



MISSION WEST

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

TO JESUS THROUGH MARY

- ✦ Fr. Lawrence Lew, O.P.,
Reflects on the Rosary
- ✦ Meet our 10 New Novices
- ✦ Your Rosary Sunday Gift
Makes an Impact!

DID YOU KNOW?



The Holy Pope Pius V Worships the Crucified, August Kraus (before 1926).

In 1571, the Dominican Pope St. Pius V extended the Feast of the Holy Rosary to the entire Church. A few years earlier, in a document titled *Consueverunt Romani*, he had standardized and promoted the Rosary in the form of 150 Hail Marys (15 decades), with an Our Father between each decade. Since the number 150 corresponds to the number of Psalms, St. Pius called the Rosary the “Psalter of the Blessed Virgin Mary” and commended it as a “simple way of praying and beseeching God, accessible to all.”

These 15 decades corresponded to the 15 Sorrowful, Joyful, and Glorious Mysteries, until Pope St. John Paul II added the five Luminous Mysteries in 2002 in an Apostolic Letter titled *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*.

Cover Photo: On the final day of the Lourdes Novena — a preached novena led by the St. Jude Shrine in San Francisco — Fr. Andrew Thomas Kang, O.P., and Fr. Elias Guadalupe Ford, O.P., led the faithful in a procession to the Marian grotto at St. Dominic’s San Francisco.

THE QUOTABLE DOMINICAN

Fr. Réginald Marie
Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P.

1877-1964

He teaches that, when it is faithfully practiced, “the Rosary is no longer the mechanical recitation of the Hail Mary, but a living thing, a school of contemplation.”



Fr. Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., was a French Dominican priest and theologian in the twentieth century. While studying to become a doctor, he had a conversion and entered the Order of Preachers. He was ordained a priest in 1902 and served as a professor at the Pontifical University of Saint Thomas Aquinas (Angelicum), where he taught dogmatic and spiritual theology from 1909 until his retirement in 1959.

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

A Letter to You from the New Director of Advancement

Generosity and Mission



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I'm grateful for the chance to introduce myself. My name is Michael Milano, and earlier this year I began serving as Executive Director of Institutional Advancement for the Western Dominican Province. My own faith was shaped in a Dominican community, Most Holy Rosary Catholic Church in Antioch, CA.

It was here where I fell in love with Our Lady and the Rosary, where I encountered preachers who were earnestly striving to be witnesses of the Gospel, and where I encountered an authentic Catholic community that prayed and served together. I'm humbled now to help advance that mission with you.

This issue's theme "To Jesus Through Mary" points us back to the heart of Dominican life. As Fr. Lawrence Lew, O.P., reminds us, the Rosary is Mary's *gift* that draws us into the saving mysteries of Christ and then sends us forth to preach the Gospel through both word and deed.

You'll see that rhythm of *generosity and mission* in the hopeful signs the Lord is giving the province. This year, 10 men entered the novitiate, and together with our student brothers and transitional deacons, that means 42 men are now in initial formation. Their "yes" to Christ is a grace for all of us, and a reminder that the preaching of the Gospel continues to take root in new hearts.

That same rhythm animates our Jubilee year, a true milestone and celebratory event. In 1850, Pope Pius IX instructed the newly appointed Bishop Alemany, O.P., to establish a Dominican presence in California: "You must go to California; there is no alternative; where others are drawn by gold, you must carry the cross."

As we mark 175 years of Dominican preaching in the West, we remember the courage and fidelity that first planted the Order here and we recommit ourselves to that mission today. I hope you'll join us in celebration for The Dominican Black & White Gala on December 6, 2025, at the Palace Hotel in San Francisco, a moment to give thanks together and to look forward in hope.

Please keep our Dominican friars in your prayers. Know of my gratitude for your friendship, your witness, and your support of the Gospel they preach.

In Christ,

Michael Milano
Executive Director of Institutional Advancement

10 More Men Enter the Novitiate!

Thanks to your prayers and support, the Western Dominican Province continues to grow



Br. Clement Knuffke

"The Lord is God and has enlightened us." Psalm 118:27

From Fresno, California, Br. Clement studied liberal arts at Thomas Aquinas College in California, as well as classics and patristics at the Salesian Pontifical University in Rome, Italy. He later taught at Thomas Aquinas College for 10 years. Br. Clement enjoys hiking, as well as studying theology, philosophy, and Latin.

One of his favorite saints is St. Thomas Aquinas, whose life and teachings have strongly influenced him. He has been drawn to the Order of Preachers out of a desire to offer the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and to hand on the truth of the Catholic Faith.



Br. Joshua Matthew Lynn

"I command you: be strong and steadfast! Do not fear nor be dismayed, for the Lord, your God, is with you wherever you go." Joshua 1:9

From Las Vegas, Nevada, Br. Joshua Matthew completed his bachelor's degree in computer science at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. He enjoys hunting, fishing, and off-roading, as well as woodworking and metalworking.

Br. Joshua Matthew has been profoundly impacted by the account of St. Patrick's faith intensifying through the experience of enslavement and adversity in Ireland. His admiration for this extraordinary bishop has been further developed by reading St. Patrick's *Epistle to the Soldiers of Coroticus* and *The Confessions of St. Patrick*. Br. Joshua Matthew is drawn to the intellectual and contemplative aspects of Dominican life, coupled with preaching the fruits of that contemplation out into the world.



Br. Charbel Ambrose Gonzalez

"Jesus answered and said to them, 'Amen, amen, I say to you, a son cannot do anything on his own, but only what he sees his father doing; for what he does, his son will do also.'" John 5:19

From Burbank, California, Br. Charbel Ambrose received his B.S. and M.S. in aerospace engineering at Stanford University. After time at JPL/NASA, Br. Charbel Ambrose worked as an educator and lay minister. He enjoys hiking, cycling, cooking, and studying wine and winemaking.

The pursuit of truth in his studies and education work deepened his desire to pursue truth for the salvation of souls. In the Dominicans, Br. Charbel Ambrose found an order where study is not merely intellectual, but also contemplative and active. He also found a family and home in the Order of Preachers. He draws inspiration from St. Ambrose, particularly his gifts of mediation, persuasion, and his fatherly heart.



Br. Paul Mary Arnold

"We have come to know and to believe in the love God has for us." John 4:16

Br. Paul Mary grew up in Muncie, Indiana. He studied philosophy and theology at Thomas Aquinas College and continued those studies through the Dominican School of Philosophy & Theology's concurrent Master of Arts program. He enjoys watching classic and foreign movies and listening to classical music. He draws inspiration from St. John Cassian's ordered and balanced approach to the spiritual life.

He joined the Dominicans to live a contemplative life that overflows into an active life of handing on the fruits of his contemplation.



Br. John Gabriel Carney

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel. It is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: for Jew first, and then Greek." Romans 1:16

Originally from San Diego, California, Br. John Gabriel studied theology and film, television, theatre at the University of Notre Dame. In his free time, he enjoys running, playing the drums, karaoke, and driving the Pacific Coast Highway.

His journey to religious life was influenced by St. Therese of Lisieux, especially her confidence and sense of total abandonment toward her own religious vocation. Br. John Gabriel joined the Order of Preachers because of the Dominicans' combination of the contemplative and active life, as well as the Order's closeness to Mary.



Br. Isaac Maria Lapointe

"I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly." John 10:10

Br. Isaac Maria grew up near the Canadian border in Watertown, New York. He earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy and theology and a Master of Arts in theology with a concentration in sacred scripture at Franciscan University of Steubenville. A few of his favorite hobbies are hiking, backpacking, fly fishing, and reading. He draws inspiration from Pope St. John Paul II because of his rich proclamation of the sacred truths of our Faith and the profound goodness of human life, as well as his deep devotion to our Blessed Mother.

After studying the truths of our Faith, developing a prayer life, and experiencing the joy of community life, Br. Isaac Maria decided to join the Dominicans to pursue each of those things and belong more fully to Christ.



Br. Bede Hamilton

"While he was still a long way off, his father caught sight of him, and was filled with compassion. He ran to his son, embraced him and kissed him." Luke 15:20

Br. Bede is from Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. He studied philosophy, first at the University of Victoria, then at the St. Philip's Seminary of Toronto, where he graduated with a bachelor's degree in Thomistic thought. His hobbies are diving, swimming, tennis, and karaoke.

He credits St. Thomas Aquinas with bringing him back to the faith and educating him, as well as inspiring him with his courage in the face of life's many storms. Br. Bede joined the Order of Preachers so that he could preach for the salvation of souls.



Br. Moses Paul Baska

"You will let me hear gladness and joy; the bones you have crushed will rejoice." Psalm 51:10

From Mesa, Arizona, Br. Moses Paul received a bachelor's degree in liberal arts from Wyoming Catholic College. He has been strongly influenced by Moses and St. Paul, both called by God to lead and to do so boldly. Contemplating St. Paul, teacher of zeal, gave him the strength to join the Order of Preachers. Br. Moses Paul has a strong desire to preach the Word wherever he can, and he has found a community within which to do so in the Dominicans.

He is especially struck by Psalm 51, which shows him that the Lord is not always gentle in his love, but there is joy at the end of it all.



Br. Edward Massicotte

"His mother said to the servers, 'Do whatever he tells you.'" John 2:5

Br. Edward is from Québec City, Canada, where he studied philosophy at Université Laval. He enjoys hiking, reading, and listening to classical music — particularly Baroque-era harpsichord and organ.

His favorite saint is Mary, the most perfect image of the church, and he draws further inspiration from his favorite scripture passage, John 2:5, which shows us how Mary will always orient us towards Christ. He has been drawn to the Dominicans to perfect the two greatest commandments the Lord has given us: first, to love Him with his whole heart in religious life, through a life of prayer and study; second, to love his neighbor as himself by bringing Christ, the greatest good, to his neighbor.



Br. Jacob Mary Budd

"God is in its midst; it shall not be shaken; God will help it at break of day." Psalm 46:6

Born and raised in Mesa, Arizona, Br. Jacob Mary studied electrical engineering at Arizona State University, where he found a blend of math, physics, and applied science: theory and its application. He enjoys singing and sang at the ASU Newman Center as a student. He also enjoys writing poetry and short stories.

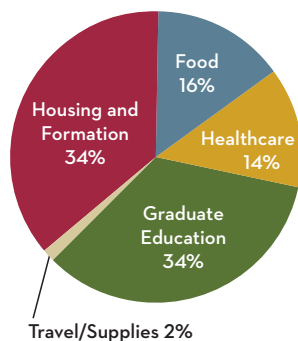
St. Lucy has been a great friend and intercessor for him, and he is struck by the story of her martyrdom. He has always wanted to be a priest and was drawn to the Order of Preachers by the intellectual life of the Dominicans.

Your Rosary Sunday Gift Makes an Impact

What is Rosary Sunday?

Each year around the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary (October 7), the Dominicans invite the Church community to support the formation of their novices and student brothers. As mendicants (beggars), the Dominicans rely on their friends for all their financial needs. Annually, formation for the novices and student brothers costs ~\$2.5M.

How Your Gifts Are Invested in the Student Brothers



Fiscal Year 2025 Rosary Sunday Results

Total Funds Raised: \$1,611,255

Total Formation Cost: \$2.5 million

Where Does Your Gift Go?

Rosary Sunday contributions do not just fund spiritual formation and academic education, they've spurred the transformation of the friars who will carry out the mission of this order: to preach the Gospel for the salvation of souls!

The generosity of our benefactors paves the way for the truth of the Gospel to be heard in every corner of the earth. Thank you for making Rosary Sunday a success, and please continue to support the friars each year!

How Your Investment Makes a Difference

Every dollar entrusted to us is carefully directed towards comprehensive formation, covering essentials such as: tuition, living expenses, spiritual and educational resources, and health care. Combined, these costs total ~\$59,500/year per friar in formation.

Rosary Sunday
DOMINICAN STUDENT APPEAL

Impact on Vocations Today

Because our friends support Rosary Sunday...

10 men are discerning God's will and learning Dominican life in our novitiate.

32 men are continuing their spiritual, academic, communal, and human formation as religious student brothers at our House of Studies, the Priory of St. Albert the Great, including 5 men being ordained as transitional deacons in September.

Total: **42** men in formation this year.



**Fr. Lawrence
Lew, O.P.**

*Promoter General of
the Holy Rosary*

A Light When All Other Lights Fail

The Rosary: Mary's Gift to the Order of Preachers

“Under Mary’s inspiration, St. Dominic went into the villages of the heretics, gathered the people, and preached to them the mysteries of salvation — the Incarnation, the Redemption, Eternal Life.” With these words, Fr. Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P., sums up the focus of the Rosary, a “triptych of salvation” as I like to call it. Hence, we are called to not just meditate on the scenes of Christ’s life, or focus on what He did during His lifetime as though this were just a chronological newsreel. Rather, we’re called to ponder theologically what the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity accomplished by His Incarnation and Paschal Mystery. St. Athanasius summed it up in his pithy statement: “God became Man so that Man might become God.” This, surely, is the central mystery of our Christian Faith, which sets it apart from all other religions, and the good news of Man’s divinization through sanctifying grace is preached and contemplated in the Rosary.

The Rosary, therefore, is Mary’s gift to the Order and, through us, to the Church and to the world as a prayer that leads our restless hearts to rest in God’s love made visible in the saving mysteries of Christ. The Rosary is Mary’s instrument for bringing the light of Christian hope into our lives and to our world, which are often so troubled and veiled in darkness. But praying the Rosary places us under Mary’s protecting veil, and

she has given us this prayer to be a light when all other lights fail.

This is precisely why meditation on the mysteries of the Rosary is essential — indeed it is the soul of the Rosary, giving life to the mere recitation of words by recalling, again and again, Christ’s loving work of salvation. Hence our Dominican preaching — rooted firmly in Scripture, and also using art, music, and other means that engage the imagination — is so important in helping devotees of the Rosary to bring this beautiful prayer to life, and to attract a wider audience to engage with it.

However, people are moved not only by teachers but by those who are witnesses, as Pope St. Paul VI said. So, ours must be a witness of loving trust in Mary as our mother. For we pray the Rosary every day not because of any legal obligation, or fear, or guilt, but because we love Mary and know that this is her daily prescription against our fundamental human disease which is sin and rebellion against God. “Pray the Rosary every day for peace and for an end to the war,” Our Lady of the Rosary said six times in Fatima in 1917. Thus, we pray the Rosary daily in order to please our Mother, out of love for her and with trust that she asks of us only whatever is most efficacious for our salvation. Thus are we led to Jesus through Mary.

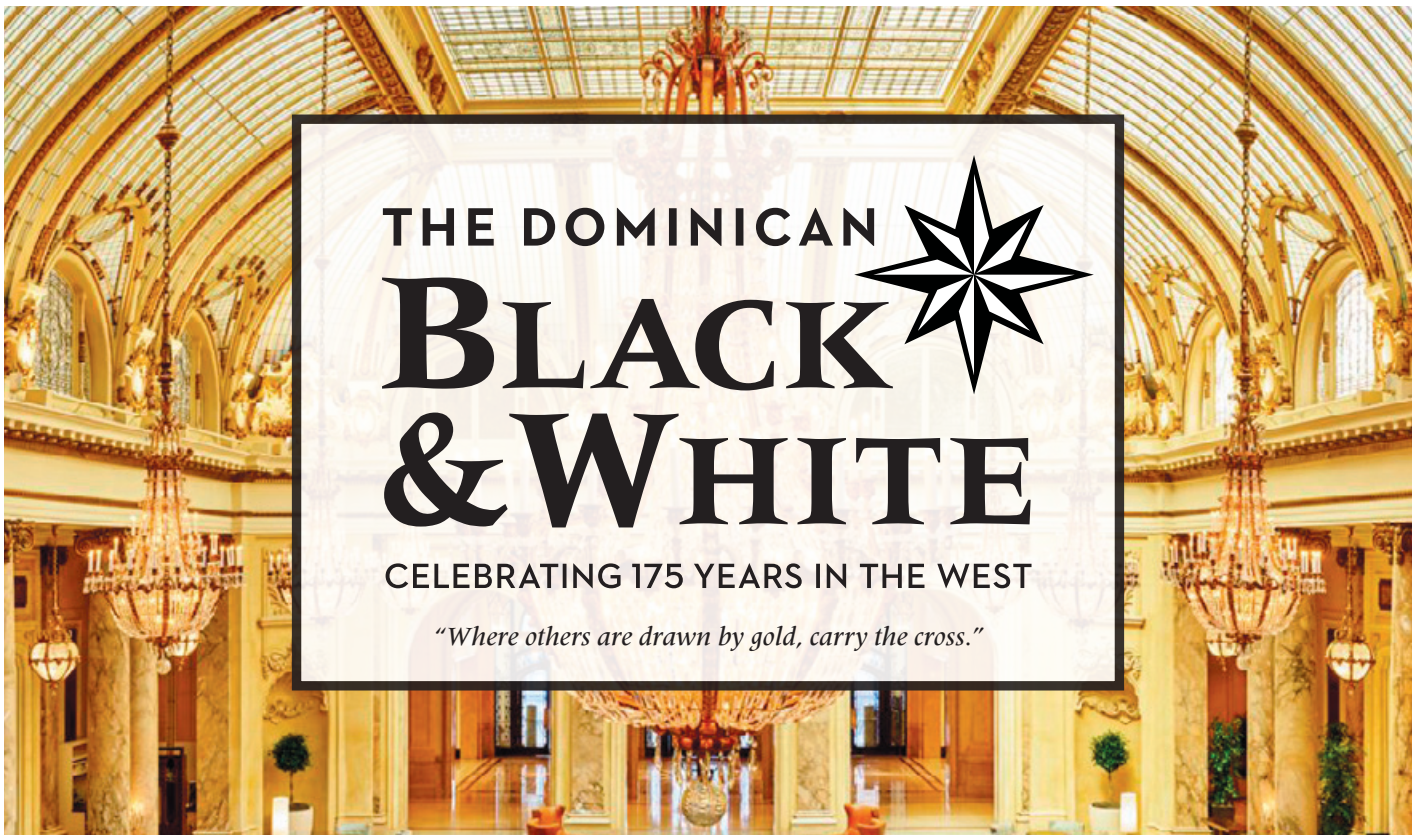
Fr. Lawrence is a son of the English Dominican Province and Promoter General of the Holy Rosary for the worldwide Order of Preachers.



Learn more about the Rosary Confraternity:
rosarycenter.org

Donate to support Fr. Lawrence’s work:
english.op.org/LL

Join Fr. Lawrence on pilgrimage:
206tours.com/cms/frlew



THE DOMINICAN **BLACK & WHITE**

CELEBRATING 175 YEARS IN THE WEST

"Where others are drawn by gold, carry the cross."

Join us for the Dominican Black & White!

Enjoy a festive evening of dinner and dancing at the historic Palace Hotel. Join friends of the Dominicans, bishops, dignitaries, and special guests — including our renowned speaker, Fr. Robert Spitzer — for this celebratory fundraiser benefiting St. Dominic's Priory and our growing Novitiate!

Come honor our 175-year history, and celebrate the future of the Dominicans in the West!

December 6, 2025 | 6 p.m.
Palace Hotel, San Francisco



DOMINICAN FRIARS
Province of the Most Holy Name of Jesus

Get tickets and
learn more at
opwest.org/gala
or at the code.



Celebrating 175 Years of History

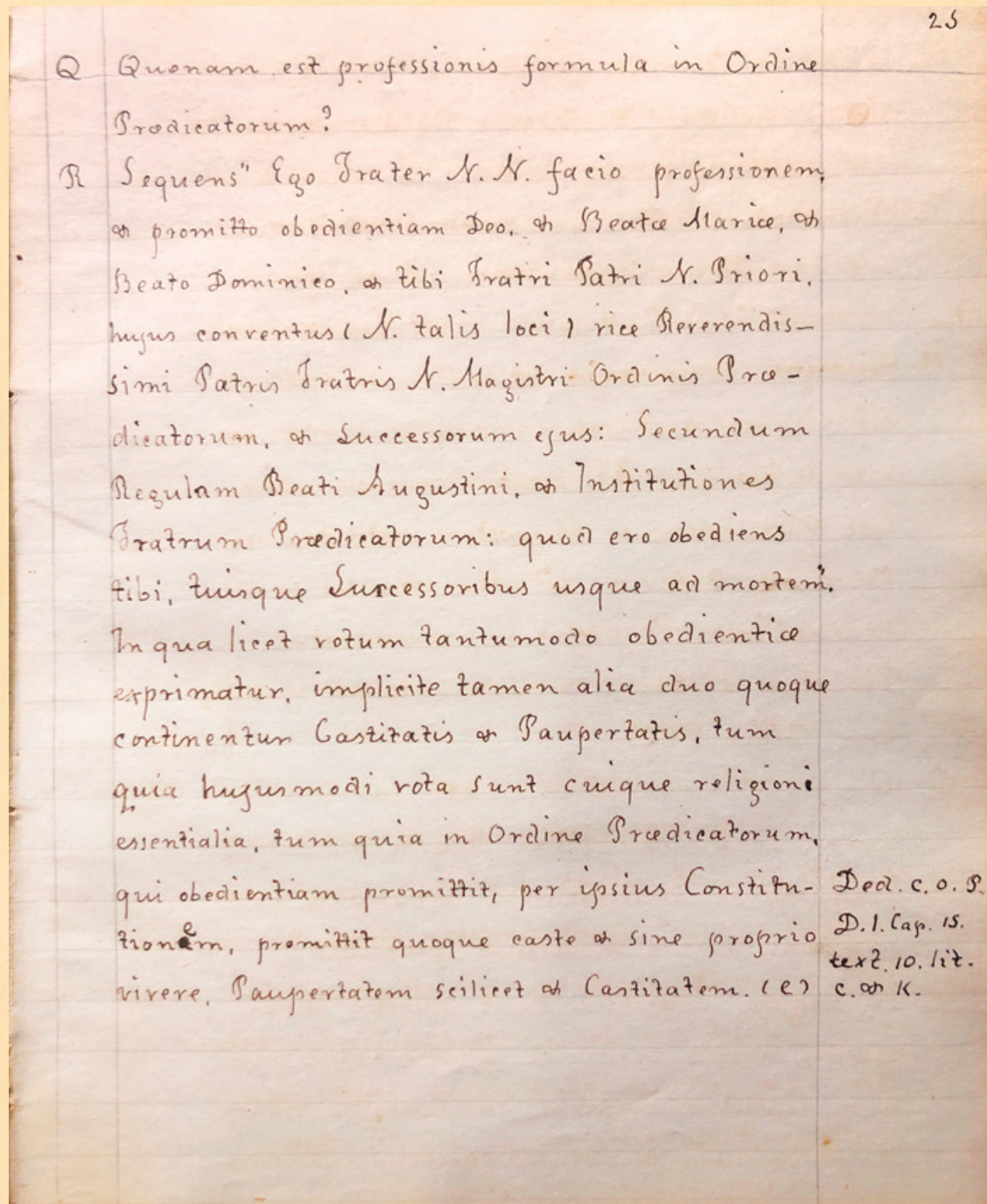
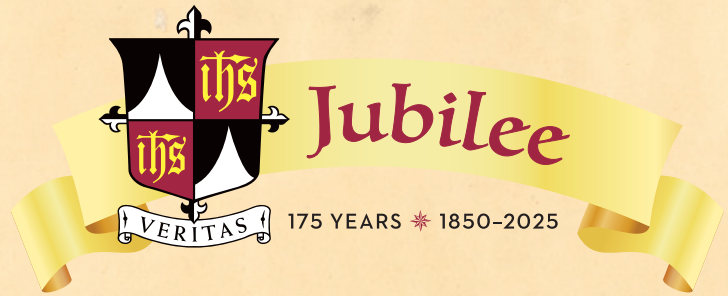
Institutiones Novitiorum: Fr. Vilarrasa's hand-written textbook for the Province's first novices

1851 Fr. Vilarrasa's Textbook for Novices

In 1850, Fr. Francis Sadoc Vilarrasa, O.P., came to California with Bishop Joseph Sadoc Alemany, O.P., to establish a new province of the Order of Preachers.

After Alemany began his duties as bishop of a vast frontier diocese, Vilarrasa became solely responsible for charting the first steps of this fledgling province.

Vilarrasa's most pressing concern was to educate the six novices who arrived from Spain in December 1851 and who formed the only hope of the province growing into the future. Here we have an excerpt from a textbook titled *Institutiones Novitiorum* ("Institutions for Novices") in Fr. Vilarrasa's own handwriting.



Q. What is the formula of profession in the Order of Preachers?

R. The following 'I, Brother [Name], make profession, and promise obedience to God, and to Blessed Mary, and to Blessed Dominic, and to you, Brother Father [Name], Prior, of this convent [Name of location] in the place of the Most Reverend Father Brother [Name], Master of the Order of Preachers, and his Successors: According to the Rule of Blessed Augustine, and the Institutions of the Friars Preachers: that I will be obedient to you and to your Successors until death.'

In which, although the vow of obedience alone is expressed, implicitly the two other vows of Chastity and Poverty are also contained, both because such vows are essential to any religious profession, and because in the Order of Preachers, whoever promises obedience, by its Constitution, also promises to live chastely and without one's own property, which is to promise, namely, Poverty and Chastity.

REQUIESCAT IN PACE



Fr. David O'Rourke, O.P.

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Fr. David O'Rourke, O.P., who died on his 92nd birthday on Wednesday, July 16, 2025, after celebrating his last Mass. Learn more about Fr. David O'Rourke, O.P., at opwest.org/frdavidorourke

Join the legacy of ongoing generosity toward the mission of St. Dominic by joining the 1216 Monthly Giving Society.

Members are recognized privately in the beautiful cloister garden of our House of Formation, the Priory of St. Albert the Great.



1216
MONTHLY GIVING
SOCIETY



A Profile in Generosity: Maria and Ed Padrones

Celebrating 43 years of community

Tell us about your involvement at St. Dominic's Church in Benicia.

We've been parishioners at St. Dominic's Church since we were married—for 43 years! We began as extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion and over the years, we have been involved in the music ministry, Catechism classes, youth group, RCIA team, the prayer group, the welcoming committee, and a faith-sharing group for married couples. Currently, Ed is involved in the Friday evening Adoration ministry and the Sunday music ministry, while Maria oversees the parish's Gabriel Project, which aids mothers in need.

Tell us about your connection to the Dominicans.

When we moved to Benicia, we found St. Dominic's very welcoming. We didn't immediately notice that it was a Dominican parish, but the Dominican presence became obvious over time. We met a young student brother, Br. Steve Maekawa, now Bishop Steve Maekawa, O.P. We couldn't make it to his ordination, but we were so proud of him. We also met Br. Michael Hurley, now the pastor at St. Dominic's in San Francisco.

We fondly remember the times when the Dominicans supported the St. Dominic's Youth Group (SDYG). The friars would offer support and encouragement during the Choose Christ retreats.

Why do you choose to give to the Dominicans?

Giving to our Dominicans helps them to continue their work here at St. Dominic's! We also support the novices and student brothers through Rosary Sunday, because they're the future of the Dominican Order. Supporting the friars gives us great joy, especially when we read about one of the Dominicans moving forward in his journey as a Dominican priest. We enjoy reading about their accomplishments

and feel that we played a small part in their journey.

What do the Dominicans offer that you believe is of the most value to our society today?

Their calling is evangelization. They're teachers and preachers. We love their homilies — each one is different and very enjoyable. Fr. Gregory, who just left for Rome, had a wonderful way of speaking to the parishioners. When we think of the Dominicans, we feel hope. We need more Dominicans to reach more souls.

Why do you think interest in the Dominican Order is growing?

We think it comes down to the education they receive as student brothers, which helps with the teaching, preaching, and evangelization they're able to offer as priests afterwards. The Dominicans live in community and there's a sense of brotherhood and family that we think is important and attracts young novices to the Order.

What do you wish other people knew about the Dominican Friars?

There's a difference when you're surrounded by Dominicans. They're great listeners and thinkers. They have kind hearts. They're not afraid to become part of a community.



Maria and Ed Padrones have been parishioners at St. Dominic's Church in Benicia for 43 years. They are grateful for the welcoming friendship of the Dominicans in their community!



Maria serves as one of the lead coordinators for St. Dominic's Gabriel Project, a ministry that supports mothers in need. Ed and Maria have found great joy in participating in many different ministries at St. Dominic's.