

Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul

Goa, India, 25 January 2023

Prot n. 50/22/677 Jubilee St. Thomas Aquinas


Dear Brothers and Sisters of the Dominican Family,

We celebrate the 7th Centenary of the canonization of our esteemed brother St. Thomas Aquinas, *Doctor of the Church*, on 18 July 2023 and his 750th death anniversary on 7 March 2024. We gratefully remember that in 1974, St. Paul VI wrote the Apostolic Letter *Lumen Ecclesiae* to commemorate the 7th centenary of the death of the Angelic Doctor.

In order to enkindle further our spirit of gratitude to the Lord, the Giver of all graces, we petitioned the Holy See for the granting of **plenary indulgence** (see attached rescript) on the properly disposed faithful who will participate in the Eucharistic celebrations organized by the Dominican Family in our churches and schools on the important occasions of the jubilee of the canonization and death of St. Thomas Aquinas, and on the faithful who will make pilgrimages to Churches, shrines and oratories under his patronage. The double jubilee celebrations will be from 28 January 2023 to 28 January 2025. Please provide the necessary catechesis on the meaning of indulgence as well as the conditions prescribed by Holy Mother Church for its worthy reception.

As a Doctor of the Church, St. Thomas remains an excellent model and teacher for us today. As St. Paul VI noted, the Angelic Doctor conceived of "the relationship between the whole created order and the order of religious truths and especially of the Christian message" not in terms of opposition but a of certain *ordered harmony*: "Grace does not diminish nature but brings it to fulfilment, while nature is subordinate to grace, reason to faith and human love to divine charity"¹. Moreover, in faithful fidelity to St. Dominic who either *spoke with God* (prayer) or *about God* (preaching), Thomas enunciated a way to hold in fruitful tension the contemplative (study and common prayer) and apostolic dimensions of our Dominican life: "For even as it is better to enlighten than merely to shine, so is it better to give to others the fruits of one's contemplation than merely to contemplate"². Mindful of this important dimension of Dominican spirituality, our general chapters have reminded us to maintain always the harmony and synergy between our Dominican life and mission.

May our celebration of the double jubilee in the life of St. Thomas propel us to serve God and the Church with great dedication and profound humility - he told Reginald - "*mihi videtur ut palea*, all that I have written seems like straw to me"; and to seek no reward in this world except to be with God - *Domine, non nisi Te*, "Lord, nothing but you."


Fr. Gerard Francisco Timoner III, OP
Master of the Order

¹ *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 1, a. 8, ad 2.

² *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, q 188, a. 6.