



ACTS OF THE 9TH ECLDF ASSEMBLY BOLOGNA 22 – 25 May 2014

Introduction

The European Council of Lay Dominican Fraternities 2011-2014, as elected in Caleruega was composed of:

Ruth Anne Henderson	President
Jean Michel Solente	Secretary
José A. Muñoz Mata	Treasurer
Jacinta O'Donnell	Communication officer
Leny Beemer- de Vos	Formation officer

As European member of ICLDF Klaus Bornewasser was elected.

Bro. David Kammler was for two and a half years our Promoter General.

After his term ended in September 2013 he was succeeded by Bro. Rui Carlos Lopez.

In Caleruega the Assembly changed in the Statutes the term of ECLDF members from 3 to 4 years. The term of the ECLDF elected in Caleruega however was still, in conformity with the former Statutes, for 3 years.

After a year Jacinta O'Donnell resigned from the Council for personal reasons. Eva Zudorova, who had the next largest number of votes at the elections of Caleruega, immediately accepted her membership of ECLDF. She became the new Communication officer. The ECLDF members came from five different countries and became a good team, working hard but also with fraternal attention to the personal and family circumstances of every member, united in prayer.

In these Acts of the Bologna Assembly information will be brief, whereas more detailed reports are made and published on the ECLDF website.

Assembly delegates and other participants

At the Assembly 20 of the 27 Provinces/Vicariates were represented and entitled to vote in the Electoral Body (article II.D.3). Sadly, seven Provinces/Vicariates could not send a delegate:

1. Croatia, Province of Croatia
2. France, Province of Toulouse
3. Italy (South), Province San Tommaso d'Aquino
4. Italy (Central), Province Santa Caterina
5. Spain, Province of Bética
6. Spain, Province of España
7. Spain, Province of Aragón

With delegates, promoters and observers the Assembly had altogether 41 participants and several guests (Francesco Andriulli, Robert Mickens, and Bro. Bruno Cadore with his secretary; at lunch on the day of the Translation we also had the Prior Provincial of San Domenico in Italia, Br Fausto Arici). On the evening of 23 May there was a meeting with a group of the local Dominican Family, brethren and Lay Dominicans, in the Collegio.

Assembly accommodation

Members of the Assembly were accommodated at the Collegio Universitario S. Tommaso D'Aquino, Via S. Domenico 1, in Bologna.

Plenary meetings and morning prayers were held in aula 2 of the Faculty of Theology in the Priory.

Group meetings and the meditation with the Pilgrim Image were in rooms in the Collegio Mass was celebrated three times in the Basilica at the tomb of St. Dominic, once in the Chapter room of the Priory. Vespers were in the Basilica S. Domenico together with the

EUROPEAN COUNCIL OF LAY DOMINICAN FRATERNITIES

brethren.

Report of the activities of the ECLDF members in the past 3 years

- Semi-annual meetings of the Council members in Paris (France), Chieri (Italy), Estavayer-le-Lac (Switzerland), Rome (Italy), Bologna (Italy). During these meetings the Council also met with local Lay Dominicans and members of the Dominican Family. In Rome at Santa Sabina, there was a special meeting with the Master of the Order Bro. Bruno Cadore.
- A working group was composed by the formation officer with members of different European countries, who made an inventory and framework for initial and permanent formation on behalf of European Lay Dominicans.
- Visits and meetings of ECLDF members with fraternities in other Provinces/Vicariates: United Kingdom, Tsjechie, Ukraine/Russia, Belgium South, Portugal, Germany.
- Meeting with Sister Ginevra Rossi o.p., who was at the time secretary of IDYM
- Publishing a regular newsletter at least twice a year
- Taking care of the financial situation of the ECLDF in several ways, asking all Provinces/Vicariates for the annual contributions. Funds were also requested by means of donations, while crowd-funding on the site was a trial for other kinds of donations. At every ECLDF meeting a financial overview was supplied by the treasurer. A financial report was sent to all Bologna delegates and after the Assembly a final financial report became available
- Beginning of a revision and update of the website and establishment of a Facebook page. Gabriel Silva (Portugal) was webmaster until mid-2013. After him Karin Bornhijm (Netherlands) was asked to take on this task, and made proposals for renewal. Realization of this depends on the financial position of ECLDF in the next few years.
- Regular updates of the (email-)address list of all Provinces and Vicariates of Europe
- Organizing a Pilgrimage of an icon of St. Dominic, especially made by Bro. Felix Hernandez Mariano for this purpose
- And last but not least: organizing the ECLDF Assembly in Bologna 22-26 May 2014

Notes and points of discussion on the reports of ECLDF 2011-2014

About Formation

A working group was composed with members of different Provinces/Vicariates: United Kingdom, Belgium-South, Netherlands, Teutonia. This working group twice spent a long weekend together. The working group was digitally supported by a resonance group with members from several countries spread over Europe. A final report was made and sent to the Bologna Assembly 2014. The Assembly was very positive about this framework. On special questions about methods and about the formation of formators, who have the responsibility for the formation in their fraternity, the working group added a list of suggestions in the final report. The biggest problem for European exchange and input on formation issues remains the language. Not every Lay Dominican can understand, read and speak the English language, which is used by ECLDF in accordance with the Statutes to communicate. So the formation working group asks every Province/Vicariate to find someone who is able and willing to make translations of the basic information. Literature must mostly be chosen from authors of the language of their own country. Many good books and articles written by members of the Dominican family are already translated in several European languages.

About Finances

After an alarming message from the ECLDF treasurer on the annual contributions of every Province/Vicariate more contributions came in, while at the Assembly some delegates offered their contributions in cash. The treasurer explained what finances are needed yearly to permit ECLDF members to do their jobs: meetings and visits with the costs of travelling

EUROPEAN COUNCIL OF LAY DOMINICAN FRATERNITIES

and accommodation, postal costs or even carriage costs (as for the Pilgrim Image), costs of preparing materials for the Assembly, etc.

The costs per head for the Bologna Assembly were kept as low as possible, but as the Caleruega ECLDF Assembly decided to have the next ECLDF Assembly in Bologna, the chosen accommodation was the best possibility. ECLDF had to decide, because of costs and because of accommodation possibilities, not to have any interpreter at all.

Merchandising some articles at the Bologna Assembly (T-shirts, Murano crosses) was also a source of income. All together ECLDF members can manage to do their tasks if every Province/Vicariate contributes the annual fee.

About secretary work, communication and website

For a good communication between the ECLDF and the European Provinces/Vicariates and communication among the European Provinces/Vicariates mutually it is necessary to have a good system of addresses, council functions, etc. That is why the Assembly was asked to give good information to the ECLDF, especially when there are Council changes, special meetings, chapters, days of study, festivities, etc.

In this context the website was discussed. Karin Bornhijm explained that for the younger generation a more modern and active site is needed to be attractive and informative. She can only be the webmaster if she is supported by at least two 'detectives', reporters, who will collect and write information and articles on any news from the Provinces/Vicariates.

All delegates were asked to ensure that they send as much information as possible regarding what is going on in their Province/Vicariate to the ECLDF email address info@ecldf.net.

The ECLDF in their turn must inform other Dominican entities of the Dominican Family and the general website of the Order.

About language matters

The Statutes (II.E.d) concerning the elections of a new ECLDF require that nominees be able to speak and write English. Since the ECLDF Assembly in Vienna (1998) the text became even stronger, asking that they not only be able to speak and write the English language, but also at least one of the other official languages of the Order. In the Bologna Assembly it was decided by vote, after discussions about the language issue, to change the Statutes on this point to only the English language.

Language remains a problem, because the Council must be able to communicate within the Council as with all European Province/Vicariates. The choice of the English language is evident, because this is the most widely known and used language in all European countries where it is not the native language. Where European Lay Dominicans have not the skills themselves of speaking and writing English, the ECLDF asks them firmly to find somebody in their Province/Vicariate to help with translations.

ICLDF

Klaus Bornewasser was elected in Caleruega as the next European member of the ICLDF, starting this job in June 2012. In this function he succeeded Eva Kameniarová, who was the European member of the ICLDF until this date. The council term in the ICLDF is three years, without the possibility of a second term, as is possible in the ECLDF.

ICLDF has a meeting once a year in one of the continents. ICLDF had intended to have an ICLDF Assembly again, as decided in 2007 at the Assembly of Buenos Aires, after ten years in 2017. Because of the Jubilee activities of the Order it may be changed to 2018.

Klaus explained that it is impossible to have any progress in the work of ICLDF within only a term of three years for each council member. He pleaded for an extension of the council term until the next ICLDF Assembly. Then the Assembly can change the Statutes giving the possibility of a second term, as is possible in the ECLDF. After discussion Bro. Rui asked the Master of the Order, Bro. Bruno Cadoré permission for such an extension, which he gave on the last day of the Bologna Assembly. In the meantime the Assembly decided to elect another European member for the ICLDF in case the permission of the Master would not come and if Klaus would have reasons to leave the ICLDF in the following years.

EUROPEAN COUNCIL OF LAY DOMINICAN FRATERNITIES

General Promoter

Bro. David Kammler o.p. was General Promoter for the Laity until September 2013. He was present during all the ECLDF meetings and a great support in the background. The reports of his international meetings and activities were very informative and lively.

Bro. Rui Carlos Lopes o.p. succeeded him. Bro. Rui unfortunately couldn't be at the Council meeting in Bologna in March 2014, but he met the ECLDF president Ruth Anne Henderson several months before the Assembly, in Chieri. The other ECLDF members met him for the first time at the Assembly. He was warmly welcomed. He reflected on what it means to be a part of the Order, of the Dominican Family as brothers and sisters. He considers himself a servant and a link between the laity and the brethren, nuns and sisters. He wants to have more insight in the coming years into what is going on in all Provinces/Vicariates of Europe. He told us about the coming activities for the Jubilee of the Order and recommended the Assembly delegates to be involved and to watch the special Jubilee site. Finally he called for reflection on our vocation.

Talks and discussions on two specific issues

- **Call to dialogue with all humanity**
- **Youth Movement and the Dominican laity**

Robert Mickens, Vatican watcher and journalist, now writing for the *National Catholic Reporter* (USA) and for the online journal *Global Pulse*, gave a talk about Pope Francis and his call to dialogue with all humanity. Three themes from the exhortation 'Evangelii Gaudium' of Pope Francis were expounded:

- The witness of God's mercy
- The dialogue with all humanity, especially with other faiths and non-believers, in the first place listening to them, going to the periphery of society to meet the weak.
- The gospel of fraternity and justice. We do have a responsibility for each other facing the problems of our time.

About these issues groups talked together and exchanged experiences, reflecting on the possibilities of doing more at the place where you are '*Taking the friendship of Christ to the margins of society*'.

José Alberto de Blas, Secretary of IDYM (International Dominican Youth Movement) had been invited to be the speaker at the next talk about Youth Movement and the Dominican Laity, together with Francesco Andriulli, a former member of the IDYM and now a Lay Dominican. José broke his leg shortly before the Assembly and his talk was given with a Skype connection, while Francesco added the talk with his experiences. IDYM is recognized by the Order as an official branch. IDYM has a structure with a council, statutes, etc. But only in Spain and England this structure is reality. In many other Provinces/Vicariates they are not organized in that way and many Provinces/Vicariates do not even have any Dominican youth movement. The question to the European Dominican Laity is, if and how Lay Dominicans are involved with young people. Are young people part of the mission of European Lay Dominicans?

Again there were talks together in groups about these questions and again many good experiences but also problems were exchanged. Obviously it is not easy for 'old' fraternities to find contact with young people. And young people will not easily relate to structures not of their own making. A call to be more open and flexible for young people was heard, asking Lay Dominican Fraternities to build a relationship with young people and listen to their questions, even while we have not answers either.

Liturgies

Every day the Assembly had morning prayer with short meditations by members of the ECLDF. Every evening for Vespers the Assembly joined the brethren of the Bologna Priory who invited delegates of the Assembly to give readings and prayers in their own language.

EUROPEAN COUNCIL OF LAY DOMINICAN FRATERNITIES

Mass was celebrated three times at the tomb of St. Dominic in the Basilica, and once Mass was celebrated by the Master of the Order, Bro. Bruno Cadoré o.p. in the beautiful chapter house of the priory. All liturgies were supported by an ad hoc choir of delegates, led musically by Dominique Lawalrée, a Lay Dominican from Belgium South. Around the Pilgrim Image of St. Dominic there was a meditation with a specially composed litany of Dominican Saints.

ECLDF Statutes

The council had sent the proposals of changes in the Statutes to the delegates in advance of the Assembly. The parts that are highlighted in yellow are the modifications on the basis of discussion in Caleruega. The texts highlighted in green are proposals from the present Council. An extra proposal was added concerning the article II.A.1a.

The Assembly took the following decisions about the proposals by voting. Before voting all the authorization letters of the delegates were handed over to the President.

Article II.A.1a:

It was: Each Province and Vicariate shall send two lay delegates to the Assembly.
The original proposal: Each Province and Vicariate shall send two Lay Dominicans, in temporary or final profession, as delegates to the Assembly.
Put to the vote: Each Province and Vicariate may send two Lay Dominicans, in temporary or final profession, as delegates to the Assembly.

Outcome: 23 in favour and 1 abstention. The amendment is adopted.

Article II.A.5b:

It was in the original proposal: II.A.5.b.: The Province or Vicariate having no Provincial Council may be invited to send a representative to the Assembly. This representative will have no vote.
Put to the vote: II.A.5.b.: The Province or Vicariate having no Provincial Council may be invited to send a representative of their choice to the Assembly. One such representative shall have a vote.

The mandate of the representative for voting is secured in the authorization letter of the Province or Vicariate.

Outcome: 23 in favor and 1 against. The amendment is adopted.

Article II.E.5d:

It was: II.E.5.c.: Nominees must be able to speak and write English and to understand one or more of the other official languages of the Order.
The original proposal, which was put to the vote: II.E.5.d.: Nominees must be able to speak and write English

Outcome: 20 in favor, 3 against, 1 abstention. The amendment is adopted.

All the parts that are highlighted in yellow and green were accepted by the Assembly unanimously without any comment.

Elections

After nominations and the traditional tractatus the elections took place on Sunday morning 25 May 2014. The new ECLDF was elected for 4 years.

There were 10 nominees for the ECLDF

- Aksel Misje
- Arnaud Kientz

EUROPEAN COUNCIL OF LAY DOMINICAN FRATERNITIES

- Dita Zdislava Kralova
- Margret Burkart
- Dominique Lawalree
- Eva Zudorova
- Felix Hoffmann
- Leny Beemer
- Olga Rozhnikova
- Damien McDonnell

and 3 nominees for the ICLDF:

- Jose Antonio Muñoz Mata
- Klaus Bornewasser
- Dita Zdislava Kralova

In three rounds the Assembly elected as the new council:

- Eva Zudorova (Slovakia, second term)
- Leny Beemer (Netherlands, second term)
- Olga Rozhnikova (Russia, first term)
- Aksel Misje (Norway, first term)
- Arnaud Kientz (France, first term)

The new ECLDF will decide on the different roles within the Council at their first meeting in the Dominican priory in Huissen, Netherlands at the beginning of October 2014.

For the European member of the ICLDF the Assembly elected - with the permitted extension by the Master of the Order- Klaus Bornewasser. As 'reserve' José Muñoz Mata was elected.

Meeting with the Master of the Order Bro. Bruno Cadore

After asking which issues the Assembly delegates would propose, Bro. Bruno gave several points to reflect on:

- The Dominican Family should consider itself a preaching community within the possibilities and situation of where the specific members are living
- Lay Dominicans are preachers of the Word of God within the Church, partners in the mission of the Order
- Dominican Communities should be open and welcoming, happy to meet many different people
- Community is an essential element, the hope for the future
- Formation can only bear fruit if it is done in friendship as disciples of Jesus. The Word of God has to be the centre of formation
- The Dominican Order needs everybody's experiences to work and to preach in an evangelical way
- Beyond identity unity is more fruitful
- Think about how to promote justice and peace

Final proposals and remarks

For the next ECLDF Assembly two places are proposed: a Dominican priory in Huissen (Netherlands) and a priory in La Tourette (France, near Lyon).

Needed: sleeping accommodation for 50 or more people, a big room for plenary meetings, some smaller rooms for groups and a place for liturgies and personal prayers.

Evaluation forms asked the participants of the Assembly questions about the organization and the programme of the Assembly, the liturgies, the accommodation, the food and asked for comments and suggestions. These forms gave a good insight into the feelings and experiences of the delegates during the Assembly, which were overall very positive.

The new ECLDF will consider the remarks for the organization of the next ECLDF Assembly.

EUROPEAN COUNCIL OF LAY DOMINICAN FRATERNITIES

Appendixes published on the ECLDF website

- Programme of the Assembly
- Sheets with the presentation of the representatives at the Assembly
- Daily reports of the Assembly
- Talks/presentations by Robert Mickens and José Alberto de Blas
- Financial reports
- Report of the formation working group
- Statutes as highlighted with yellow and green and the Statutes as agreed by the Assembly
- Liturgies and homilies during the Assembly
- Newsletters 2011-2014

Signatures:



Ruth Anne Henderson
President ECLDF 2011-2014

Jean-Michel Solente
Secretary ECLDF 2011-2014

José A. Muñoz Mata
Treasurer ECLDF 2011-2014

Eva Zudorova
Communication Officer ECLDF 2011-2014

Leny Beemer- de Vos
Formation Officer ECLDF 2011-2014