

SPECIAL EDITION

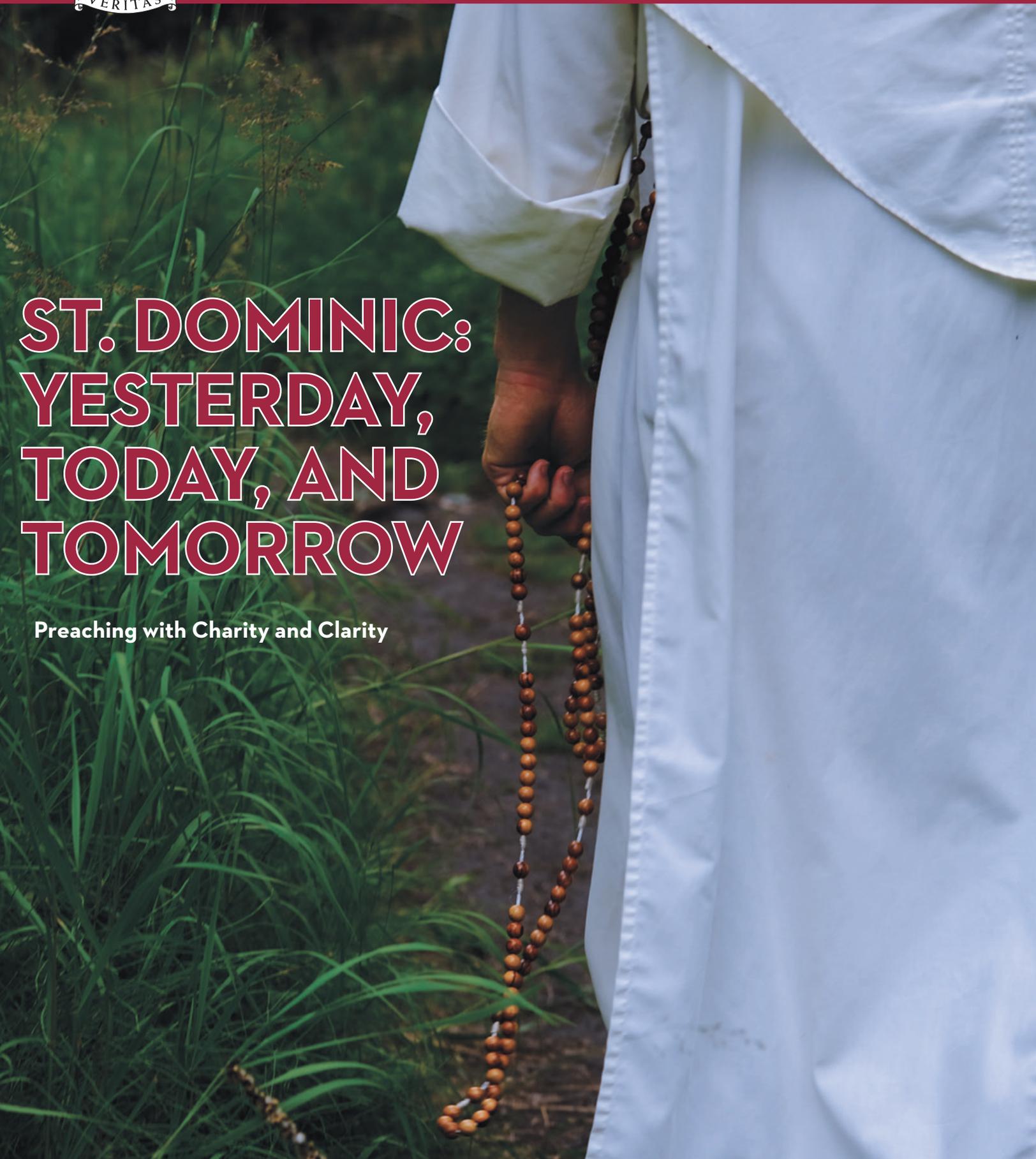


# MISSION WEST

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

## ST. DOMINIC: YESTERDAY, TODAY, AND TOMORROW

Preaching with Charity and Clarity



## DID YOU KNOW?

There are four pillars of Dominican life: prayer, study, community, and preaching.

### A life of PRAYER

Dominicans are deeply committed to prayer, the primary source of apostolic strength. In addition to private prayer, the Holy Mass, and the Rosary, the friars gather five times a day to pray the Liturgy of the Hours.

### A life of STUDY

Dominicans are committed to a life of study, which is intimately linked to the ministry of salvation. To help equip them to defend and advance the Catholic faith in a complex world, Dominicans order their contemplation around Scripture, philosophy, natural sciences, theology, and other disciplines.

### A life in COMMON

Following the example of the apostles, Dominicans live together in community, which allows them to share possessions, knowledge, traditions and experience. This fraternity is dedicated to the salvation of souls, living a life of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

### A life of PREACHING

The fruit of contemplation, Dominicans zealously preach the faith, hope, and love of Christ to every corner of the world. This apostolate (active ministry) proclaims the Gospel so that every soul may come to know, love, and serve Jesus Christ.



Dominican life is full of Christ's joy—built on prayer, study, community, and preaching!

## THE QUOTABLE DOMINICAN



## St. Dominic

1170-1221

Founder of the  
Order of Preachers—the Dominicans  
Feast Day: August 8

St. Dominic de Guzman was a Spanish priest who founded the Order of Preachers in AD 1216. His mission was to preach the Gospel with clarity during a time of confusion. In only five years, Dominic's followers grew from 12 to over 500 friars. At the time of his death, St. Dominic left his brothers with these final words to live by:

*“Behold, my children, the heritage I leave you: Have charity for one another. Guard humility. Make your treasure out of voluntary poverty.”*

# Dominicans: Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow

**D**ominicans have preached the Gospel for the salvation of souls for 800 years, addressing the spiritual and intellectual poverty of every generation.

St. Dominic saw this spiritual and intellectual poverty manifest in a number of ways, most notably in the Albigensian heresy, which, among other things, denied the intrinsic goodness of the physical world.

Today, modern society is more diverse, educated, and culturally developed than at any point in human history.

And yet, in the words of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, “personal struggles, moral confusion and fragmentation of knowledge” also define our age and constitute a crisis for our world.

As preachers who unite faith and reason, the Dominican mission is well suited to once again address the poverties of our time.

The Dominicans are one of the older religious orders of the Catholic Church, and the first order instituted by the Church with an academic mission to the emerging university institution.

Dominicans are also distinct in that many religious orders are either monastic in nature (prayer), or active (evangelists). Dominicans unite both traditions, living a life in common that is rooted in prayer and study, then sharing the fruits of that life with the world through active preaching.

As such, Dominicans have profoundly impacted the world in philosophy, theology, history, and evangelization.

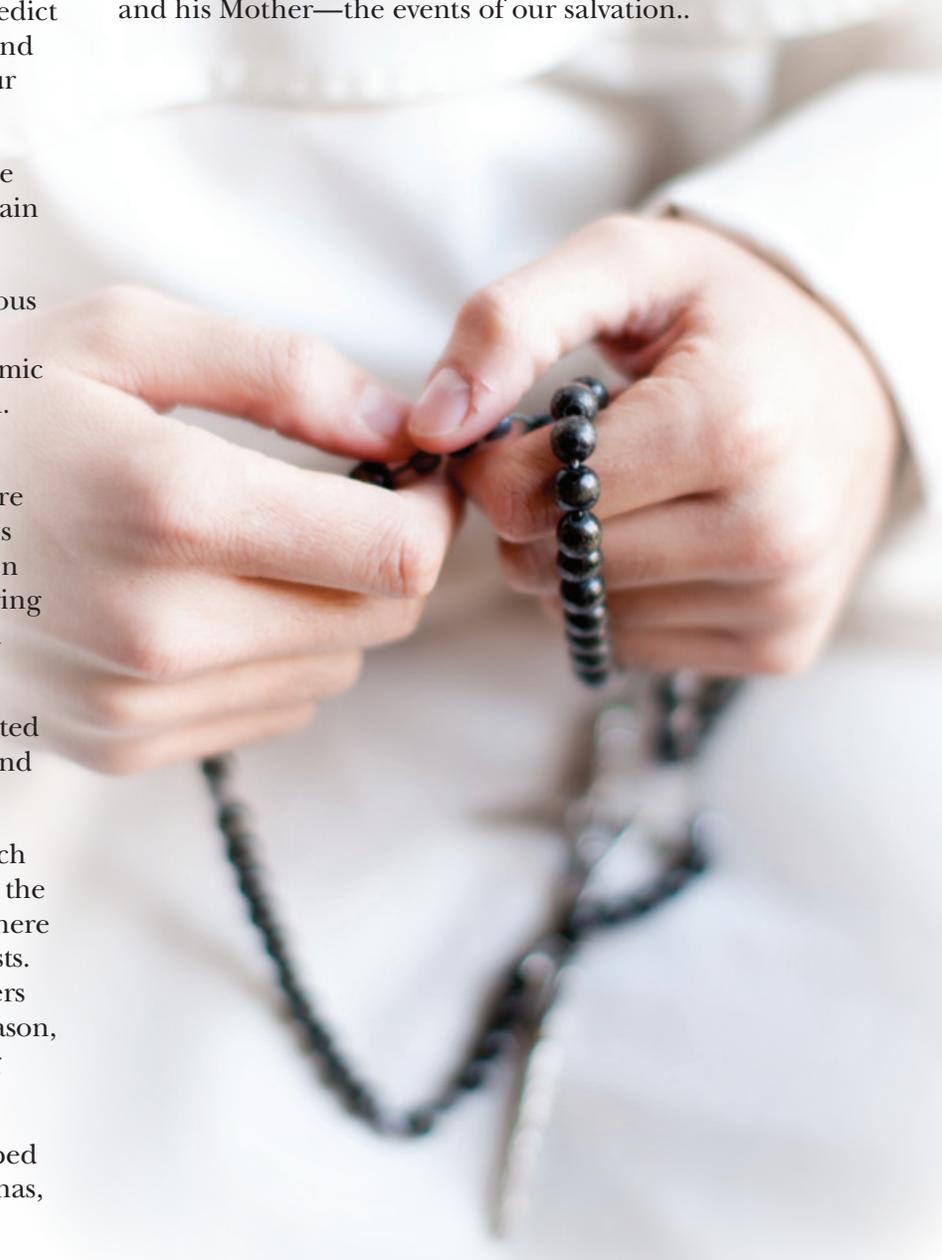
As Pope Francis once commented, the Church is “a Field Hospital after a battle,” tending to the wounded of the world. And in any hospital there is a need for nurses, generalists, and specialists. Dominicans are specialists—learned preachers who stand in the intersection of faith and reason, bringing clarity from confusion, and guiding souls to what is true, good, and beautiful.

Some renowned Dominicans who have shaped the Church and world are St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Catherine of Siena, St. Albert the Great, St. Rose of Lima, St. Martin de Porres, Pope St. Pius V, and many others.

## The Most Holy Rosary

Over 800 years ago, St. Dominic entrusted the Order to the protection of Our Lady. In the 16th century, Dominicans established the Rosary Confraternity to help spread devotion to Our Lady and her Rosary. From their earliest days, Dominicans have relied on Mary’s special intercession to persevere in their preaching mission.

In the Rosary, we have the opportunity to contemplate all the human events we are familiar with—birth, death, friendship, deceit, joy, sorrow, defeat, victory, and triumph. And in praying the Rosary, we sanctify them by identifying our experience of these events with the experience of the same events in the lives of our Savior and his Mother—the events of our salvation..



# The Dominican Identity

## Prayer, Study, Common Life, Preaching

Fr. Sergius Propst, O.P.

It was once noted that the four pillars of the Dominican way of life (prayer, study, common life, and preaching) were not unique to Dominicans, but would (and do) fit within the life of other religious orders.

However, what is special about Dominican life is how these four pillars are related to each other. Unfortunately, what is missing in most discussions of the pillars is a final end which unifies and determines how they work together.

This is not a new problem, and one that was beautifully resolved by the General Chapter of the Order in 1968 in a document entitled *Fundamental Constitutions*. In this document, the General Chapter sought to express the unique genius of the Dominican Order.

First, the Chapter defined the unique purpose of the Dominican Order in which the four pillars were related to each other and worked together for the same end.

That unique end is a charism: a divine grace given to St. Dominic and his band of preachers at the very inception of the

Order in 1216. This ultimate reason for the existence of the Dominican Order was beautifully expressed by Pope Honorius III when he said:

*He who never ceases to make his church fruitful through new offspring wishes to make these modern times the equal of former days and to spread the Catholic faith. So he inspired you with a holy desire to embrace poverty, profess the regular life and commit yourselves to the proclamation of the word of God, preaching everywhere the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Everything in the Dominican way of life is directed to this final end, that it might assist the preaching for the salvation of souls.

### Common Life

The first and foundational pillar is the community itself (i.e., Common Life). The community is not on its own the end of the Dominican way of life, but is directed in all its parts to make possible a preaching that will touch and turn human hearts back to God's love for them in Jesus Christ. The community of brethren supports and sustains the brother who is to preach, providing the resources (intellectual and material) that makes study possible. And in an even more basic way, the community itself preaches the Gospel through the showing of mutual love and support among each brother for each other's salvation.



Fr. Serge Propst, O.P., is an itinerant preacher. Specializing in homiletics, spirituality, and Aquinas, he has been a professor at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas in Rome (the Angelicum), as well as at the Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology in Berkeley, California.



## Study

The second and essential pillar is study. A friar's faith is enriched and empowered by the truth of the Catholic Faith so that he may preach that Gospel truth to everyone with a conviction of life, validating his words with the witness of his love for the sinner. For the Dominican, study is not an end in itself, but a means to enable one's self to preach with conviction and love. Study is for the preaching and the salvation of souls.



## Prayer

The third and necessary pillar is both liturgical and personal prayer. What is different about the Dominican way of praying is that the Dominican is praying for one ultimate end: the salvation of every human being and for the grace to attain that end through the grace of divine preaching. Dominican prayer seeks the same end as expressed by St. Paul writing his first letter to Timothy:

*This is good and pleasing to God our savior, who wills everyone to be saved and to come to knowledge of the truth.* (1 Tim 2:3-4)

## Preaching

The fourth and final pillar rules the other three, for it is focused on the charism God has given to the Dominican Order: to attain the salvation of souls through preaching.

While the Dominican preaches the truth of the Gospel, he encounters a person (or persons) in a direct way. Throughout these encounters, the objective remains the same as he shares with them, through speech, the reality of God's redeeming love for them, calling them to repentance and a continuing growth in grace.



What makes the four pillars uniquely Dominican is that they are united to each other in seeking the same end: the salvation of souls. The *Fundamental Constitutions* of the Order offer a beautifully concise explanation:

*The Order of Friars Preachers, founded by St Dominic, 'is known to have been established, from the beginning, for preaching and the salvation of souls, specifically.' Our brothers, therefore, as the founder prescribed, 'should everywhere behave uprightly and religiously, as men intent on procuring their own and other people's salvation; they should behave as gospel men, following in the footsteps of the Saviour, speaking to God or of God, among themselves or with their neighbors.'*

# Our Dominican Life



## 1 Vocations Discernment

Discerning a vocation with the Dominicans is a disciplined process of seeking God's will through prayer, reflection and study. Our Vocations Office promotes the Order and provides candidates with a number of resources to aid in their discernment.



## 6 Elderly and Infirm Care

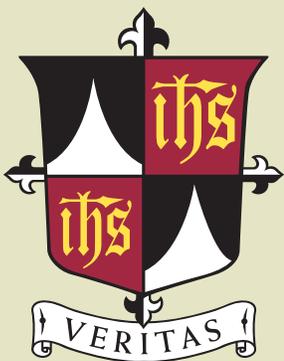
Dominicans never really retire. Even elderly friars continue to serve invaluable roles administering the sacraments, counseling, and serving as mentors to younger friars. Many elderly friars are healthy, but many also suffer from significant illnesses. Dominicans treasure their elderly brothers and take their care seriously.



*“The Dominican dedication to truth has inspired me throughout my life. It is an indispensable leaven in our culture.”*

## 5 Continuing Education and Formation

A lifelong commitment to preaching means a Dominican's education and formation never ends. Thus, Dominicans often pursue advanced degrees and continue their formation through sabbaticals and other educational opportunities. This helps Dominicans defend the faith and remain one of the most intellectually robust religious orders of the Church.



## 2 Novitiate

A friar's critical first year of formation is spent immersing himself in the Dominican pillars of prayer, study, common life, and ministry. It's an essential time during which he learns to live Dominican life, and confirms or clarifies his vocation.



## 3 Initial Education and Formation

After the Novitiate year, a Novice becomes a Student Brother, and makes his First Profession of Vows. Over the next seven years, he will renew those vows while receiving a rigorous Thomistic education in philosophy and theology. He will work to deepen his life of prayer and community with the friars.

*truthfulness, lively preaching and fellowship life. Dominicans continue to be an*  
**ure.” —BISHOP ROBERT BARRON**



## 4 Active Ministry

A Dominican is first, and always, a preacher of the Gospel. When initial formation is complete, friars enter active ministry to fulfill this preaching mission. This is actualized through a variety of apostolates such as itinerant preaching, new media work, parochial, and campus ministry.



# St. Dominic: Contemplative Apostle

## Preaching the Gospel with Charity and Clarity

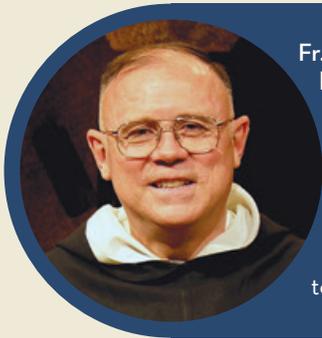
Fr. Brian Thomas Becket Mullady, O.P.

In the 12th canto of the *Paradiso*, the poet Dante speaks of the legacy of St. Dominic to the Catholic Church: “Then with both learning and zeal and with the apostolic office, he went forth like a torrent driven from a high spring.” The Dominicans were formally approved as an order by Pope Honorius III, on Dec. 22, 1216. In approving the order, he said we should be *pugiles fidei* (literally, boxers of the faith).

Born from Spanish nobility, Dominic committed himself early on to prayer, learning and charity. He used to stay up all night in prayer. He is said to have spoken only to or about God. Though he was intensely committed to learning, he sold his valuable books as a student during a famine to feed the hungry. He longed also to sacrifice his own life to convert heretics and pagans.

As a member of the Augustinian order in Osma, Spain, he was considered such a valuable and talented individual that he was sent with his bishop on a diplomatic mission to Denmark by the king. While on this trip, he encountered the Albigensian heresy in southern France, which taught that matter was evil and only spirit was good. He was so distressed by the obvious destructive results of this teaching that he and his bishop both decided to preach to the Albigensians in order to convert them.

The Catholic preachers sent by the Pope hadn’t been successful to this point, partially because of their lavish lifestyle and also their lack of learning. Dominic and his bishop chose to remedy this by following the life of the apostles: going two by two, begging their bread and basing their preaching on sound doctrine. Eventually the bishop returned to Spain



Fr. Brian Mullady, O.P., is an itinerant preacher who has made frequent appearances on EWTN and other Catholic media apostolates. He received his Doctorate in Sacred Theology from the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas in Rome (the Angelicum), where he later served as a professor for six years. He is the author of several books, and is the Theological Consultant to the Institute on Religious Life.

For 800 years the friars, nuns and sisters of this order have been serving the Church in a multitude of capacities, ranging from teachers, preachers and missionaries to caregivers for the sick—all the while, trying to pursue their active works motivated by a spirit of contemplation. In this they reflect the temperament and life of the founder—St. Dominic.



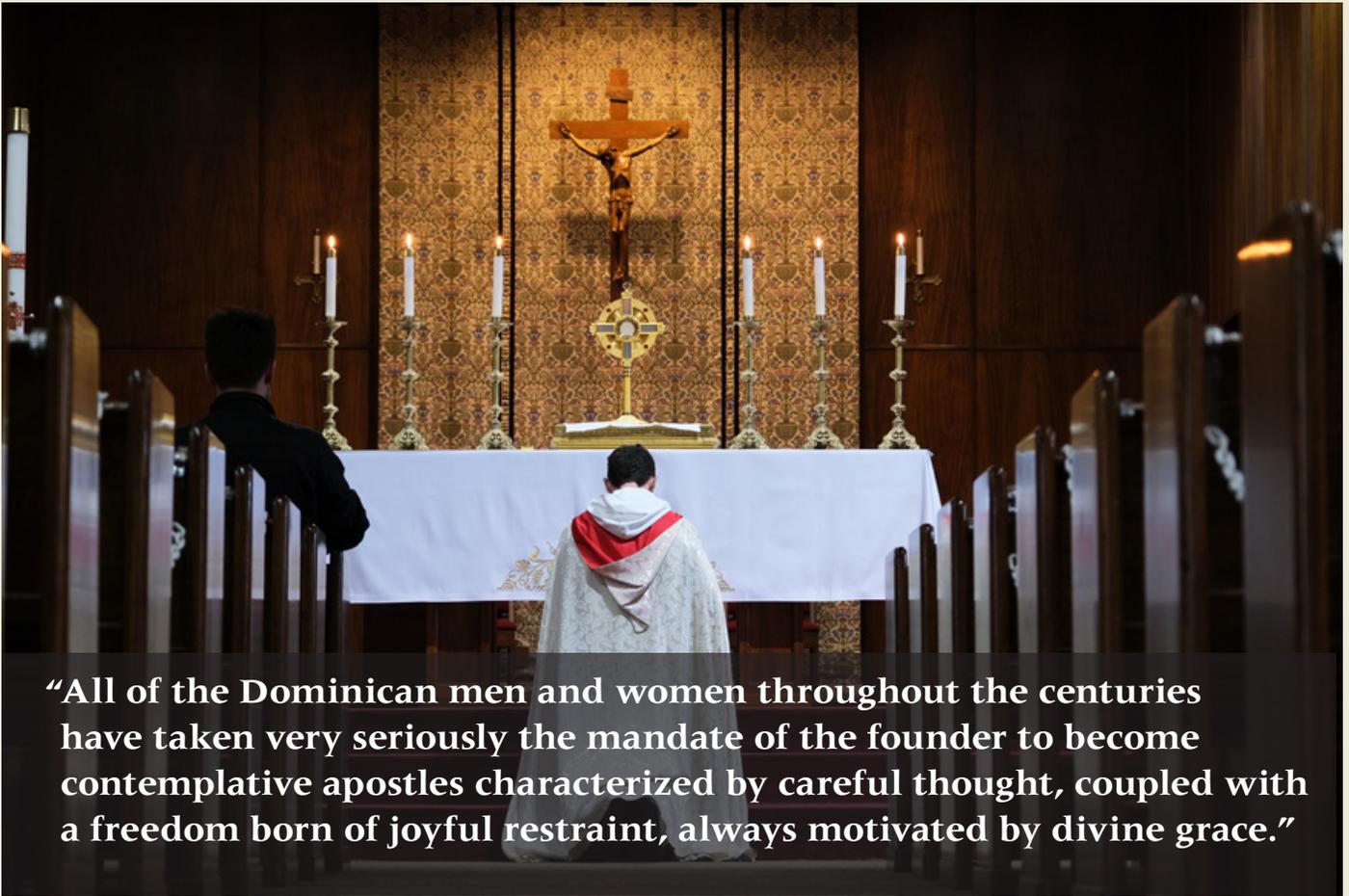
**13th Century:** When the Albigensian heresy denied the goodness of the physical world, Dominicans defended the beauty of God’s creation and helped eradicate the heresy.



**14th Century:** When the bubonic plague devastated Europe, Dominicans cared for the sick and brought hope to the hopeless with inspired preaching.



**15th Century:** With the advent of the Renaissance, Dominican friar Bl. Fra Angelico stirred the faithful throughout Europe with his artwork, revealing the unity between beauty and truth.



**“All of the Dominican men and women throughout the centuries have taken very seriously the mandate of the founder to become contemplative apostles characterized by careful thought, coupled with a freedom born of joyful restraint, always motivated by divine grace.”**

and died, but Dominic remained with the preachers who had come to join them.

The mission was not a success, and Dominic succeeded in only converting a few unmarried women, whom he quartered in a convent and for whom he wrote religious constitutions that were eventually adopted with needed changes by the friars.

The nuns he founded were so much a part of the original order that we owe our only description of Dominic’s personality to one especially devoted to him, Sister Cecilia. She testified that he was a joyful man and “a kind of radiance shown from his brow, inspiring love and reverence in all.” She also testified that he said there was only one beauty, “beauty of soul.”



**16th Century:** When Europeans argued that the indigenous people of the Americas were lesser humans, Dominicans defended their inherent dignity.



**17th Century:** As imperialists in Japan tortured Catholics, Dominicans evangelized and kept the Church active by giving their lives as martyrs.



**18th Century:** When authorities in China attempted to brutally stamp out the Church, Dominican missionaries again gave their lives in defense of the Catholic faith.

This beauty of soul was demonstrated in his decision, because of the failure of the Albigensian mission, to disperse his little community to large cities and universities throughout Europe. He so recognized the importance of education and sound philosophy for the formation of good itinerant preachers that study was a religious observance equal to the choral office in Dominican houses, and the friars sought chairs of theology in the budding European universities. This emphasis on education culminated in Sts. Albert the Great and Thomas Aquinas.

The Dominican order has striven through plague, reformation, revolution, war and persecution to carry the spirit of this

**“In the 12th canto of the *Paradiso*, the poet Dante speaks of the legacy of St. Dominic to the Catholic Church: ‘Then with both learning and zeal and with the apostolic office, he went forth like a torrent driven from a high spring.’”**

unique and wonderful man to the whole world. His was a spirit born of grace and prayer, and so the order has a number of characteristics: the spirit and life of the apostles, regular life and fraternal charity and openness to expressing the truth to the people of every age and culture in a way that takes account of their openness to receiving it.

The first quality has always entailed a respect for and defense of the pope, whose direct intervention led to the founding of the order. Apostolic spirit also means not only a commitment for the truth of the Catholic faith, but a kind of itinerancy and pursuit of holy poverty. Regular life incorporates certain religious observances common to monastic communities since the early days of the Church: habit, cloister, community life and common prayer centered on the Mass and the Divine Office chanted in choir.

Though the order has pursued a rigorous formation, a unique element is that each member has always been encouraged to



develop his or her individual personality. When one has met one Dominican, one doesn't necessarily have a clue what the next one will be like. This makes it much easier to meet people where they are and not where we would like them to be. Dominicans, together with the Franciscans, were zealous to encourage frequent Confession in mass settings, and so were accomplished confessors.

Some believe that the Dominican constitutions—which emphasize a more participatory government than most religious orders and intentionally don't bind the members under sin (if one breaks a vow of the order)—were influential in forming the constitution of the United States. The Pope's personal theologian has been a Dominican since the Middle Ages. All of the Dominican men and women throughout the centuries have taken very seriously the mandate of the founder to become contemplative apostles characterized by careful thought, coupled with a freedom born of joyful restraint, always motivated by divine grace.

Every historical period and culture stands in need of clear, doctrinal teaching about the Catholic faith taught in a human and joyful way. The witness of the Dominican contemplative apostle is as urgent now as it was in the 13th century, indeed in any century. Dominic and his sons and daughters have always exhibited a knack for what Gilbert and Sullivan call: "gilding the philosophic pill."



Dominic was convinced—and we should be too—that one cannot check one's brain at the door when one is baptized. Further, the assiduous study of sacred truth is our only hope in a jaded, dangerous and relativistic age.

The story goes that St. Dominic had a vision of St. Peter, who gave him a staff for guiding others, and St. Paul, who gave him a book to do so by truth. When they did this, they said, expressing the aspirations of all of the friars, nuns and sisters in the order: "Go and preach, for you are chosen by God to do that occupation and ministry."

Fr. Brian Mullady, O.P.

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**19th Century:** As people in the U.S. moved west for gold, Dominicans moved west for souls, founding the Western Dominican Province and establishing churches, missions and apostolates.



**20th Century:** As the world tore itself apart with war, Dominicans served as zealous chaplains on the battlefield. They faithfully preached peace and charity and served the needy with compassion.



**Today:** As our contemporary culture worships consumerism, comfort and selfishness, Dominicans preach the greatness that is a radical life in Christ rooted in love.

# Dominican FAQs

## Who was St. Dominic and where did he come from?

St. Dominic was a 13th-century Spanish priest. He encountered the Albigensian heresy in France, which denied the goodness of the physical world. Seeing great spiritual and intellectual poverty, he was inspired by God to establish a religious order dedicated to preaching the Truth of the Gospel with clarity and charity.

## What did St. Dominic do that was so important, and why did he focus on cities and universities?

St. Dominic established the first religious order with a universal emphasis on study and the first order of priests permitted to preach widely. St. Dominic insisted his brethren take study seriously. Thus, friars were trained to address confusion by uniting deep faith with the clarity of sound reason. This was most useful in cities and the emerging universities, where the Dominicans could engage academics and influential thinkers, thereby increasing their impact on society.

## Why do the Dominicans matter today?

This is a time of confusion in society, where Truth is under attack and intellectual honesty has been eroded. Dominicans are uniquely formed and educated to preach the Gospel to a world that does not understand Christ or religion, nor the belief in objective truth.

## What are the pillars of Dominican life?

The Dominican life is built upon prayer, study, community, and preaching. We contemplate the Truth, and share the fruits of that contemplation with the world.

## How are the Dominicans funded?

By you! The Dominican Order has always been a mendicant (begging) order. We are supported exclusively through donors who believe in the Dominican mission to preach for the salvation of souls. We do not receive regular funding from any diocese or the Vatican.

## Does the Vatican support the Order financially? Does the diocese?

No, we do not receive financial support from the diocese or the Vatican.

## What is a life in common?

Our common life follows the example of the apostles. We consecrate ourselves to a life in common and live the vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. We pray together five times a day, eat together, and often work or study together. We are a fraternity dedicated to the salvation of souls.

**More questions? Check out [opwest.org](http://opwest.org)!**

# Did you know?

O.P. = *Ordo Praedicatorum* or Order of Preachers

AD 1216 Established

140+ Friars

7 Parishes

3 Elementary Schools

1 Graduate School

6 Campus Ministries

7 Specialized Apostolates

4 International Missions

100,000+ Served

## You make our Dominican life possible!

As mendicant friars, we rely on God's grace and your support to make our life of preaching possible.



The Dominicans do not receive regular support from any diocese or bishops for the education of their student brothers, or for the care of their elderly. They rely on you!

ORIGIN

MISSION

MENDICANCY