



MISSION WEST

A newsletter for friends of the Dominican Friars, Province of the Most Holy Name of Jesus

SENT TO PREACH THE GOSPEL

- ✦ Dominicans Walk for Life
- ✦ A Saint in the Family:
Rev. Br. Matthew Wanner, O.P.,
and Servant of God Michelle Duppong
- ✦ SEEK24 and the Dominicans
- ✦ Do you know our Jubilarians?

THE QUOTABLE DOMINICAN



Fra Angelico Visited by the Angels, Paul Hippolyte Flandrin (1894).

Blessed Fra Angelico, O.P.

1395-1455

Patron of Catholic Artists

Feast Day: February 18

*“He who does Christ’s work
must stay with Christ always.”*

Bl. Fra Giovanni, O.P., better known as Fra Angelico, O.P., was a Dominican friar and painter in the early Renaissance. He prayed fervently while he painted and wept whenever he depicted Christ in pain. He was beatified by Pope St. John Paul II in 1982 and the pontiff declared him the Patron Saint of Artists in 1984.

DID YOU KNOW?

St. Peter Martyr, O.P., preacher of the true Faith and first canonized martyr of the Order of Preachers, wrote the beginning of the creed (Credo) on the ground with his own blood as he lay dying from the ax-blow of his assassin. His witness led to the conversion of his murderer, who became a Dominican friar himself.



*San Marco Missal 558 (Folio 41v),
Fra Angelico (1430).*

Cover Photo: Student brothers march at this year’s Walk for Life alongside tens of thousands of pro-life supporters in defense of the most vulnerable.

Our sincere gratitude is extended to all those who helped make this edition of the newsletter possible.



My dear brothers and sisters,

Christ is risen! He is risen, indeed!

I want to wish each of you a most blessed Easter season, the time when everything that we are and do as Christians finds its culmination in the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Sometimes it can be easy to let the events of salvation history drift into the abstract; sometimes we can confine God's actions to some ideal, sanitized world other than our own. But, my friends, this is not the way things really are! Our God came into our world—with all its joys and difficulties—became one of us, and came back from death, that universal fate which we know all too well.

This is a theme I discern in this season's issue of the Mission West newsletter: God's working of wonders among us, in our lives as they actually are; in this broken but beautiful world.

- In this issue, we learn about our own Br. Matthew Wanner's cousin, Servant of God Michelle Duppong, and how God builds up holy witnesses in our midst and in our own families.
- Br. Anselm Dominic LeFave shares about his experience at SEEK, a national conference for Catholic college students.
- We hear about the Convocation of the DSPT College of Fellows, which consists of lay people fulfilling the Second Vatican Council's call to sanctify the world through their work and expertise.
- We celebrate our beloved Jubilarian friars, who bear witness that discipleship of Christ must be pursued in the rhythm of life; in the ordinary and extraordinary events of passing years.

All these things witness to the work of God in our lives, as they actually are. And they all find their origin in the Resurrection of Christ, by which he transformed our ordinary and familiar sorrows into extraordinary occasions of glory.

Friends, please pray for us friars as we pray for you. And have a blessed Easter season!

In Christ and St. Dominic,

Fr. Christopher Fadok, O.P.
Prior Provincial

You Help the Dominicans Walk for Life

This past January, dozens of Dominican friars and sisters joined tens of thousands of pro-life supporters in the 20th annual West Coast Walk for Life. Thank you for your support, which helps us promote the dignity of all human life, from conception to natural death.





A Future Saint in the Family

Soon-to-be ordained Rev. Br. Matthew Wanner, O.P., credits his second cousin, Servant of God Michelle Duppong, with helping lead him to his vocation

Growing up, Rev. Br. Matthew Wanner, O.P., did not know his second cousin, Michelle, very well. He spent a little bit of time with her in high school, but it wasn't until they were studying at the same university that he got to know her. He was struck by her effect on those around her, and she would go on to have a profound impact on his life and future religious vocation.

“Michelle was never interested in drawing attention to herself,” Br. Matthew said. “She was always affable, joyful, and approachable.” These qualities, along with her missionary zeal, active evangelization, and constant defense of the unborn, speak to her holiness which attracted so many to her and marked her short life.

Servant of God Michelle Duppong

On the Feast of All Saints on November 1, 2022, Bishop David Kagan of the Diocese of Bismark formally opened the cause for canonization of Michelle Duppong and declared her a Servant of God.

Michelle Christine Duppong was born January 25, 1984, to Ken and Mary Ann Duppong. She was the fourth of six children and grew up on her family's farm in Haymarsh, North Dakota. She went on to study Horticulture at North Dakota State University (NDSU), where she became involved at the campus Newman Center and with the Fellowship of

Catholic University Students (FOCUS). After graduating, she decided to become a FOCUS missionary. During her six years as a missionary, she mentored hundreds of college students who gravitated toward her joy.

After serving as a FOCUS missionary, Michelle became the Director of Adult Faith Formation for the Diocese of Bismark in 2012. In autumn of 2014, she began experiencing sharp pains in her abdomen, which were discovered to be caused by stage four cancer, and she began a year of surgeries and hospital stays. This year of medical care was marked by Michelle's steadfast trust in God and by her focus on caring for those around her, including hospital staff who were tending to her.

Following a year of perseverance, Michelle began hospice care at home. While Michelle continued to pray for healing and God's plan, a religious sister who was assisting with respite care revealed that Michelle had told her that she would die on Christmas Day. On the evening of December 25, 2015, surrounded by family members, Michelle drew her last breath.



Michelle and Rev. Br. Matthew (pictured here) are second cousins. Her affable and joyful personality drew countless souls closer to the Lord.



All photos copyrighted by the Duppong family, used with permission from the Duppong family.

Her Impact on Br. Matthew

It wasn't until Br. Matthew and Michelle were both studying at North Dakota State University that they began to be friends: "I started spending time with her because she served as a Peer Minister at the Newman Center; she was working to build community within the student body," said Br. Matthew. "Michelle had the right personality for the position. She was very warm and outgoing."

Michelle heard that her second cousin was around the Newman Center and started to invite him to daily Mass and Adoration. The next year, she was instrumental in preparing Br. Matthew to serve as a Peer Minister. During this year, she started introducing Br. Matthew to religious brothers and priests, and invited him to enter deeper into his faith. The following summer was the first time Br. Matthew thought about the priesthood. Aside from a few priests whom he had been speaking with, Michelle was one of the very few who knew about this discernment. Michelle encouraged him to contact the Vocation Director for the Diocese of Bismarck, who, years later, would become Br. Matthew's spiritual director and steer him toward the Western Dominican Province.

"Part of the miracle of her story," said Br. Matthew, "is that she's someone who was very generous with God, and God blessed her abundantly. She wasn't encumbered by the fact that she didn't have a classic Christian formation. She was self-taught. A lot of her theological formation was just from reading books and praying, which would lead her to good insights. Part of her witness is that wisdom really can come through holy people, people who are pure, people who have access to wisdom that, in many cases, can surpass academics."

Br. Matthew spent the next five years as a diocesan seminarian. When he discerned that God was calling him toward religious life, Michelle helped him through his discernment, and introduced him to the Community of St. John where he spent the next five years. When he discerned that he was called in another direction, Michelle was in her last few months of life. "At that

moment, it was very important for me to connect with someone who knew me over the course of the many decisions that I made," Br. Matthew said, and he called Michelle. Even in her suffering, she was able to provide perspective and assured him of her prayers. Michelle passed away before she could see Br. Matthew join the Dominicans.

Reflecting upon his friendship with Michelle and her impact on his vocation, Br. Matthew said: "What was important is that there were specific moments where Michelle would open invitations to me. I don't think I ever said no. The moments in my life when I said yes to her were very grace-filled moments—I felt peaceful moving in whatever direction she steered me. She was a guide; she gave specific invitations and taught me specific lessons that prepared me for the path that I eventually was able to discover and persevere on."



Rev. Br. Matthew Wanner, O.P.

SAVE THE DATE

"I am immensely grateful to the generous benefactors who ensure a rigorous and comprehensive priestly formation program for our Dominican friars. Thank you for supporting our study so that we might serve more effectively as fully formed Dominicans in your midst. I am grateful to study in Rome this year, working on a licentiate in patristic theology with a specialization in the Syriac theological tradition!"

—Br. Matthew

May 4 - Solemn Vows of
Br. Benedict Mary Bartsch, O.P.
Br. Philip Neri Gerlomes, O.P.
Br. Luke Maria Lee, O.P.
Br. Francis Dominic Nguyen, O.P.

May 18 - DSPT Graduation at 1:00pm

May 25 - Ordinations to the Presbyterate

TO LEARN MORE VISIT OPWEST.ORG

Wanner Siblings Called to Serve

Br. Matthew's family has been blessed with vocations to the priesthood and religious life. His brother, Fr. Ben Wanner, is a priest for the Diocese of Bismark, and his sister, Sr. Thérèse Marie, is a religious sister with the Handmaids of the Heart of Jesus in New Ulm, Minnesota.

"I don't know why it is that God has blessed my family with multiple vocations," said Br. Matthew. "The easy answer is my parents were heroically generous with their lives, and they knew how to suffer. Their entire lives were spent looking for the good where it could be found and giving themselves to their family. We grew up in a family of nine children, and when you grow up in that environment, you realize that the marriage path is one of suffering. So is a religious path. So is the priesthood. There is a sense in which it's easier to move toward other types of sacrifices, when you see that this path also is a sacrifice. It detaches you to be able to move toward these other options, which for other people,

perhaps they don't have that sort of foundation. That principle has been fundamental for us."

The entire Wanner family also attended Mass regularly, while also frequenting the confessional. When the family would pray the rosary, everyone would gather around a lit candle. In the formative years of their education, the children were afforded easy access to Eucharistic Adoration. Br. Matthew also recalls his first pro-life march in Fargo in his early preteen years, which marked a strengthening of his resolve to align himself with Christ and his Bride, the Church.

"Concerning my siblings who were attracted toward marriage and raising children," said Br. Matthew, "I am deeply grateful for their witness and self-sacrificial commitments. The joy in their lives is very evident, and they have aided me immensely over the years in hidden ways as well as through encouraging me to join the Order of Preachers when the time was right."



The Wanner Family has been a gift of life and love to their community, and inspired three religious vocations from their family of nine children (not all shown).

“Do not be amazed! You seek Jesus of Nazareth, the crucified.
He has been raised.” —Mark 16:6



Christ Glorified in the Court of Heaven, Fra Angelico (1423-1424).

He is Risen, Indeed!

Reflections on the Cross and Resurrection

The cross is a sign that is contradicted. The cross is a sign of suffering and death, a sign of disgrace and shame. Even as Moses made a bronze serpent and mounted it on a pole and asked the people to look upon an image of their suffering, so we are asked to look upon an image of our suffering—an image of death, the wages of our sin.

And yet it is through that cross that we are saved; through that symbol of death that we are given eternal life; through that disgrace that we come to share in the glory of God.

And what makes that possible, what subverts the paradigm and turns even shame into triumph is that unfathomable love of God: that obedient love of Jesus for the Father, that sacrificial love of Christ for us all. It's not so much the death of Christ that saves us, it's the love with which he dies. It's not the amount of the suffering of Christ that takes away our sins, it's the love with which he suffers. And so, the cross becomes a sign of the love that brings our reconciliation to God. It leads then to

the Resurrection—that victory over death, that glorification far beyond what Adam and Eve had in the beginning—and we celebrate this week our exaltation in that victory and proof of God's love that is the Paschal Mystery.

We are told that we too need to take up our cross, take up our cross even daily and follow Christ. Often the image we have of taking up our cross is something rather passive, like we just have to bear the hardships we're given; trudge along as best we can. But that's not how Christ takes up his cross—he takes it up willingly; he embraces it even with joy—not because he loved suffering and death, but because he loves you and he loves me, and he knew the Easter triumph joy it would bring.

May we imitate what we have received! That all of our struggles and hardships and weaknesses might be like the Cross of our Lord: might be even a joy and exultation because we unite them to his cross and suffer them in love following the one who can lead us from death into the complete victory of eternal life.



**By Fr. Dominic David
Maichrowicz, O.P.**

*Pastor of Blessed
Sacrament Parish,
Seattle*



Dominicans at SEEK 2024

By Br. Anselm Dominic LeFave, O.P.

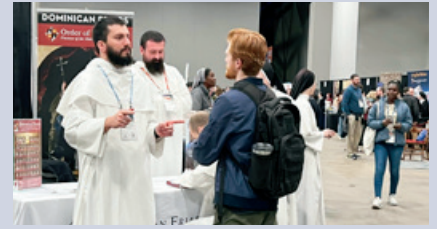
The last time I was at SEEK, I was a college student myself, having recently rediscovered the beauty of the Faith, and beginning to perceive the invitation of Jesus to devote myself to Him in religious life. This year, I returned to SEEK having since accepted that invitation, and it was a great joy to encounter young men and women who are being called by Our Lord to love and follow Him in their own ways.

Throughout the week, I was powerfully struck by the desire for Christ that openly burned in the hearts of so many of the students. Their questions for me and the other Dominicans about our life were full of hunger for truth and purpose, and I had many wonderful conversations with young people who have hope that in Christ there is a way out of the malaise and aimlessness which haunts their generation, that in Him lies true joy,

perfect love, and the final fulfillment of all their desires.

Nowhere was the love of these young people more visible than in prayer, especially Eucharistic Adoration. Throughout the week there was a constant stream of hundreds of people coming to spend time with their Divine Friend in the makeshift adoration chapel, and midway through the week there was an evening Holy Hour at which these students poured out their devotion and love in a powerful way.

I came away from my time at SEEK with a reinvigorated love for Christ in my own heart, and with great gratitude to Him for the ways in which He continues to bless us and draw us to Himself.



Br. Anselm joined thousands of Catholic young adults at the annual SEEK conference of the Fellowship of Catholic University Students. College students from across the country meet to begin or deepen their discipleship of Christ. It's here that many students get to experience the reality of a religious vocation for the first time.

The 2024 Convocation of the DSPT College of Fellows

In early February, the Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology (DSPT) hosted the first in-the-flesh convocation of its College of Fellows since before the pandemic. The College of Fellows is a group of prominent Catholic lay men and women who work in a variety of professions, including academics, lawyers, activists, and more, and who come together once a year to discuss and

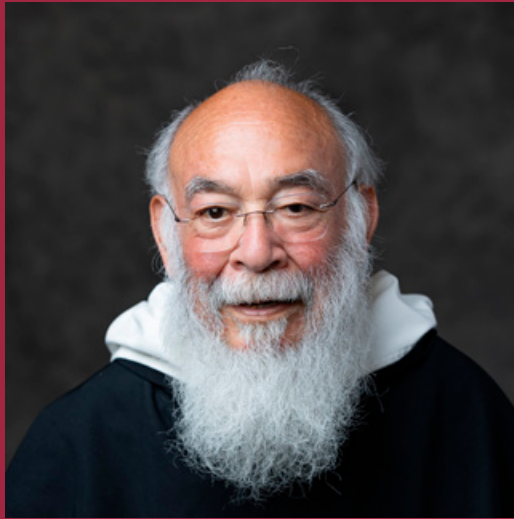
promote discussion of some topic relevant to contemporary culture. This year's topic was the document *Gaudium et Spes* from the Second Vatican Council, known as the "Pastoral Constitution on the Church in These Times." The questions that the Fellows came to discuss, both at their private session on Friday, February 2, and at their public session on Saturday, February 3, revolved largely around the



By Fr. Raphael Mary Salzillo, O.P.

Regent of Studies





REQUIESCAT IN PACE

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Br. Gregory Lira, O.P., who died on Sunday, January 14, 2024. Br. Gregory (known affectionately as “Bro”) joined the Order of Preachers in 1958, shortly after his 18th birthday. He was professed a year later as a cooperator (permanent) brother and made his solemn profession in 1965. Learn more about Br. Gregory at opwest.org/brgregorylira

continuing relevance of the document in *our* times, that is, in the Church in the 21st Century.

The debate on Saturday included a keynote argument from prominent canon lawyer and disability advocate J.D. Flynn, with responses from Russell Hittinger, Executive Director of the Institute for Human Ecology at the Catholic University of America, and our own Fr. Michael Sweeney, O.P., past president of DSPT, founder of the Lay Mission Project, and, indeed, founder of the College itself. The conversation also included presentations by four of our own DSPT students, who presented incisive comments about the relevance of *Gaudium et Spes*, from the perspective of a younger generation. The weekend ended with the granting of an honorary doctorate to Professor Scott Roniger of Loyola Marymount University, by which he was inducted into the College of Fellows.

Special thanks to Interim President and DSPT professor Sister Marianne Farina, CSC and to the DSPT staff, whose hard work made the weekend such a great success! We look forward to next year’s convocation!

Jubilarians Celebrate Decades of Ministry

Thank you for generously supporting our friars through decades of priesthood!

50 YEARS



Fr. Reginald Martin, O.P.

40 YEARS



Fr. Paul Raftery, O.P.



Fr. Vincent Benoit, O.P.

10 YEARS



Fr. Justin Gable, O.P.



Fr. Peter Junipero Hannah, O.P.



Fr. Corwin Low, O.P.

A Profile in Generosity: The Rosebrook Family

Three generations of connection

The Rosebrook family shares years of relationships with the Dominicans of our Province. Philip Rosebrook, Sr., made the first connection when his family moved to McKenzie Bridge, which has blossomed into deep friendships between the Dominicans and the Rosebrook children and grandchildren.

A highlight of the relationship between the Rosebrook family and the Dominicans is the annual “Brothers Dinner” that the family has been hosting for years, wherein all the student brothers are invited to attend and spend time with the Rosebrook family and their community. One of Philip Sr.’s sons, David, shares more about the long history.

The History of the Brothers Dinner

David: The party started a long time ago. Fr. Christopher Moschini, O.P., had always wanted to roast a lamb, and eventually a tradition began: the student brothers would come over to our house for this dinner. It started out small and it’s grown so much over the years—around 100 people! Now, all the student brothers attend, along with our families, and we invite other families from our community who have been attending regularly for years now.

With everyone attending the dinner and getting to know the brothers, we eventually thought it would be great to turn the dinner into a fundraiser for the student brothers. Once you get to know them, it’s hard not to want to support them! What’s more, we’ve gotten to witness the formation of the brothers in a really special way. We get to know them as novices, and then we watch them grow spiritually as they progress from the first year through the point of their priestly ordination.

When we were young, my siblings and I were just hanging out, playing games and sports with the brothers. It’s different now! The brothers still play games—volleyball and

spike ball—in their habits, but it’s not just playing. They’re always breaking off and having conversations, especially with the young people at the party. I’ve been able to see the brothers affect the faith life of not only my children, nieces, and nephews, but also the children of our friends and other attendees of the dinner.

They have had an enormous impact on all our lives. In some ways, for my siblings and I, being around the Dominicans was so normal—it was just the way we grew up. Now, seeing my children, nieces and nephews grow up with them, it becomes clear that they are having a great impact on the lives of their generation. For example, at one of our Brothers Dinners, one of the student brothers was the first to suggest to my daughter, Madeline, that she had a call to religious life. She is now Sr. Israel Rose, SV, with the Sisters of Life. She had a call to religious life, and it was talking with the brothers that made her aware of that call.

Learn more about the Rosebrook family and their special connection to the Dominicans at opwest.org/rosebrookfamily



Carol and Phil Rosebrook, Sr., received a 50th anniversary blessing from the late Bishop Robert Christian, O.P.

The student brothers join the Rosebrook family and their friends for Vespers during one of their annual dinners.

