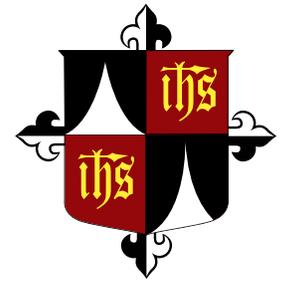


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# Mission West



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

## Dominicans Until Death

**Thanks to your support and  
God's grace, Brs. Brad and  
Thomas Aquinas have given  
their lives to the Church**

On April 9th, friars and friends from around the Province gathered to celebrate the Solemn Profession of Br. Bradley Thomas Elliott, O.P., and Br. Thomas Aquinas Pickett, O.P., who made their vows as Dominican friars until death. This profound commitment marks the beginning of their final years in initial formation as they prepare for full-time ministry in the Church.

Br. Brad, who comes to us from Centerville in Ohio, is a convert from Lutheranism and was a professional drummer before he entered the Order of Preachers. After earning a B.M. from the University of Cincinnati College Conservatory of Music, he toured with a number of well-known artists and musicians.

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Laying prostrate on the ground is a sign of deep humility, signifying Br. Brad's and Br. Thomas Aquinas' turning over their lives to the Order and the Church.



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Br. Thomas Aquinas, originally from Ellensburg in Washington State, joined the Dominicans shortly after graduating from Gonzaga University, where he studied philosophy and theology with the diocesan seminarians.

Both brothers are excited to be taking this next step in their formation. By professing vows until death, the brothers dedicate themselves totally to God, offering up their lives in service to the Lord. The friars understand that it is through the living out of the vows that we grow in love of God and neighbor.

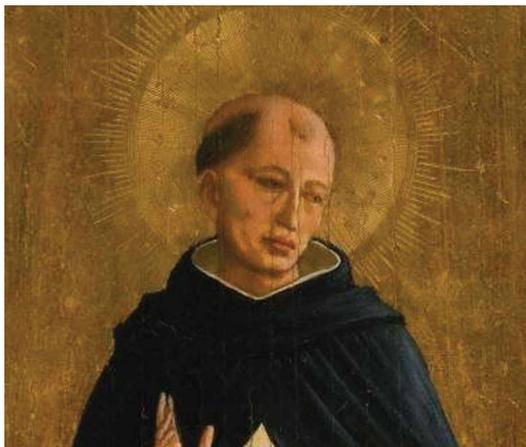
Thanks to the support of our donors and benefactors, more young men are able to discern a life of service as Brs. Brad and Thomas Aquinas have done.

The prayers and financial support of friends like you helps us to train the future generation of preachers who will proclaim Christ's name to the world. Together, we will set the world on fire for Christ!



Br. Thomas Aquinas, O.P. (top) and Br. Brad Elliott, O.P. (bottom) with their parents and family following their Solemn Vows.

View the inspiring video of our 2016 Solemn Vows at [opwest.org/videos](http://opwest.org/videos) and beautiful photos at [opwest.org/photos](http://opwest.org/photos).



## THE QUOTABLE DOMINICAN

BL. JORDAN OF SAXONY

Feast Day: February 13

*Laugh to your heart's content, my dearest children ... it is only right that you should laugh after breaking from the devil's thralldom (enslavement), and bursting the shackles in which he held you fast these many years past.*

# Equipping Couples for Strong Marriages

Dominican student brothers teach young people the beauty of Christian marriage

Twice a month, in a small classroom at St. Dominic Catholic Church in San Francisco, young couples gather around a large set of tables for a special presentation. Soon they'll dive into a series of classes meant to change their lives.

These couples are all preparing for marriage. And in a world that often doesn't support the Christian view of marriage, it's critically important they get support and education on what saying "I do" really means.

Teaching the class is a shared responsibility between two Dominican student brothers, Br. Brad Elliott, O.P., and Rev. Br. Chris Brannan, O.P., as well as a few lay leaders.

"This is the front line of the Church's effort to defend marriage and prepare couples for a life of Christian love," said Br. Brad. "They know they love each other, but discovering how that love reflects the love between Christ and His Church, and how their love can then radiate through society and change the world — that's something they don't always realize, and why we're here to help."

Magda Czyz and Travis Simmons were one of the couples to have gone through the marriage preparation classes at St. Dominic. Now married almost two years, and having just been blessed with their first child, Emil, they reflected on their experience in Br. Brad's class.

"We enjoyed learning the deeper meaning behind the scriptures on marriage, and how to apply them to our life together. And the Dominicans stay in touch with you. We can really tell they are invested in our marital

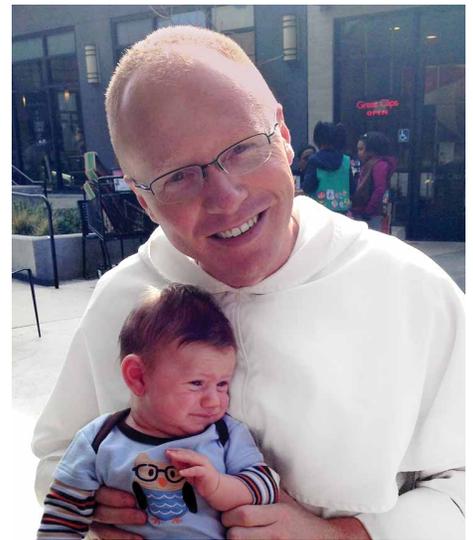
success and weren't just going through the motions."

Along with receiving a strong formation in the theology of marriage, couples are challenged to engage in "must have" conversations before the Big Day: questions about children, finances, conflict resolution, education and any impediments to marriage. These conversations, some of which seem obvious, are often overlooked by many couples.

"The marriage prep classes forced us to have conversations that we were taking for granted or avoided," said Magda and Travis. "We would recommend the classes to anyone!"

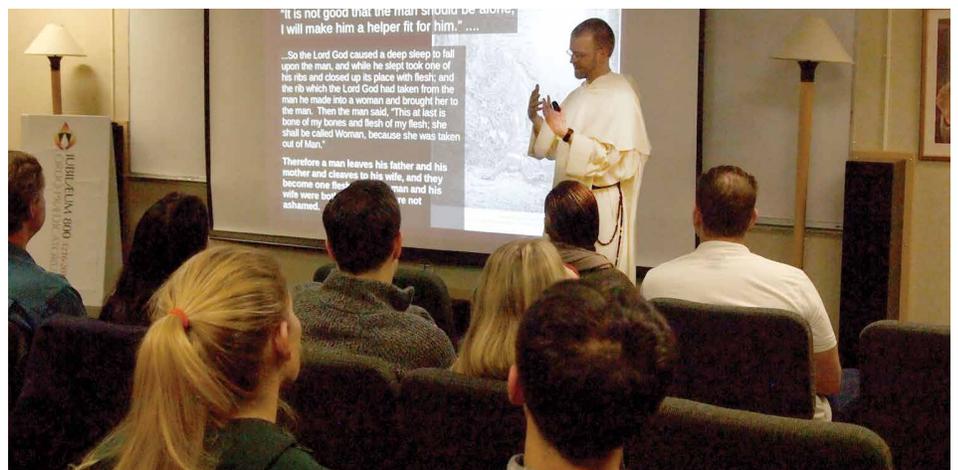
*"the Dominicans stay in touch with you. We can really tell they are invested in our marital success..."*

Dominicans are at the forefront of preaching the Gospel. And doing so through efforts like St. Dominic's Marriage Preparation Classes are key to helping young people embrace their faith and vocation for life.



Br. Brad with baby Emil. Travis and Magda, Emil's parents, learned to embrace their vocation to the married life with the help of Br. Brad's and Br. Chris' marriage preparation classes.

Thanks to your prayers and support, we have men like Br. Brad and Br. Chris to go out into the world and prepare men and women to experience the sacraments and share the love of Christ. It's through this witness that we can extend the reach of the Church's evangelical mission and bring countless souls to the mercy and love of Christ.



Engaged couples learn about the scriptural foundations of marriage from Br. Chris.

# Ready, Set, Coffee!

## Dominicans at St. Catherine of Siena Newman Center build a coffee shop and community of faith

Since I arrived in Salt Lake City last year, Utah has become an easy place to love. Natural beauty. Friendly parishioners. Catholics, non-Catholics, and everything in between, who are, generally speaking, full of questions about faith, and quick to take advantage of the diverse liturgical and educational opportunities at St. Catherine of Siena Newman Center.

As a convert to the Catholic faith who became a Dominican precisely to evangelize and educate, the University setting of St. Catherine's is just the sort of rich harvest awaiting laborers that excites me. This is exactly the kind of mission I had hoped for when I answered God's call to the priesthood.

Given our mission of preaching the Gospel to university students, and a need to find new, creative ways for young people to engage the faith, we started brainstorming in earnest. Then it hit us!

Along with campus minister Julie Bellefeuille, we came up with the idea to start a coffee shop in our former student lounge. We began promoting the idea last August, which ignited immediate and generous financial support from a broad cross-section of parishioners — older, younger, middle-aged, daily mass goers, even students. Apparently, coffee and Catholicism go together really well!

Long and grueling hours were put in by all of these groups, stripping and laying down a new floor, scraping the fireplace to reveal its original 1920's brickwork, and gathering various furniture and accoutrements to "Ready the Way" for the countless students who would soon arrive.

On Friday, January 15th — just five months after the idea was broached — behold: Cate's Café. Or rather, Catès Café™.

The opening ceremonies involved gathering outside the entrance, with Julie turning on the "OPEN" sign to cheers and hurrahs. We all proceeded inside for a "coffee shop blessing" with holy water and all, capped by a Marian hymn under the watchful gaze of the two Marian works of art that adorn opposite corners of the space.

In the short time the shop has been open, it is already attracting numerous students, young adults, even professors — as a convenient and comfortable place to imbibe caffeine, socialize and meet up, discuss the faith and get work done.

Trevor Woods, a professional graphic designer, has contributed a beautiful tryptich of the Creed, stylized and prominently displayed. And Julie Bellefeuille, an Art History major from the University of Washington, and an alumna of the Dominican Newman Center there, has put a real artist's touch into the decor and atmosphere. She recently shared what inspired her on this project:

"The pillars of Dominican life are study, community, prayer and preaching. The idea behind Cate's Cafe is to provide a space for this life to be lived in the midst of the college experience. We meet student where they are at, in a way that serves their particular needs. We give them a place to form community, we invite them to prayer, we encourage them to study, and, through a new means, we preach the Gospel. I have thoroughly enjoyed watching the students grow in faith and become more and more excited about this beautiful Church!"



Fr. Lukasz, Director of the Newman Center, is a frequent visitor to the café, always ready to answer the questions of inquisitive students.

So far, I have regularly seen students studying at Cate's, meeting with their small faith-sharing groups, and sipping tea and coffee mid-morning while taking care of schoolwork and looking out onto the downtown Salt Lake City skyline in the distance.

“I come here for the free coffee,” said Utah student Kissy Sonnenberg, “but I always stay longer than I mean to because of the great people and warm environment.”

Similar to Kissy, I engaged one student just last week in a conversation on evolutionary biology, God, and philosophy, with other students sitting around, cool jazz playing the background, and a deep sense of gratitude for this wonderful new space.

A great vision, combined with the extraordinary generosity and labor of practically every group at St. Catherine, seems to have planted an attractive seed which, in God’s time, will be a place of rich harvest and encounter with community, life-changing ideas, and indeed the Lord Jesus Christ.

*fr. Peter J. Hannah, O.P.*  
Fr. Peter J. Hannah, O.P.



## Have Your Prayers Remembered at the Tomb of St. Dominic

Submit prayer requests online at [opwest.org/petitions](http://opwest.org/petitions)

This June our Prior Provincial, Fr. Mark Padrez, O.P., will lead a pilgrimage to Spain, France and Italy, tracing the steps of St. Dominic in honor of our 800th Jubilee.

During the pilgrimage, Fr. Mark has been granted permission to celebrate a special Mass on June 13 at the Tomb of St. Dominic in Bologna, Italy.

**If you’d like to submit an intention for this Mass, please do so online at [www.opwest.org/petitions](http://www.opwest.org/petitions) by June 1.**

Your intentions will be printed and placed on the altar as we invoke the intercession of our founder, St. Dominic.

Above, Fr. Robert Christian, O.P., and Rev. Br. Chris Brannan, O.P., celebrate Mass at the Tomb of St. Dominic.

## DOMINICAN FACTOID



### Did you know?

The Dominican nuns in Puebla, Mexico, invented Mole, the famous Mexican sauce.

Legend says that one day the local archbishop suddenly announced he would visit the nuns. Embarrassed they had nothing to offer him to eat, the humble nuns killed a turkey

and quickly mashed together bits of things they had around the kitchen to make a sauce.

When the archbishop arrived and tasted the wonderful meal, he asked the nuns what was in the delicious sauce they had made. A sister simply replied, “it’s a mole (mix).”

# TRANSITIONS & UPDATES

Your place to stay up-to-date on happenings around the province



## CHECK OUT THE LATEST VIDEOS FROM **OPWEST.ORG**

Visit [opwest.org/videos](http://opwest.org/videos) to view the latest videos on the Dominicans, Catholic faith and more. They're short, easy to share and a fun way to expand your knowledge of the faith. Plus, you might see a friar you know!



## **DON'T MISS OUT! GET THE DOMINICAN E-NEWSLETTER!**

It's a quick and helpful way to stay up-to-date on the friars, get connected to the latest Dominican activities, videos and news, and enrich your Catholic faith — all at the same time!

**SIGN-UP IN A FLASH ON  
THE HOMEPAGE AT  
[WWW.OPWEST.ORG](http://WWW.OPWEST.ORG)**



## **ANGELIC WARFARE CONFRATERNITY DEFENDS CHASTITY**

Inspired by the heroic virtue of St. Thomas Aquinas, the Angelic Warfare Confraternity is a fellowship of men and women bound to one another in love and prayer, dedicated to pursuing chastity under the patronage of St. Thomas Aquinas and the Blessed Virgin Mary. The confraternity is a powerful response to the pressures and temptations of our modern culture.

Visit [opwest.org/awc](http://opwest.org/awc) to learn more, watch insightful video presentations, share with a friend or enroll yourself.

## **FR. RICHARD SCHENK, O.P., PUBLISHES *SOUNDINGS IN THE HISTORY OF A HOPE***

Based on the work of St. Thomas Aquinas and numerous patristic sources, Fr. Richard recently released his new book, *Soundings in the History of a Hope*. The collection of essays examine a number of issues in systemic theology, including: hope and doubt, human labor, mortality, the structures of nature, movements of history and events of grace.

In addition to addressing contemporary critics and questions raised after Thomas' time, Fr. Richard explores how one might renew programs of systematic theology, following the advice of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI. In 1989, then Cardinal Josef Ratzinger wrote that "the only way to bring fresh wind into systematic theology is to connect looking back at the great masters in the history of the faith, with questioning anew and more profoundly in the horizon of our times."

**The text can be found on Amazon. Remember to look for "Western Dominican Province" on AmazonSmile, and a portion of your purchase could be donated to the Dominicans!**

**OUR SINCERE GRATITUDE  
IS EXTENDED TO ALL  
THOSE WHO HELPED MAKE  
THIS EDITION OF THE  
NEWSLETTER POSSIBLE.**

# Advancing THE Order

The Dominican Order is a powerful response to the evils and errors of our world today, but we need your help to be successful. If you haven't already, consider supporting our mission to preach Christ in one of the following ways.

## **PRAYERS FOR STRENGTH & VOCATIONS**

Your prayers give us energy to persevere when so much of the world is against us. Please also pray that God raise up holy, zealous men of faith to embrace the religious life. **VISIT: [opwest.org/prayforus](http://opwest.org/prayforus)**

## **1216 SOCIETY: MONTHLY GIVING**

Help us address our most urgent needs by pledging a monthly gift of \$10, \$20, or more. Sign up before the end of the Jubilee to be remembered forever as a Founding Member. **VISIT: [opwest.org/1216](http://opwest.org/1216)**

## **ST. DOMINIC LEGACY SOCIETY**

Remembering us in your will or estate plans helps us pass on your legacy of faith to your children, grandchildren and other souls in need. As our way of saying thanks, we'll enroll you in the St. Dominic Legacy Society. **VISIT: [opwest.org/plannedgiving](http://opwest.org/plannedgiving)**

## **BECOME AN ASSOCIATE OF ST. DOMINIC**

For over 30 years, Associates have made a special annual gift of \$250 or more to advance the mission of the Dominicans in the West. In gratitude, Associates receive special recognitions. **VISIT: [opwest.org/asd](http://opwest.org/asd)**

## **BECOME A THIRD ORDER DOMINICAN**

Since the beginning of the Order, the laity have participated in the mission of St. Dominic, following his example of preaching the Gospel. **VISIT: [oplaitywest.org](http://oplaitywest.org)**



## **THANK YOU!**

**BR. JOSEPH MARIE  
GIVES YOU A BIG  
'THUMBS UP' FOR  
YOUR SUPPORT!**



## **CELEBRATING 800 Years**



**IUBILÆUM 800 1216-2016**  
**ORDO PRÆDICATORUM**

### **Dominican Popes**

Throughout the almost 800-year history of the Order, four Dominicans have occupied the Chair of Peter, and all four have been raised to the altars.

Petrus Tarentasia was known as the “most famous doctor” upon finishing his education at the University of Paris. During the last six months of his life, in 1276, he served on the throne of Peter as Innocent V.

Nicholas Boccasini entered the Dominicans at age 14 and eventually became Master General. He became Pope Benedict XI in 1303 and served for eight months before dying. Both he and Innocent V are Blessed.

Pope St. Pius V was born Michel Ghisleri in 1504. A model of fervent zeal and spiritual discipline, he became the 225th Vicar of Christ in 1566. During his seven year papacy, he was assiduous in prayer and in works of mercy. He enforced the decrees of the Council of Trent, supported faithful Catholics in their struggles against the Protestants and rallied Christendom to ward off the menacing threats of the Turks.

Pietro Francesco Orsini had served as a Cardinal Bishop for almost 50 years with indefatigable pastoral zeal when he was at last persuaded, despite his protests, to serve as Pope. As Benedict XIII, he labored strenuously to enforce ecclesiastical discipline. After serving for almost seven years in the See of Rome, he died in 1730, and is now honored as a Servant of God.

— *Father Timothy Combs, O.P. (Central Province)*



## You Were With Us at the Walk For Life!

**The Dominicans gave witness to the dignity of human life, from conception to natural death, during this year's West Coast Walk for Life.**

Joining tens of thousands on the streets of San Francisco, and strengthened by your prayers and generous support, the friars led people in praying the rosary and preached the love of Christ through word and deed. Even if you weren't there in person, you were with us in spirit!



**Have a story idea or want to help with the newsletter? Email us at [newsletter@opwest.org](mailto:newsletter@opwest.org)**