



MISSION WEST

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

ANCHORS OF HOPE

- ✦ A Double Jubilee
- ✦ Pier Giorgio Frassati to be Canonized
- ✦ The Virtue of Hope
- ✦ Dominicans Defend the Sanctity of Life

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who in his great mercy gave us a new birth to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.” —1 Peter 1:3

THE QUOTABLE DOMINICAN

Bl. Pier Giorgio Frassati, T.O.P.

1901-1925

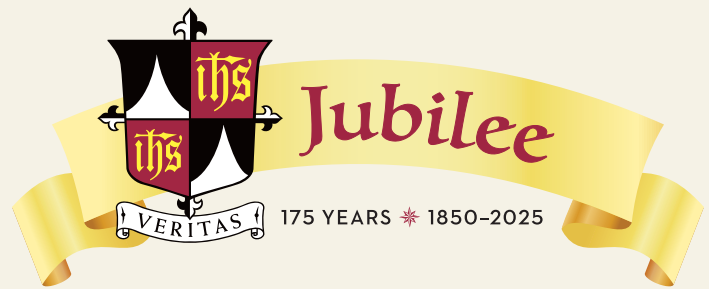
Feast Day: July 4

“Modern society is drowning in the sorrows of human passions, and it is distancing itself from every ideal of love and peace. Catholics, we and you, must bring the breath of goodness that can only spring from faith in Christ.”



Pier Giorgio was a Dominican Tertiary (lay Dominican). He died at the age of 24, in 1925, after contracting polio while caring for the sick. He will be canonized on August 3, 2025, during this summer's Jubilee of Youth.

DID YOU KNOW?



2025 is not only a Jubilee year for the church, but it also marks the 175th anniversary of the beginnings of the Western Dominican Province.



175 years ago, on December 6, 1850, the founder of our Province, Fr. Joseph Sadoc Alemany, O.P., arrived in San Francisco with his companions Fr. Francis Sadoc Vilarrasa, O.P., and Sr. Mary Goemaere, O.P., to lay the foundations of what would become the Western Dominican Province.

To learn more about the 175-year history of the Province and how we are commemorating this Jubilee, visit opwest.org/175.

Cover Photo: Friars hike Proxy Falls, near McKenzie Bridge, Oregon. Many of our friars enjoy the beauty of God's creation, just like the soon-to-be-canonized Dominican Tertiary, Pier Giorgio Frassati (left).

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

From the Prior Provincial



My dear friends,

By the time you receive this, we will have entered the great joy of Easter! Praise the Lord!

The theme of this Year of Jubilee in the Church is “pilgrimage of hope.” As my brother, Fr. Michael Sherwin, O.P., reminds us in his incisive essay (pg. 8–9), Christian hope has the aspects of “already” and “not yet.”

As a reality already infused deeply within us by Almighty God, hope acts as the “sure and steadfast anchor of the soul” (Hebrews 6:19); but as we sail the waves of life toward a heavenly homeland not yet attained, we look to “signs of hope” along the way (see the Jubilee document, *Spes non confundit*).

And there are *so many* such signs of hope!

I invite you to contemplate the works of mercy carried out by my brothers, including their stand for the sanctity of human life at the West Coast Walk for Life, the education of generations of students through 100 years at St. Dominic’s School in Eagle Rock, and the support for refugees in Ukraine which *you* compassionately made possible.

Or consider my brothers’ expansion to new frontiers of evangelization through media efforts like our documentary *Sleigh Ride* and the proclamation of faith through film in an exhibition titled *The Spirit of Cinema*.

I especially invite you to meditate on the decades of faithful preaching offered by the brethren who celebrate jubilees of their priestly ordinations, the seeds of future preaching found in the upcoming ordination of several student brothers, and finally, the energetic hope of thousands of college students exploring their vocations in Christ, including among the Order of Preachers!

Friends, the hope given us by Christ’s resurrection is “imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven” (1 Peter 1:3-4). As we journey with this hope, let us joyfully acknowledge the signs of our future homeland in these great things happening among us! I pray you have a blessed Easter season, and I ask for your prayers for myself and my brethren!

In Christ and St. Dominic,

Fr. Christopher Fadok, O.P.
Prior Provincial



Photo by Elle Ornido

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DOMIN
FOR



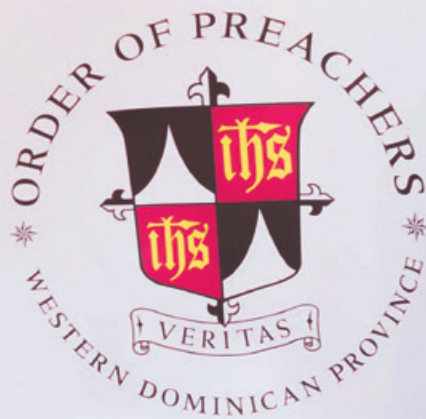
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Dominicans Join Tens of Thousands in Defending the Sanctity of Life

Dominican friars and sisters participated in the Walk for Life West Coast in San Francisco this January. Your support of the Dominicans helps us promote the dignity of all human life, from conception to natural death!



DOMINICANS
FOR LIFE



opwest.org
CONNECT WITH US   

Dominicans Minister at SEEK 2025

This past January, a modest group of Catholics gathered for FOCUS's SEEK 2025 conference in the heart of Mormon territory. By a modest group, I mean 17,000 Catholic university students and other participants from around the country. In the face of dwindling numbers of Mass attendees and nationwide efforts to "consolidate" parishes, I encountered a vibrant new generation of Catholics, eagerly being equipped to bring the message of Jesus Christ to the world.

From my corner of the large hall, where religious orders and vendors gathered to interact with a seemingly incalculable number of students, I talked with hundreds of Catholic students curious to learn about Dominican life. We called this corner "Dominican Row" because it gathered Dominicans from all four United States provinces and several congregations of Dominican sisters.



Endless streams of students came to ask us questions—ranging from abstract theological topics to the reason we wear white habits—and dozens expressed interest in learning more about the Order of Preachers and meeting with our Vocation Director, Fr. John Winkowitsch, O.P.,

to learn more about the Dominican way of life.

At times, it seems that our Lord's adage that "the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few" was true of a bygone era but not true today. These 17,000 Catholics taught me that not only is the harvest abundant, but the Lord is truly ready to fulfill His promise of "sending out laborers into His harvest" to bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the world.



Rev. Br. Nathaniel
Maria Mayne, O.P.

COME AND SEE VOCATION WEEKENDS

October 10-12, 2025 February 13-15, 2026
November 21-23, 2025 April 17-19, 2026



Western
Dominican
Province
opwest.org

TO REGISTER, CONTACT:
Fr. John Winkowitsch, O.P.,
Vocation Director
vocations@opwest.org
opwest.org/comeandsee



Interested?

SAVE THE DATE

May 3: Solemn Vows

May 24: DSPT Graduation

May 30: Ordinations to the
Presbyterate

December 6: Black and White Gala

TO LEARN MORE VISIT **OPWEST.ORG**



Sleigh Ride Premieres Along the West Coast

The Western Dominican Province's media team shares the beauty of Alaska mission territory

During the month of December, the Dominican Friars celebrated the premiere of *Sleigh Ride: Christmas in the Last Frontier*. Co-produced with Openlight Media, *Sleigh Ride* is the first documentary film produced by the Western Dominican Province's new media apostolate, led by Fr. Brad Elliott, O.P. The film documents the harrowing mission of two Dominican friars as they travel over 28 hours and 548 miles during the coldest and darkest part of the year to celebrate Christmas Mass for three small villages in remote Alaska that have no assigned priest.

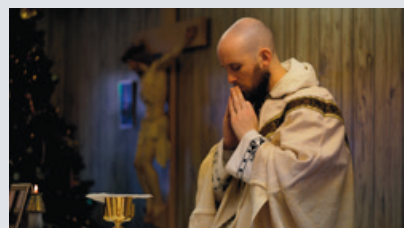
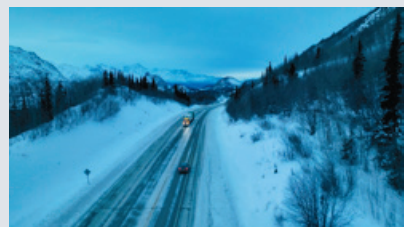
The film debuted at three events along the West Coast. On December 13, 2024, the Dominican Friars premiered *Sleigh Ride* at the Anchorage International Film Festival. The first showing of the film sold out, prompting the festival organizers to add two additional screenings throughout the

weekend. The screening of the film at the festival was covered by local publications.

On December 14, *Sleigh Ride* was screened again at the Bear Tooth Theatre in Anchorage, with Bishop Steven Maekawa, O.P., and over 400 supporters in attendance. The event brought the Catholic community together to celebrate the evangelical mission of the friars and their 50 years of ministry in Alaska.

Wrapping up the week, on December 17, *Sleigh Ride* premiered in the San Francisco Bay Area at the Rheem Theatre to an audience of over 50 friars and 300 friends and supporters. Shortly after, the film was released on YouTube, where it reached more than 35,000 views by Christmas.

The film is currently being considered in over 12 film festivals in the United States and Europe. *Sleigh Ride* can be viewed at YouTube.com/opwest.





**Fr. Michael
Sherwin, O.P.**

*Professor of
Fundamental Moral
Theology at the
Pontifical University
of St. Thomas
Aquinas, Rome*

Hope, the Virtue of Holy Desire

The Christian life is a call to love God and neighbor. We live charity, however, through faith and hope (1 Cor 13:7). The virtue of faith disposes us to believe what the Lord reveals to us about Himself. When we love God, we do so from within this revealed knowledge. But what about hope? What does the virtue of hope dispose us to do? Indeed, what does it mean to hope?

Hope, as a human emotion, seems to express a form of desire. When, for example, we say that we hope it will be sunny today, we express the desire for a sunny day. Notice, too, that we are desiring something that is not directly under our control. Hope is thus a

unique form of desire. It is the desire for something difficult to obtain. The New Testament authors understood this natural emotion and chose the Greek term for it—*elpis*—to express a supernatural gift that is analogous to this emotion. Like the emotion, theological hope is a desire for something difficult to obtain. Theological hope, however, exists on a deeper level. It is a desire that flows from a theological virtue infused into our wills. To help us understand why God gives us this infused desire, St. Thomas Aquinas employs the analogy of friendship. Just as friendship with a person would be impossible if we were ignorant of that person's existence (hence the importance of faith), so too

St. Dominic School in Eagle Rock, California, Celebrates 100 Years

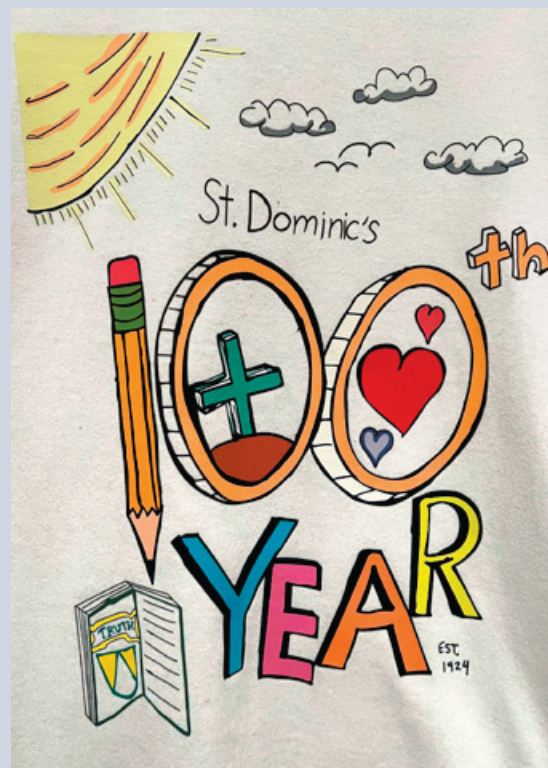
The Dominicans of the Western Province have had an official presence in Los Angeles since 1920, when St. Dominic Church was founded. After their ministry in the Eagle Rock neighborhood began, the friars saw a great need for a Catholic parochial school and put out an appeal for teachers.

The Dominican Sisters of San Rafael answered that appeal and sent sisters from Northern California to join in this new ministry in Los Angeles, starting their work at St. Dominic School in 1924.

In its first year, the school opened with just four teachers and about 100 students. As the years passed and enrollment grew, both the friars and sisters continued to hope that St. Dominic School would be a place where students would graduate with a firm foundation in, knowledge of, and love of the faith.

As pastors and principals left their mark on the school, parents of students—always the primary educators of their children—also contributed their support. It was this support and commitment from parents which gave the school its solid foundation throughout the years and provided the community that the school needed to survive.

On November 9, 2024, St. Dominic School celebrated 100 years of Catholic education. Looking back at the humble beginnings of the school, both the Dominican Sisters of San Rafael and the Western Dominican Friars give glory to God that the school is celebrating 100 years. Saint Dominic's remains an educational community with a heart that embraces each child as a part of its family.



With the Catholic faith at the core of all they do, the friars, sisters, faculty, staff, and parents have worked together to create an amazing environment for students of St. Dominic's to thrive and learn. Given its long history, we pray that St. Dominic School may continue to grow for another hundred years and more.

friendship would be impossible if we despaired of ever meeting that person: hence the importance of supernatural hope (*Summa Theologiae* I-II 65.5). In Christ, the Lord reveals Himself to us and infuses into our hearts a desire for union with Him.

For the ancients, the attainment of union with God seemed impossible. Not only was the distance between God and humans too great for friendship to exist between them, but bodily resurrection seemed to be an utter fantasy (Acts 17:32). The Lord, however, establishes us in “communion with his Son” (1 Cor 1:9) and thereby makes divine friendship possible. In Christ and through the action of the Holy Spirit, the object of hope’s desire becomes possible. Thus, the *Catechism* defines hope as the virtue “by which we desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ’s promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit” (n. 1817). Hope is, therefore, a holy desire for the communal joys—the kingdom—that God the Father makes possible for us through the saving missions of the Son and Spirit.

But just as faith—which is replaced by the vision of God in heaven—is temporary, so too is hope. Like a child’s desire for his mother’s milk, hope’s desire for God will be replaced when we attain the spiritual adulthood of union with God in heaven. While in this world, we live as wayfarers (1 Pt 2:11), because our citizenship is in heaven (Phil 3:20). Hope thus desires God as an absent good, as the Psalmist proclaims: “like the deer that longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for you, O God” (Ps 42:2). This union, does, however, already begin in this life, since charity loves God from a union of affections, as Jesus himself explains: “Whoever loves me will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our dwelling with him” (Jn 14:23). Hope is thus a holy desire for a fulfillment found only in heaven but begun in this life through the life of charity.

Jubilarians Celebrate Decades of Ministry

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

70 YEARS



Fr. Hilary Martin, O.P.

40 YEARS



Fr. Nathan
Castle, O.P.



Fr. Kenneth
Gumbert, O.P.



Fr. Augustine
Thompson, O.P.

25 YEARS



Fr. Bryan Kromholtz, O.P.

10 YEARS



Fr. Gabriel Mosher, O.P.

Dominicans Serve as Stewards of Beauty in the Modern World

The Blackfriars Gallery at DSPT houses a collection of Biblical movie posters

Movies were born of light. So begins Fr. Michael Morris, O.P. (†2016), in a catalog essay from 2009 that describes the historical and cultural importance of the Biblical Movie Poster Collection he developed, that is now housed at Blackfriars Gallery at the Dominican School of Philosophy & Theology (DSPT). Curated over several decades, this spectacular collection is a unique tribute to both the memory of Fr. Michael and to his keen insight into the relationship between religion and cinema, an academic discipline he passionately pursued during his tenure at DSPT. Since his death, the collection and other art objects along with a specialized library were transferred by the Province to DSPT. Thanks to the generosity of the Province and several benefactors, Blackfriars Gallery has been able to inventory and catalog the entire art collection and library, making them useful for education and evangelization.

Thanks to the work of several of Fr. Michael's doctoral students, who are now professionals in the movie industry, an online catalog of the Biblical Movie Poster Collection is now available: dspt.edu/biblical-movie-poster-collection. In the upcoming month, a video history and a podcast series will also be available. The goal is to develop marketing materials that will interest galleries, universities, and even parish ministry sites to use the collection for education and evangelization on a variety of topics in religion and material culture.

To begin this work, generous benefactors, Raul and Martha Campos (see page 12), enabled us to attend the 2024 International Conference on Religion & Film hosted by Fuller Theological Seminary (Pasadena, CA). We provided six posters to the conference, which generated a lot of excitement. More than 80 participants from across the globe

observed that, while the collection is important and valuable, it needs wider promotion and opportunities for display. Participating in the conference also resulted in new relationships with those eager to help our efforts. For example, a large exhibition is being hosted at La Sierra University (Riverside, CA), providing an important opportunity for publicity and evangelization. More locally, Blackfriars Gallery is sponsoring a joint exhibition this Spring 2025 semester with colleagues from Manresa Gallery at the Jesuit School of Theology. Entitled *The Spirit of Cinema*, the collection is available for viewing now through May 2025. For more information about these exhibitions and coming attractions visit the Blackfriars Gallery website: dspt.edu/spirit-of-cinema-illuminating-journey-faith.

If you are interested in hosting this Biblical Movie Poster Collection or supporting the ongoing efforts, please contact Fr. Chris Renz, O.P., at crenz@dspt.edu.



Fr. Chris Renz, O.P.

Director of the Dominican School of Philosophy & Theology's Blackfriars Gallery

See more:



An exhibit of 28 movie posters on display at Brandstater Gallery at La Sierra University.

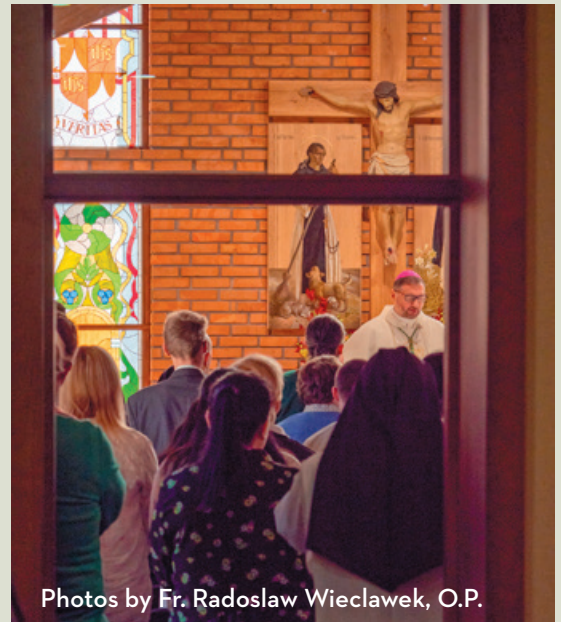


Dominicans in Fastiv, Ukraine, Thank You for Your Generosity



Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine in February of 2022, generous friends like you have provided over \$1.3 million in direct support to Ukrainian refugees served by our Dominican brothers in Poland and Ukraine.

The Ukrainian Dominican Province used the funds to rebuild a center for housing refugee families in Fastiv, Ukraine, which included a beautiful chapel. In gratitude for the help of the Western Dominican Province and our generous benefactors, they incorporated the Western Dominican Province crest into one of the chapel's stained-glass windows near the altar (upper-left window). We are deeply honored by this gesture, one that will live on in perpetuity as a testament to the kindness and prayers of friends like you.



Photos by Fr. Radoslaw Wieclawek, O.P.



A Profile in Generosity: Raul and Martha Campos

Investing in truth, beauty, and goodness

How did you meet the Dominicans?

Raul: I became interested in the Dominicans after reading St. Thomas Aquinas. I was captivated by how he reconciled the differences between his faith and the scientific perspectives of his time through beautifully reasoned arguments. This motivated me to enroll in Fr. Michael Dodds, O.P.'s class on the Philosophy of Nature at the Dominican School of Philosophy & Theology. I loved the class, the school, and the intellectual atmosphere there. I also appreciate how relevant the Dominicans' approach to reconciling faith and reason is today in addressing the challenges we face in our times.

What has been most impactful for you about your relationship with the Dominicans?

Raul: What impresses me most about Dominicans is their way of tackling challenges with remarkable intelligence, humility, genuine compassion, and respect for others. Their actions inspire me to follow their example in my own life.

Martha: I have always been struck by the liturgies celebrated by the Dominicans. It wasn't just the beauty of the Mass that was striking, it was also the reverence with which it was celebrated. Furthermore, there's an impressive attractiveness to the Dominican charism: the spirituality, the education, the preaching, which the Church really needs right now. Additionally, the Dominicans are so filled with joy, thanks to their dedication to clarity and to the truth.

Tell us more about your connection to the Blackfriars Gallery at DSPT.

Raul: We contributed to Fr. Chris Renz, O.P.'s efforts to care for and promote DSPT's collection of Christian-themed movie posters. Fr. Chris and I have had numerous discussions about these vintage movie posters and how art can bridge the gap between the secular and religious worlds.

Martha: Both of our kids are artists, and art has played a central role in our family. Art just seems to be part of the Dominican message: the good, the true, and the beautiful.



Raul and Martha Campos are generous friends of the Province and benefactors of the DSPT's Blackfriars Gallery.



Raul and Martha are stewards of beauty in their own home. Both the Campos children are artists, and Raul and Martha commission works of art from them that glorify God: St. Thomas Aquinas (left) and Mary with the infant Jesus (right).

Is there anything you wish people knew about the Dominicans?

Raul: I'm constantly telling people about the Dominicans. What I tell them is to go hear the preaching from the Order of Preachers! The way they convey the faith might resonate with you. Listening to the Dominicans has been the highlight of my experience.

Martha: I wish the Dominicans had a megaphone! More people need to hear what they have to say.