those Orders in a distinctive

holiness within the Church. Now, since — it has to be said — since the Second Vatican Council, General Chapters who have been asked by the Holy See to set about the modernisation, the *aggiornamento* as it is called, of these constitutions, of these religious Orders, have brought about the ruin of those constitutions, a change so profound in the spirit of those Orders and of those congregations, that we are presently the witnesses of their ruin and their disappearance.

Faced with this truly tragic state of the religious Orders, and with the situation in which the Church finds herself today, should we remain merely silent and inactive? Or, on the contrary, have they not the duty, those who are conscious of that destruction, of that disappearance of the works of holiness in the Church, the duty to conserve and to bring to new life that which has been the glory of the Church, and is a proof of the principal mark of the Church, the mark of holiness?

I believe that one can truly say that the Catholic Church without the religious Orders, without these religious professions, would no longer be the Catholic Church.

The appearance, ever since the death of Our Lord Himself, of people wishing to consecrate themselves wholly to Our Lord Jesus Christ, forsaking the world and having no other desire than to contemplate and meditate on heavenly things, lasting things, eternal things, instead of becoming attached to the ephemeral and corruptible things of this passing world, manifests precisely the holiness of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

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dedicated partly to contemplation and partly to the apostolate. And it was particularly Saint Dominic and Saint Francis who would establish those societies, those Orders which give themselves at one and the same time to study, to prayer, to the religious office, to the liturgical office, and who, equally, go about preaching the Gospel, drawing to Our Lord Jesus Christ multitudes who so easily stray from Him, attracted by the delusions of this world, attracted by the pleasures and delights of this poor world.

And that is why these religious make the three vows of poverty, chastity and obedience : in order to remove all the obstacles which could be in their way and which might prevent their being deeply and totally attached to Our Lord Jesus Christ. For it is not only to show a spirit of penance, of renunciation of the world, that they make these vows ; these vows which could appear folly in the eyes of the world, especially to those who do not believe in Our Lord Jesus Christ, to the pagans. "*Gentibus stultitia*" said Saint Paul, Our Lord's Cross is a folly to those who do not believe ; "*pro Judaeis scandalum*", for the Jews it was a scandal, that Cross to which was fastened their Messiah, their King — unthinkable ! "*Pro credentibus autem sapientia Dei*", for those who believe it is the wisdom of God. Yes, it is wisdom, wisdom which clears away in the heart all that could be an obstacle to the love of Our Lord Jesus Christ ; and wisdom for the souls who wish to consecrate themselves to Our Lord, to do so in an official, public manner, in the Church, in the presence of the Church ;

Numerous were the hermits who populated the deserts, who were seized by the spirit of Our Lord Jesus Christ and withdrew from the world. And then came the cenobites, particularly with Saint Benedict who spread throughout the world those monasteries of which we still see today the admirable traces in every country of Europe. If we mark on a map of Europe the Benedictine monasteries, then later the Cistercian monasteries, we shall see that Europe was covered with those monasteries, thus showing that many souls were captivated by Our Lord Jesus Christ, drawn by Our Lord Jesus Christ to live in union with Our Lord, the better to devote themselves to serving the Church — contemplative souls who shut themselves forever, till their last breath, in the cloisters, in the monasteries, in order to meditate on the charity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, on his Cross, on his Sacred Passion, and to live a life of privation and penance, so as to love Our Lord Jesus Christ better, so that the charity of Our Lord Jesus Christ might increase in them.

Undoubtedly those contemplative congregations did not have the exterior apostolate as their object, but their apostolate was nonetheless effectual : the example, the example alone of those people shutting themselves away for their whole lives in cloisters and monasteries in order to live in union with Our Lord Jesus Christ, was a magnificent example for Christians in the world, and it encouraged them also, in their different circumstances, to live with Our Lord Jesus Christ and to follow Our Lord.

And then came the Orders that have been called mixed, in the sense that their lives are, at the same time,

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and that is why they are called religious in the Church those who make in the presence of the Church the three vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.

The vow of poverty that separates them from earthly goods, which could so easily purchase forbidden joys and draw us into sin.

The vow of chastity — because they want their heart to be undivided. Oh ! certainly, one can sanctify oneself by way of marriage, and thereby souls have been sanctified, have been united to Our Lord Jesus Christ. But we must recognise that there are also, alas, occasions for neglecting Our Lord Jesus Christ perhaps more frequently and easily than for those who renounce the pleasures of the flesh and the right to establish a home and family here below. It is, on the other hand, an honour for Christian families to give their children to God ; there is no greater grace for a Christian home than to have a religious brother, a sister, a priest in the family !

Then the vow of obedience, which is perhaps the most difficult to carry out. It is perhaps easier to abandon the good things of this world, refrain from founding a family in this world, than to abandon one's own will. To be no longer free, to be in the hands of a Superior who will show you the way of God which you are to follow all the days of your life, that is very difficult. And yet that is what the religious does : he delivers his will, so to speak, into the hands of his Superior in such a way that the Superior disposes of him for his apostolate, for the duties, the tasks that he will have to fulfil.

You see, then, what the religious is before the Church.

But once more, those vows which could seem austere : to give up all handling of money, to give up the joys of founding a family, to give up one's own will, is not all this very austere, and a truly unendurable life of penance? No indeed ! When these renunciations, when this abnegation is made in order to give oneself to Our Lord Jesus Christ then, on the contrary, it is a profound joy and consolation which those religious experience intimately in the depths of their souls. If God has come among us, if He has willed to become Incarnate, if He has willed to live among us and to shed His Blood and give His Life for the redemption of our souls, He who is God gives to souls who give themselves to Him extraordinary consolations and graces.

So in a few minutes, my very dear friend, you are going to pronounce these vows of religion in circumstances altogether unusual. It is true that I have not been specially delegated by the Superior General of the Dominican Order to receive these vows that you are going to make, and that, consequently, it could be said that, so far as the Church is concerned, these are not public vows but private vows. But should we, as certain of our friends even have advised, abandon the project? Abandon the renaissance of Dominican life in souls who desire to follow the way of Saint Dominic? I don't think so. And I believe that, as some of our friends at Rome have said, who hold positions in the Roman congregations : "if you are not following the strict letter of the code, you are following its fundamental laws". The Church's legislation, in effect, is in its principles wholly

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constitutions, in order to give to the Order of Saint Dominic its true holiness and the true end for which Saint Dominic founded it.

And what, in a few words, is that end? I think it was Saint Thomas of Aquinas, a son of Saint Dominic, who defined it best : "*contemplata aliis tradere*", to impart to others the object of your contemplation ! That is to say, the object of your studies, the object of your meditations, the object of your prayers, the object of your devotions ; to make manifest to others all that God inspires in you by that prayer, by that study ; to preach the Gospel, to go and preach Our Lord Jesus Christ ! That love of Our Lord Jesus Christ, which will enflame your heart and your soul as the soul of Saint Francis and of Saint Dominic, you will go and pour it out in the world. And those graces which will be poured out in the world will bear fruit in souls. That is what you will do, that is your programme, defined so well by Saint Thomas of Aquinas.

And so we earnestly desire that you should take up that torch of all your forebears, of all the Saints who have followed Saint Dominic ; and that the Church in a few years, perhaps soon, will rejoice and will congratulate you. And you yourselves know it well ; you have already met Dominican Fathers here and there who, sorrowing to see their Order destroy itself, encourage you and tell you : "You're right : carry on ! stand fast !"

I am convinced then that the grace of God also will be with you, that vocations will come, that this house will truly prosper, and that it will be a shining beacon not only

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directed towards the salvation of souls : "*prima lex, salus animarum*", the first law in the Church is the salvation of souls.

In certain circumstances then, historical circumstances which don't depend on us, of which we are simply the witnesses — stupefied witnesses, astounded witnesses, taken woefully by surprise — we have the duty to make provision for the salvation of souls. And such is the duty of every priest, of every bishop. And that is why, if in these circumstances the letter of the law is against us, the fundamental principles of the law are for us. Because, as I said to you a moment ago, the Church cannot do without the religious Orders ! The Church cannot do without the testimony to her holiness. The Church would be no longer holy if she had not those souls who consecrate themselves irrevocably to God. If there were no more Carmels, if there were no more Benedictines, if there were no more Dominicans, no more Jesuits, no more religious Orders, ah then the Church would no longer show her holiness. Now that is an essential mark of the Church. And it is the one which is the most convincing. For simple souls, it is the holiness of the Church which is more important than all her other marks, more apparent and more attractive. Simple souls are convinced by that holiness which is manifest in souls who consecrate themselves to God.

So we think it is entirely lawful, my dear friends, that you should gather here, and that you should ask Saint Dominic to give you the grace of his Order in following his principles, the principles that Saint Dominic put in his

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for this region but for the whole of France. May your example, may your preaching, preaching which has converted many millions of unbelievers — when one reflects on what the children of Saint Dominic have done in South America for example, it is wonderful ! With the children of Saint Francis it was they who converted all the countries of South America.

When I was in Mexico last January, I could see for myself the convents of Dominicans and of Franciscans all over that land. In spite of the persecutions which have raged for fifty years in that poor country of Mexico (convents have been sacked, priests and religious brothers and sisters killed, congregations driven out) in spite of all, one can still see the admirable traces of that presence. It is they who converted these pagan peoples.

So, seeing that we are living in a time when it is necessary to make conversions anew, you will be these apostles, apostles at the same time of the great and of the little ones ; you will go to carry that grace of the Gospel which will make our France once more a Christian France.

We shall ask today, shall we not, my very dear brothers, particularly during this Holy Mass, all of us together and all of you gathered here, we shall ask that Saint Dominic may come into this house and that he prepare the way here for the Blessed Virgin Mary, for Our Blessed Lady to whom he had so great a devotion, he who spread so fervently the practice of the Rosary : you also will be the devotees of the Virgin Mary ! She will protect you and will help you in your preaching for the

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greater good of souls and for the greater glory of the Church.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.
Amen”

**Declaration of Archbishop Lefebvre
on November 21, 1974.**

The doctrinal charter of the Dominican Third Order of the priory of la Haye-aux-Bonshommes is exactly and in all points the declaration of His Grace Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre of November 21, 1974 :

“We hold firmly with all our heart and with all our mind to Catholic Rome, Guardian of the Catholic Faith and of the traditions necessary to the maintenance of this faith, to the eternal Rome, mistress of wisdom and truth.

We refuse on the other hand, and have always refused, to follow the Rome of Neo-Modernist and Neo-Protestant tendencies which became clearly manifest during the Second Vatican Council, and after the Council, in all the reforms which issued from it.

In effect, all these reforms have contributed and continue to contribute to the destruction of the Church, to the ruin of the priesthood, to the abolition of the Sacrifice of the Mass and the Sacraments, to the disappearance of the religious life, and to a naturalistic and Teilhardian teaching in the universities, in the seminaries, in catechetics, a teaching deriving from Liberalism and

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The only attitude of fidelity to the Church and to Catholic doctrine appropriate for our salvation is a categorical refusal to accept this Reform.

That is why, without any rebellion, bitterness, or resentment we pursue our work of priestly formation under the guidance of the never-changing Magisterium, convinced as we are that we cannot possibly render a greater service to the Holy Catholic Church, to the Sovereign Pontiff, and to posterity.

That is why we hold firmly to everything that has been consistently taught and practiced by the Church and codified in books published before the Modernist influence of the Council concerning faith, morals, divine worship, catechetics, priestly formation, and the institution of the Church, until such time as the true light of tradition dissipates the gloom which obscures the sky of the eternal Rome.

Doing this, with the grace of God, the help of the Virgin Mary, Saint Joseph, and Saint Pius X, we are certain that we are being faithful to the Catholic and Roman Church, to all of Peter's successors, and of being the *fideles dispensatores mysteriorum Domini Nostri Jesu Christi in Spiritu Sancto*.

† Marcel Lefebvre

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Protestantism which has been condemned many times by the solemn Magisterium of the Church.

No authority, not even the highest in the hierarchy, can compel us to abandon or to diminish our Catholic Faith, so clearly expressed and professed by the Church's Magisterium for nineteen centuries.

“Though it were we ourselves,” says Saint Paul, “though it were an angel from heaven that should preach to you a gospel other than the gospel we have preached to you, a curse upon him” (Gal. 1:8).

Is it not this that the Holy Father is repeating to us today ? And if there is a certain contradiction manifest in his words and deeds as well as in the acts of the dicasteries, then we cleave to what has always been taught and we turn a deaf ear to the novelties which destroy the Church.

It is impossible to profoundly modify the Lex Orandi without modifying the Lex Credendi. To the New Mass there corresponds the new catechism, the new priesthood, the new seminaries, the new universities, the “Charismatic” Church, Pentecostalism : all of them opposed to orthodoxy and the never-changing Magisterium.

This reformation, deriving as it does from Liberalism and Modernism, is entirely poisoned ; it derives from heresy and results in heresy, even if all its acts are not formally heretical.

It is therefore impossible for any conscientious and faithful Catholic to adopt this Reform and to submit to it in any way whatsoever.

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RULE

Put in writing only in 1285 by Munio de Zamora, seventh Master of the Order, it brings together the precepts given orally by Saint Dominic and which had a tendency to change because of the growing extent of the Third Order. So that our tertiary brothers may be reminded every day “from what rock they were hewn” (Isaias 51:1), here is the text of that Rule as it was sanctioned in 1439 by Pope Eugene IV, which he himself took from the Bull of Confirmation of Innocent VII in 1405.

“It is appropriate to the cares of our office to watch over the maintenance and preservation of all rights. That is why, considering the tenor of certain letters of Innocent VII, included in the collection of his Acts, and following the entreaties which have lately been addressed to us on behalf of our beloved children, the Brothers and Sisters of the Order of Penance of Friars Preachers, commonly called “(the Order) of Penance of Saint Dominic”, established in our town of Eugubio, hastening to acknowledge the reasons for the utility of these letters, which has caused the great desire of our children for their publication, we have had transcribed word for word and annexed to this present letter, following the request of the aforesaid Brothers and Sisters, these same letters, as follows :

Innocent, Bishop, Servant of the Servants of God
For Perpetual Memory.

The watchful care of the Apostolic See extends with most benevolent favour to persons who commit themselves assiduously, under the laws of regular observance, to the practices of Christian piety ; and, in order to maintain without alteration the wise regulations established to direct and sanctify their life, the Holy See is pleased to

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strengthen them with the weight of its authority. Thus a request has recently been presented to us on behalf of our beloved children the Brothers and Sisters of the Order of Friars Preachers, ordinarily called Brothers and Sisters of Saint Dominic, in which it was explained to us that they had up till now followed by praiseworthy custom, and that they were following still, a certain Rule or manner of religious life, in which it is known that a number of honourable statutes and precepts are found, reasonable and in accordance with regular discipline ; that, although that Order and the Brothers and Sisters who belong to it have already been accorded various privileges by the Apostolic See, nonetheless, for the greater consolidation of their Institute, and in order that, with the aid of the Most High, they may, mounting from excellence to excellence, be able to serve the Lord with a more perfect devotion, they further desire for that Rule or way of life the approval of the same Apostolic See. That is why, on behalf of the Brothers and Sisters of that Order, we have been humbly supplicated to vouchsafe, by a benevolence worthy of this See, to add to that Rule or regular manner of life the authority of Pontifical confirmation, and to prescribe that it should be henceforth observed in perpetuity by the said Brothers and Sisters, present and to come. Therefore, having gathered on each and every point still clearer information according to the full and faithful account of our venerable brother Angelus, Bishop of Ostia (to whom we had entrusted the inquiry, in order that he might make his report to us), yielding to the supplications that have been presented to us, and recognising as worthy of our approval the Rule or regular manner of life which we give here, transcribed clearly and distinctly, word for word, chapter by chapter, with the above-mentioned prescriptions and ordinances ; by our Apostolic authority, and from certain knowledge, we confirm them and place them under the protection of the present decree : and nonetheless we wish and ordain for all time coming, in perpetuity, that this same Rule or manner of regular life may be inviolably observed by those same Brothers and Sisters, present and to come. The tenor of the aforesaid Rule or way of life is as follows :

I — CONCERNING THOSE WHO OUGHT TO BE RECEIVED AND THEIR CHARACTERISTICS

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All the Brothers and Sisters of the said Fraternity will be clad in white and black garments, which will not be too costly, either in colour or material, as befitting the modesty of the servants of Jesus Christ. The cloaks and cowls of the Brothers will be black ; the tunics will be white, and the sleeves will come down to the wrist and will be closed. The belt will be of leather only, and the Sisters will wear it under their dresses. In their bags, shoes and other objects, they will avoid all worldly vanity. The veils and the coifs of the Sisters will be of white cloth, either linen or hemp.

III — CONCERNING THE BLESSING OF THE GARMENTS OR HABIT, AND THE MANNER OF RECEPTION INTO THE ORDER

The man who wishes to be admitted will be received in the chapter of the Fraternity or before the altar of the local church of the Friars Preachers by the Father Master or Director of the Fraternity or by his delegate. He will go down on his knees before him and humbly ask of him to be received, in the presence of some Friars Preachers, of the Prior of the Fraternity or whoever takes his place, and of the rest of the Brothers. The Father Director will first of all bless the habit of the man who is due to be received in this manner : *Ostende nobis, Domine, misericordiam tuam, etc. Dominus vobiscum etc. Oremus. Domine Jesu Christe, qui tegimen nostrae mortalitatis, etc.* The habit being blessed, the postulant will change into it in a side room ; when he has returned

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In the first place, so that the Order may be able to achieve continual and perpetual growth from good to better, which is known to depend essentially on the reception of well-disposed persons, we wish and ordain that no member may be admitted other than by the Master or Director, and by the Prior of the Fraternity, or with their full consent and with the approval of the majority of the professed Brothers of the Fraternity in the same place, but always after a close inquiry into his behaviour, his morals, his reputation, the purity of his faith, and even the zeal with which, as a true spiritual son of Saint Dominic, he shows himself solicitous in promoting and defending to the utmost of his strength the truth of the Catholic Faith. He ought, moreover, to settle his debts in full, if he has any, to be reconciled with his neighbour and to attend to preparing or making his last will and testament, following the counsel and advice of a wise confessor. The same inquiry should take place in regard to women who ask to enter the Order and, for those who are married, entry is forbidden except by the permission and consent of their husbands, consent which must be publicly confirmed. We wish that the same instruction be observed in regard to married men, unless there should be for them or for any among them some grounds of excuse which, in the opinion of wise men, may be judged lawful.

II — CONCERNING THE APPAREL OF THE BROTHERS AND SISTERS

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once more to the foot of the altar, and has knelt down in front of the Father Director, the latter will start the *Veni Creator*, which will be continued to the end by the Brothers in the congregation. Next, there is said : *Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison, Kyrie eleison. Pater noster, etc. Emitte spiritum tuum, etc. Salvum fac servum tuum, etc. Dominus vobiscum, etc. Oremus. Deus, qui corda, etc. Praetende, Domine, etc.* After the response *Amen*, the Father Director will sprinkle with holy water the man who is taking the habit. Then all the Brothers will receive him with the kiss of peace. Women will be received before the altar in the same way as that described for the Brothers.

IV — CONCERNING THE MANNER OF PROFESSION

At the end of the year, or even sooner if the Father Director and the Prior, or those who have been appointed by them, and also the majority of the professed Brothers, judge the novice fit to be admitted, he will be received to profession, which he will make in this manner : *To the honour of Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and of Saint Dominic, I, Brother N., in your presence, Reverend Father N., Director of the Third Order of Penance of Saint Dominic, established in this town of N., make my profession and promise that I wish to live according to the Rule and the statutes of the Third Order of the Brothers and Sisters of Penance of Saint Dominic, until death.* Women will make

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