



International Dominican Foundation

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Lent Holds a Hidden Image



This image of “Christ Crowned with Thorns” in Livorno, Italy is attributed to the Dominican artist Fra Angelico. The image draws us into both its suffering and its sadness. It is the face of humanity. Christ’s Incarnation has embraced the whole of humankind and in his suffering Christ reflects the hidden images of our own misery. Today more than ever the human spirit suffers and it suffers from a torment of our own making. Look for a moment into the eyes depicted here and you will see the parched burning look of mercy denied. See in his brow the confusion of an inhumanity that has haunted the centuries. Note how his head is mockingly crowned with thorns, the blood soaked hair trails down like tears and his lips silently pleading. This is the face of suffering, the face of terror, the face that reflects our own horror. Yet around this face is a golden halo that stands in defiance of death and suggests the cross on which Christ’s suffering won for us our salvation. The monograms IHS and XPS in the halo name him Jesus, Christ, the humanity and divinity of the one who suffers for us. His collar defiantly but faintly declares in Latin ‘the King of Kings’.

We are abhorred by this image of pain yet know that it holds a hidden image. Look closely at Christ’s eyes. At first we wish to look away but are drawn to them for they are the eyes of God’s compassion, God’s mercy. As our world seems again to grow in its capacity to inflict suffering on the innocent ones, this Lent is an ideal time for all of us to see the hidden images of Christ’s suffering. Let us make in our hearts room for the suffering Christ that is echoed in the suffering of our brothers and sisters. Though our age seems to have forgotten the One who suffered, died and rose, God has not forgotten us. Lent helps us to remember, to see the hidden mystery



IDEO’s activities in Cairo (Egypt)

from fr Jean Jacques Pérennès

The Dominican Institute for Oriental Studies established in Cairo since 1953 has received as its mission from the Holy See and the Dominican Order to build links with Muslim scholars and research in Egyptian as well as the Middle-East culture, without any proselytism.

At the moment, its staff comprises 10 friars, permanently based in Cairo, and a few others coming and going on a part time basis. All of them are fluent in Arabic and have or are getting a PhD degree in Arabic/Islamic sciences. They are all involved in research programs either in Egypt or abroad. A part of

their works are published in the review of IDEO, *MIDEO*.

The main activity in Cairo consists in its library, one of the most famous in the Middle-East: 160,000 volumes with a large collection of scientific journals. A staff of 8 full time persons, under the supervision of a Dominican friar, makes this unique resource available for researchers in Masters or PhD studies. Most of the readers are Muslims, coming from local Universities.



The catalogue of the library is available on Internet (www.ideo-cairo.org). In 2012, IDEO has started an ambitious project of integrating in its *al kindi* program the new international rules of library cataloging (FRBR/RDA).

To help the students who often lack methodology and preparation for research, the Institute organizes a monthly seminar of methodology in Arabic, which is of great help for the students. IDEO offers as well several times a year conferences to a larger public, to help understand the ongoing evolution of Islamic societies and the challenges they are facing.

The Dominican friars of IDEO are called as well to lecture on the possibilities and difficulties of the interreligious dialogue, in confident relationship with the local Church and the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue based in Rome.

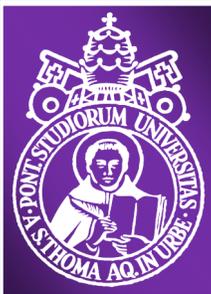
The goal is to build bridges and develop fraternal relationships through study. This is of great importance especially in our times of growing religious fundamentalism.



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My First Day in Rome by Karl Stuebe Part 1/2

17 hours later I was finally in Rome. Jet lag was no match for the excitement of the new semester that lay ahead. But first I must Skype home as my mother made me promise “as soon as I landed”. My luggage, and laptop, is in Lisbon? No problem I will come back to the airport at the appointed time after meeting with my new landlord. A 15 euro ticket from the airport-Rome: my very first Italian purchase YEAH BABY! Train ride over, now I must figure out the ticket machine for the urban Metro...so many coins, I was beginning to miss paper money, but I finally managed to extract a ticket.



I thought you said the deposit was only two month’s rent? I guess utilities need to be covered too and I have no alternative so let’s go the ATM...I hope my card works. Success! I withdrew my money without using the ‘English’ option on the ATM and I only had to try thrice. And the receipt had an intricate pattern on it...I wonder if the international transaction fee, the bank fee, and the currency exchange fee paid for that pattern. Can’t wonder about receipt-stationery right now I must collect my luggage at the airport!

Oh the Metro ticket has expired time to dig through all the strange coin denominations for another ticket. Once again 15 euro to the airport. Why was the luggage claim desk closed? According to my Italian-English dictionary the sign said they would re-open in two days. After a quick 4 laps around the airport I finally found someone who looked up my luggage number. Berlin? Okay in 2 hours? Grazie Signore. Geez not even a Wolfgang Puck stand in the airport. I best head back to the apartment; the jet lag is beginning to hit me and I am famished. 15 euro for the train...I think you are beginning to see the pattern.

The end of the story is that after 6 roundtrip journeys to the airport my luggage arrived after having done the grand tour of Europe without me. The point of this reflection is not to carp about the Italian transport system, airports, or landlords. I expected that these differences in culture and business would accompany a few financial surprises during my time in Rome and I thought I had prepared for it. Students can only base their expectations on past experience, pre-arrival research, and scenarios they are able to imagine. For example: my past experience at university saw my grants and loans cover most of the fees but in Italy none were accepted unless I wanted to sell my soul to a private loan shark; my very in-depth research of the immigration process confirmed I only needed to pay for X and that was it, but once in the immigration office I discovered that to get X I needed to cover other fees; I could not have imagined how difficult it would be for someone like me with such a diverse resume to find work in the Euro-crisis climate since I had never experienced such austerity before. (to be continued) [Karl’s story reflects what many students face and how your support benefits their study.]



Comments on BEST

[Interest in BEST is growing. The following comments by Fr. Justin Taylor, SM on BEST were made in Rome the 16th of November 2011, Fr Taylor was ordained a Catholic priest in 1966, obtaining his PhD from the University of Cambridge in England in 1972. He is also Co-Director of a research seminar in New Testament at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. [More](#)]



I would like to conclude this lecture with a personal reflection. As I researched the subject, I was very struck by points in common between the old commentaries of Cornelius a Lapide and Calmet and Migne’s Cursus, on the one hand, and on the other the Ecole biblique’s project – now officially that of the Order of Preachers – The Bible in Its Traditions. This project, like those older works, but no doubt more systematically than they, means to present the diversity of the traditions in which the Biblical writings have been received – the ancient text and versions – and also the diversity of the traditions that have received them: the Church Fathers, Greek, Latin and Syriac, later theologians, Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant, and also the Jewish tradition. Its full version will be available on line, with the possibility of many different sorts of printed editions derived from this. Despite the differences in presentation, I now have the feeling that the Bible in Its Traditions, as well as representing the best in recent and contemporary Biblical scholarship, including historical criticism, is also reaching and joining hands with an older tradition of Biblical commentary that has been neglected for most of the 20th century, owing no doubt to a preoccupation with critical issues. You could call it an exercise in the hermeneutics of continuity.



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International Dominican Foundation United States National Office ~ 1 Galleria Blvd., Suite 710-B ~ Metairie, LA 70001

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Many Thanks!