

Mission West

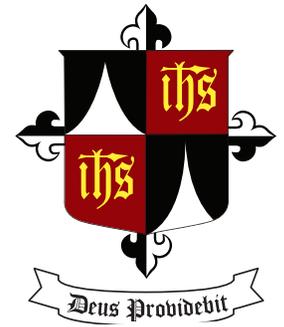


TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dominican Street Preaching 1
The Elegance of the
Incarnation 2
Rev. Br. Corwin Ordained ... 4
Why December 25th? 3
Keeping the Lights On 5
A Christian Life 5
Transitions & Updates 6
Rosary Sunday: Thank You! 8

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

Taking the Gospel to the Streets

Your support helps Dominicans courageously preach the Good News

Rosaries? Check.
Truth sign? Check.
Courage? Check.
Zeal? Check.

This is the routine of the Dominican student brothers at St. Albert's Priory as they prepare for another round of "Street Preaching" — their twice-monthly pilgrimage to proclaim the Gospel on the streets of the Bay Area.

Traveling into the heart of secular cities such as San Francisco and Berkeley, they stand on the sidewalk in their habits, offering the Good News to anyone who will hear them.



Inspired by St. Dominic's call to go out 'two by two' to preach the Gospel, they're doing what Dominicans have done for hundreds of years: using their gift of itinerant preaching to help people encounter the Gospel, wherever they may be.

"I really enjoy street preaching," said Br. Gregory. "You never know how the Holy Spirit will lead you, or what interesting and edifying conversations you will have that day."

And the fruit of this effort speaks for itself.

On one occasion the brothers stumbled upon an open-air Evangelical Christian concert. A number of guests noticed them and offered to pray with them. The brothers gladly accepted.

Soon, more and more people from the concert joined in praying with the brothers. Once they were done, the brothers had quite the group around them, so they preached about the joy of the Catholic faith and offered everyone rosaries.

It was wonderful to be there with them, to pray with them, and to share the joy of our Catholic faith.



Brs. Gregory and Chrysostom share the Good News with the people of Berkeley.

"They all gladly took rosaries and instructions on how to pray it," said Br. Chrysostom. "It was wonderful to be there with them, to pray with them, and to share the joy of our Catholic faith."

Supporting the work of the Western Dominican Province gives us the means to train more gifted men like

Br. Gregory and Br. Chrysostom, and the many other Dominican student brothers who participate in street preaching.

continued on pg 2...

The Elegance of the Incarnation

A Christmas message from Fr. Mark

Dear Friends,

Nearly 750 years ago our Dominican brother, St. Thomas Aquinas, asked whether the Incarnation was necessary for our salvation. He replied that because God could have saved us in any number of ways, the Incarnation was not necessary. But, he added, if by “necessary” we mean was the Incarnation the most convenient, the most elegant, or the most fitting way to save us, then the answer is yes — the Incarnation was absolutely necessary.

For what could more aptly increase our faith than to have God’s Son become a partner in our human nature? And what could be a better example, when we had forgotten what it meant to be God’s children, than to have God’s Son dwell among us and to go through every moment of our lives?

We might say the same about you, our friends and benefactors. One of the mottos of the Western Dominican Province is *Deus Providebit* — God Will Provide — so God will undoubtedly look out for our many needs. But I cannot imagine a clearer sign of the Incarnate Word in our midst than you, whose prayers and support enable us to carry out our mission to teach and preach for the salvation of souls.

For what could more aptly increase our faith than to have God’s Son become a partner in our human nature?

As we look forward to the birth of God’s Word made Flesh, let me offer to you the thanks of the brothers of the Western Dominican Province for giving a human face and human hands to God’s love.



We pray for you every day, but we will offer special prayers for you, your loved ones, and your intentions during this holy and joyous Christmas season. I beg you to remember us as we strive to proclaim the Good News of God’s Word in the 21st Century.

With deep thanks, I remain,

Always in Christ,

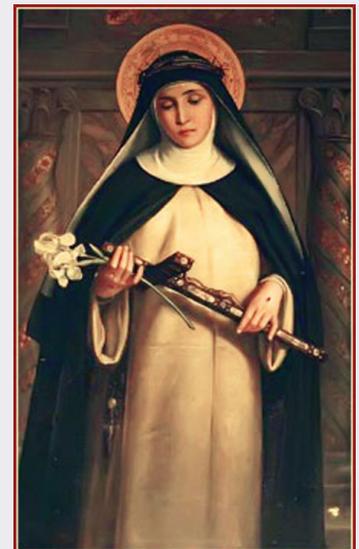
Mark Padrez, O.P.

Fr. Mark Padrez, O.P.
Prior Provincial

Preaching... continued from pg 1

Friars around the province go out into the world every day to teach and preach for the salvation of souls. Thanks to your support and God’s grace, we’re touching lives both inside and outside the walls of our churches.

THE QUOTABLE DOMINICAN



“If you are what you should be, you will set the world on fire.”

— ST. CATHERINE OF SIENA

A popular translation of her letter to Stefano di Corrado Maconi (1379), the original Italian reading: “Se sarete quello che devote essere, metterete fuoco in tutta Italia, non tanto costi.”

Welcoming the Light of the World

Why the date of Christmas matters

The near universal celebration of Christmas on December 25 dates to the early fourth century. It is commonly said that this date was chosen to counter the birthday of the pagan “Invincible Sun” on that date. Personally, I do not find that explanation very convincing.

St. Hippolytus of Rome’s *Commentary on Daniel* 4:23 (dated A.D. 203), gives December 25 as Christ’s birth date. Although some think this text is an interpolation, it is a very early one. Since celebration of the Invincible Sun’s birth was not instituted at Rome until the reign of Emperor Aurelian (A.D. 270-275), the earlier existence of the Christian date makes a borrowing from pagan practice unlikely.

So why would Christians have picked December 25? Luke’s Gospel tells us that the births of Jesus and John the Baptist were separated by six months, and that John the Baptist was conceived after his father Zacharias saw a vision in the Temple and was struck dumb. The popular stories

of the “Infancy Gospel of James” (early 100s) also say that Zacharias was a high priest (which he was not), implying that his vision happened on the Jewish Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur). That feast comes mostly in late September and probably did so in the second century too.

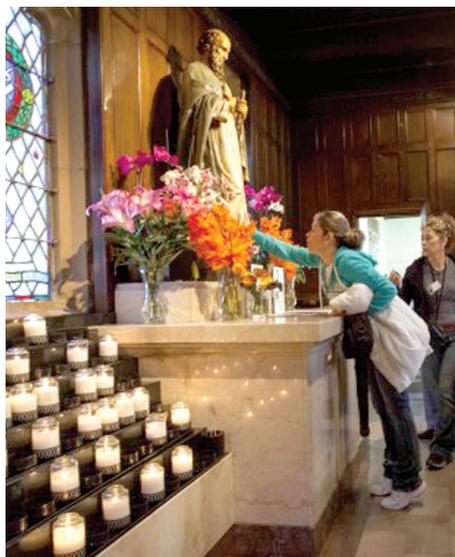
Ancient Christians could then have calculated nine months to the birthday of John the Baptist (late June) and then six months more to the birthday of Jesus (late December). Since the ancients believed June 24 was the longest day of the year and December 25 the shortest, settling on those as the exact dates would have been natural. St. Bede (700s) wrote that John the Baptist preached that he had to decrease and Christ had to increase, and that is exactly what the daylight does, beginning on their respective birthdays.

Fr. Augustine Thompson, O.P.
Fr. Augustine Thompson, O.P.,
M. Div., M.A., Ph.D., S.T.M.



One of the many images of the Nativity of Christ on display in the Cathedral of Lima in Peru.

Fr. Augustine is a history professor and Chair of the Philosophy Department at the Dominican School of Philosophy & Theology. His recent book, Francis of Assisi: A New Biography has received broad acclaim, and is available on Amazon.com.



The Shrine of St. Jude Thaddeus

ENROLL A LOVED ONE

St. Jude is the patron of difficult or impossible causes. Founded by the Western Dominican Province in 1935, the Shrine of St. Jude is located in beautiful St. Dominic’s Church in San Francisco, and welcomes pilgrims with loving consolation.

If you would like to visit the shrine, submit prayer requests, or enroll yourself or a loved one (living or deceased) in the apostolate, please visit www.stjude-shrine.org or call (415) 931-5919.

WWW.STJUDE-SHRINE.ORG



Br. Corwin Low receives the Laying on of Hands from the Most Rev. Charles Morerod, O.P.



Now a priest, Fr. Corwin's hands are anointed with sacred chrism, consecrating them to the service of the Lord.



Fr. Corwin is surrounded by friends outside of St. Dominic's Church in Benicia.

Br. Corwin Low Ordained to the Priesthood

The fruits of God's grace and your prayerful support

In a beautiful ceremony on October 25th, our brother, Corwin Saxon Low, O.P., was ordained to the priesthood of our Lord Jesus Christ by the Most Reverend Charles Morerod, O.P., Bishop of Lausanne, Geneva, and Fribourg.

"It was a remarkable experience," said Fr. Corwin. "I remember vividly lying prostrate, listening to the litany of saints — many of whom I chose — and I could actually feel their presence. I've heard many litanies before, but this time I felt like the saints were right there next to me."

Don't be afraid to make radical decisions in your life, especially when it involves seeking the Truth!

— Fr. Corwin

Surrounded by family, friends, and a host of fellow Dominicans at St. Dominic's Church in Benicia, CA, Br. Corwin received the Laying on of Hands and the Invocation of the Holy Spirit, making him Fr. Corwin.

"I see the world desperately in need of the Sacraments — that interaction with Christ," reflected Fr. Corwin, "and now that I'm a priest, I'm so grateful to be able to offer that to people."

When asked what he might say to someone discerning a vocation to religious life, Fr. Corwin said, "Don't be afraid to make radical decisions in your life, especially when it involves seeking the Truth!"



Fr. Corwin offers Dolores Meehana blessing following his ordination.

Fr. Corwin's first assignment is to serve the people of St. Dominic's in Benicia. Thank you for supporting his vocation and the many others around the province.

Keeping the Lights On

The surprising role of Blessed Sacrament Church's spire

"Hey," shouted Gary's friend, "why can't you keep those lights running on the steeple? They're always going out!"

Gary McDonald, Blessed Sacrament Church's Facilities Manager, had heard this good-humored complaint from his friends before. But replacing the old lights that illuminate the church's large neogothic spire is a constant battle.

The aging wires, bad bulbs, and dangerous 129-foot climb up the steeple, mean that all four lights on top are rarely working at the same time.

"The spire is beautiful when fully lit," Gary said. "It's just incredibly difficult to keep that aging light system operational."

Gary's friends aren't just Sunday parishioners, however, wanting to see their majestic spire lit. No, they're airline pilots, and they need the steeple illuminated at night so they can land at Sea-Tac International airport in Seattle.

"My friends tell me that the old-timers enjoy keeping their pilot skills sharp by landing manually from time to time," said Gary, "as opposed to just letting the autopilot do it all. When they do that, they apparently rely on Blessed Sacrament's illuminated steeple as one of their fixed reference points during their final turn into Sea-Tac airport."

Though Blessed Sacrament's spire isn't critical to the pilots (they have other



Blessed Sacrament's spire guides pilots to Sea-Tac airport.

references points to use), it serves as a fun commentary when viewed through the lens of our faith. Just as the light of the steeple leads pilots to a safe landing, the light of Christ leads us to our safe landing in Heaven.

So the next time you see a church spire, make sure they have the lights on. It may be more important than you think.

Defining the Christian Life

How giving makes us more like God

Everybody loves Christmas gifts! All of us experience a thrill when we glimpse the wrapped packages under the tree. We may guess that it's only a pair of socks, or perhaps the family's petrified fruitcake, but our first view of Christmas presents is a moment of joy.

And yet, we've already received the best Christmas present: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son" (John 3:16). God's nature is love, as St. John points out. And genuine love, as opposed to a mere desire for something, always expresses itself in giving. Thus God the Father has demonstrated his character of love by first giving us life, and then by giving us his Son. Even more amazing is the truth that the Son, this gift to us, is a person both fully human and fully divine.

Our Christian faith begins with a gift, and this is the basis of giving Christmas presents. We've received a gift — better, the Gift — and we respond by giving gifts to others.

The story is told of a man who grumbled to his priest as he left Mass one Sunday: "That's all I hear at Church, 'Give, give, give.'" The pastor paused a moment, then replied, "Why, that's the best definition of the Christian life I've ever heard!"

God's love did not stop with the birth of his Son. Saint Peter pointed out that Jesus showed his love and giving nature as "he went about doing good" (Acts 10:38). Indeed, Saint Paul instructed us

to "keep in mind the words of the Lord Jesus who himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive'" (Acts 20:35).

Our Christian faith begins with a gift, and this is the basis of giving Christmas presents. We've received a gift — better, the Gift — and we respond by giving gifts to others.

As you plan your Christmas giving, please consider including a gift to the Western Dominican Province. Our friars seek to be agents of Christ's love as they preach the Word of God and convey his grace through the sacraments. This is only possible by God's grace and through your generosity. May this holy season be full of the Lord's blessings!

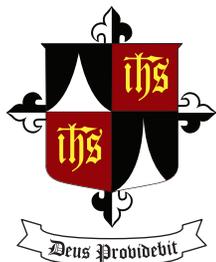
TRANSITIONS & UPDATES

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

WHAT'S DIFFERENT ABOUT THE PROVINCE CREST?

You may have noticed a change to the crest on the front of this newsletter, which now includes

the words "Deus Providebit" along the bottom. The text is the official motto of the province, which means "God will provide." Other mottos associated with the Dominicans include "veritas", which means "truth", and "Laudare, Benedicere, Prædicare", which means "to Praise, to Bless, to Preach."



THANK YOU! \$25,000 MATCHING CHALLENGE MET!



Fr. Antoninus gives everyone a 'thumbs up' for meeting the matching challenge!

Thanks to you, we've met the \$25,000 matching challenge for our New Media Communications and Evangelization Project, exceeding the match by over \$5,000 dollars! We now have the funds necessary to complete this important project.

Stay tuned for exciting announcements in early 2015 as we roll out a new, media-rich website, communication tools, and social media projects. Thank you for bringing 800 years of Dominican preaching to the internet!

POPE ANNOUNCES THE YEAR OF CONSECRATED LIFE

Ten years after Pope Saint John Paul II announced the Year of the Eucharist, Pope Francis has called us to celebrate the Year of Consecrated Life. Between Nov. 29, 2014 and Feb. 2, 2016, the universal Church will offer a number of events, such as presentations and an "open house," to help the faithful better understand the vocation of those who take vows as consecrated religious. Contact your local community of Dominicans to find out what they are planning.

CONGRATULATIONS, BLESSED SACRAMENT CHURCH!

The Dominican Friars of the Western Province send their sincere gratitude and appreciation to the parishioners and friends of Blessed Sacrament Parish for meeting (and exceeding!) your Mission West Campaign goal of \$354,343. Your contributions have made a difference in the lives of the friars, and stand as a testament to your faith and generosity. Thank you!



OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE, PATRONESS OF THE WESTERN PROVINCE

December 12th is a special day for the Western Dominican Province. Not only do we honor our Lady of Guadalupe as patroness of the Americas, we also give thanks for her patronage over the province. In 2012, at a special assembly of the brethren, Fr. Mark Padrez, O.P., consecrated the province to Our Lady of Guadalupe, asking for her intercession and protection.

END OF YEAR GIVING IS HERE!

With the tax year ending December 31st, please consider the Western Dominican Province in your end of year giving plans. Donations to the province are deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law, and help the Dominicans bring souls to Christ. Thank you for your kindness!

GIVE ONLINE AT WWW.OPWEST.ORG/DONATE

NEWS FROM THE DSPT

The Dominican School of Philosophy & Theology is pleased to announce **Fr. Justin Gable, O.P., Ph.D.**, as its newest faculty member. Fr. Justin will be teaching classes on philosophy, ethics, logic, and Thomism, training the next generation of Church leaders to defend the faith and proclaim the Gospel. Learn more at www.dspt.edu.



Fr. Justin Gable, O.P.

Fr. Anselm Ramelow, O.P., is editor of a new publication titled, *God: Reason & Reality* (Amazon). The text addresses miracles, the science of life, and the problems of language when talking about the nature of God. Included are contributions from well-known academics, including **Fr. Michael Dodds, O.P.**



Fr. Anselm Ramelow, O.P.

ST. ANDREW'S NEWMAN CENTER CELEBRATES 25TH ANNIVERSARY

In late October of 2014, the St. Andrew Newman Center in Riverside, CA, had a number of reasons to celebrate, including: the 25-year anniversary of the dedication of the chapel; the Oktoberfest dinner, which drew a record crowd; and the installation of Fr. Michael Augustine Amabisco, O.P., as pastor.



Fr. Mark Padrez celebrates with parishioners of St. Andrew's Newman Center.

PROVINCE PREPARES FOR CHAPTER MEETING

This January will be an exciting time for the Dominicans of the Province of the Most Holy Name of Jesus. In addition to celebrating our titular feast on January 3rd, delegates from throughout the province will come together at St. Albert's Priory to elect our leadership for the next four years, as well as revise our rules of governance, in accord with the Order's legislation. Please pray for the friars during this important time.

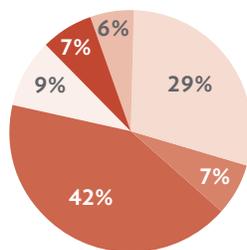
PHILOSOPHY VS. THEOLOGY: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Ever wonder why theologians talk so much about philosophers? You might be interested to know the reason is critical to articulating our Catholic faith.

Check out a great series of free, short videos by the DSPT illuminating the relationships between philosophy and theology at www.dspt.edu/youtube.

MISSION WEST CAMPAIGN UPDATE \$2.6M

The Mission West campaign raises critical funds for Dominican formation, healthcare, and our school of philosophy and theology. Thank you to all who have contributed! Note: Since the fall of 2013, Rosary Sunday funds have counted towards a ministry's campaign goal. Hence, they are included in the chart.



- Elderly and Infirm Friar Care: \$193,738
- Dominican School Restricted: \$146,397
- Dominican School Renovation Loan Repayment: \$743,732
- Initial and Ongoing Friar Formation: \$183,899
- Greatest Need: \$1,089,896
- Rosary Sunday: Dominican Students: \$243,292

PLEASE NOTE: NUMBERS AS OF 10/30/14 AND UNAUDITED.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS AND FAITHFUL SUPPORT!

Thank You for Supporting Rosary Sunday

Your generosity trains the future priests and brothers of our province

Thank you to everyone around the province who has made a gift, or offered a prayer, toward our annual *Rosary Sunday: Dominican Student Appeal!*

When men accept God's call to enter the Dominican Order, they trust in the generosity of faithful people like you. Right now, twenty-six faithful young men are doing just that.

Supporting the annual *Rosary Sunday Dominican Student Appeal* will provide Dominican student brothers with the best possible education and formation. More importantly, you'll help launch them into lives of preaching and teaching for the salvation of souls.

Because of the welcoming of Dominicans, and my Dad, I have returned to the Catholic Church. I am very blessed to have this order of priests in my life.

— Margaret from Eugene, OR

Your support is a great blessing to the Dominicans, and a priceless gift to the world through the vocation of these faithful men.

If you haven't already, please consider making a gift to our *Rosary Sunday: Dominican Student Appeal* online at www.opwest.org/donate or by using the enclosed envelope.



I always pray for all our benefactors, because I know I couldn't devote my life to this vocation without their help.

— Br. Chrysostom Mijinke, O.P.



Br. Cody with Gabe and Katie, friends of the Western Province from Blessed Sacrament Parish in Seattle.

Helping to sponsor the formation of a Dominican student brother is a priceless gift to the world. That's because your gift will...

- Help train thoughtful and articulate Dominicans to teach in our communities.
- Help give the world great preachers and evangelists to defend the Catholic faith.
- Help fund the education of gifted writers and scholars who will enrich the Church.
- Help form compassionate and faithful Dominican priests and brothers to care for our family and friends in their hour of greatest need.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our gratitude to the following individuals for making this newsletter possible

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Fr. Boniface Willard, O.P.	Jesson Mata
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Fr. Corwin Low, O.P.	Br. Michael James Rivera, O.P.
Debbie Gonzalez	Molly McCoy (design)
Fletcher and Kay Bingham	Fr. Reginald Martin, O.P.
Br. Gregory Liu, O.P.	

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