



**ORDO PRÆDICATORUM  
CURIA GENERALITIA**

*Feast of St. Albert the Great  
Rome, 15 November 2020*

*Prot. 32/20/549 Berkeley Dominican School*

To: **PRIORS PROVINCIAL AND REGENTS OF STUDIES**

Re: Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology of the Holy Name Province at Berkeley, California USA Offers Unique Opportunity for Dominican Education

**Dear Brothers,**

A truly Dominican formation is indispensable for Dominican life and preaching, it is of consequential importance to the mission and sustainability of our Order. In particular, we want to ensure that our more than 800 student friars in initial formation around the world are prepared to preach the Gospel by providing them a philosophical and theological education second to none. We want to bring them the best of our intellectual tradition, especially the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas; and with that foundation, to provide a robust engagement with contemporary scholarship and culture in a manner that is mutually enriching. Such an authentic Dominican formation which stresses the relationships among philosophy, theology, and our preaching is essential to our own viability, our service to the Church, and our contribution the world.

My predecessors have underscored that the friars are *sons of different provinces, yet brothers in the Order*. It is our collective responsibility to provide every student brother a rigorous education and formation for the sake of preaching the Gospel. Our fraternity implies that each brother's preaching represents the entire Order. So, we may ask: if each brother does not have equal access to the fullness of Dominican formation, how is our fraternal communion as preachers to be fully realized across provinces of different countries and cultures? There is a need for centers of study to serve not only the sons of their own provinces, but their brothers throughout the Order.

Thus, I am delighted that the Province of the Most Holy Name of Jesus has thoughtfully and generously responded to the call of the last General Chapter by making the Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology (DSPT) accessible to student brothers from other provinces. It is one of the leading centers of study in the Order that has the capacity to provide brothers in initial formation from around the world philosophical education and theological reflection in the context of common fraternal life.

The DSPT has recently announced **the launch of the newly developed formation program, PHILOI International**. Commencing in the fall of 2021, DSPT will offer a Dominican education and spiritual formation, in accordance with the *Ratio Studiorum Generalis*, to student brothers from provinces around the world. The School is a member of the Graduate Theological Union and


provides an outstanding academic community, including cross registration with the renowned University of California, Berkeley. With proximity to the Silicon Valley corridor, the School extends an opportunity for student brothers to engage in philosophical studies on the frontier of some of the world's most dynamic technological advancements and innovation, such as social media and research and development in Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Projects like these and their applications have immediate and immense personal and social implications for humanity. Their influence is both local and global. That is why members of the faculty at DSPT are bringing philosophy to bear on these contemporary issues. Logic, metaphysics, anthropology, and ethics are critical in all ages, but their global potential to enrich humanity and open the way to the truth of the Gospel has never been greater. Moreover, their pedagogical method follows in our Dominican tradition specifically through the integration of philosophy and theology, with not only specialists but also a faculty who are well-equipped to teach across both disciplines. I hope you agree, DSPT is well positioned and stands ready to help us meet our need.

I strongly and confidently commend the Dominican School's new program to you, to provide our brothers with a rich Dominican education in the tradition of St. Thomas Aquinas. Moreover, the Studentate Community at St. Albert's Priory is a vibrant intercultural community that welcomes student brothers from other provinces. Watch their website ([dspt.edu/philoi](http://dspt.edu/philoi)) for further developments and to find other helpful information such as application instructions for interested brothers, how to apply for financial assistance, and more information about the spiritual and cultural life of the brothers who will participate in this program.

Preaching the Gospel for the salvation of souls is our core mission, and this divine mandate requires that we as Dominicans be immersed in study, with reason enriched by faith. We are called to exercise our charisms, employ our talents, and learn new skills to teach and preach the Truth in charity with confidence and passion. In our ongoing efforts to provide Dominican formation to all, the launch of the Berkeley program is a great step, with great promise.

Your brother,

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