



Convocation 2015

Registration materials were sent to congregational communicators on January 8th. Registration and Market Place packets are also available on the [DSC website](#).

Paris 2015 and Counting . . .

On January 7th we distributed the first in our monthly series leading up to **Paris 2015**. As January is Human Trafficking Awareness month, we are educating on the connections between Climate Change and Human Trafficking. A prayer for community and personal use is included. Please feel free to share. There are more resources and information at [our website](#).

Annual Meeting

The Executive Committee of the DSC will hold its annual meeting in River Forest On January 23rd and 24th. You can find the members of this committee [on our website](#) if you have anything you would like to share with them.

2015 Now Is the Time



A Message from Pat Farrell, OP

“May you live in interesting times.” Is that a curse or is it blessing. Certainly as we look back we remember some of the very painful displays of human violence and disregard for human dignity, as well as that of Earth and all with who we share this planet that is our home. We remember with horror that there is even a need to call January Human Trafficking Awareness Month. The stories sent to us by our Delegation in Erbil remind us of our complicity in the events that have led to the “displacement” of these families.

Though we live in “interesting times,” these are not times for us to give up hope. They are times to bring our hope to bear in those places that seem most desperate. The poet Mzwakehe Mbuli writes:

*Now is the time to renew the barren soil of nature
Ruined by the winds of tyranny,
Now is the time.*

*Now is the time to commence the litany of hope,
Now is the time . . .*

The picture above is a musician in Dohuk. Where there is music, there is hope. Let us continue to bring both to our broken world.

Images from Our Family in Iraq



These containers are home



Arlene and the Director of CRS



Sr. Maria Hanna with Sr. Marcelline



Sr. Dusty with family in shelter

We Have Family in Iraq - by Roberta Popara, OP

In 2003 when the US led invasion of Iraq was eminent, Dominicans in North America proclaimed: "I Have Family In Iraq." This cry has been unceasing since then. And no one could have imagined what was to come the summer of 2014.

In June 23 of 2014, ISIS entered Iraq with a vengeance and as the terror unfolded over the summer, the lives of our Dominican family and all who lived in the Nineveh Plain was shattered. Tears have been shed by many of us, and with them came the obligation to get the Iraqi Sister's story told and heard. Thus the US Dominican Iraq Coordinating Committee reconvened and decided that a small delegation of sisters should go if the Iraqi Sisters felt it would be helpful. The Sisters did.

January 5th began the pilgrimage of Sisters Marcelline Koch, OP (Springfield), Arlene Flaherty, OP (Blauvelt) and Dusty Farnan, OP (Adrian). Here in their own words are some of their departing thoughts shared in an article for *Global Sisters Report*:

Marcelline Koch, OP Meister Eckhart wrote that "we are all meant to be mothers of God . . . for God is always needing to be born." As I place these words alongside the question in the Christmas message from the sisters in Iraq – "Where and how are we going to be born in this tough crisis in which we live?" – I know that I want to be about this birthing process. I want to visit our sisters and brothers, hear their stories, and let them know of our love and concern. As they have been for us in their suffering, I want the presence of our delegation, in the name of the Dominican Family, to be a sign of hope and solidarity.

Arlene Flaherty, OP As we U.S. Dominicans embark on our journey to Iraq, we hope that our presence among the Iraqi people will convey what words often cannot – "we have family in Iraq." Not only the U.S. Dominican Family, but countless men and women religious, church and interfaith communities, as well as Americans from all walks of life, send us to Iraq with this message of solidarity and support – "we are family."

Dusty Farnan, OP I feel an urgency to meet them, experience what they are experiencing and wondering If I could do what they are doing. I feel sent and called at the same moment by my sisters in the Adrian Dominican Congregation. They have blessed me in many ways with their tears, delight that we are going and somewhat hesitant. Each of us represents not only our Dominican congregation but all Dominicans, as well as our families.