



MISSION WEST

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

SENT TO SERVE

Your faith and generosity helps us
make a difference in the world

- ✦ When the World Says No to Commitment
- ✦ Dominican Service on the Frontiers
- ✦ Make a Difference Today, Tomorrow and Forever



DID YOU KNOW?

Every child in California learns about the 21 missions founded throughout the state by the Franciscans. But did you know that the Dominicans established a similar string of missions south of the border in Baja California? Today, with the support of faithful friends like you, Dominicans are still working in Baja and MexiCali, serving the people of God and preaching the Gospel.

THE QUOTABLE DOMINICAN

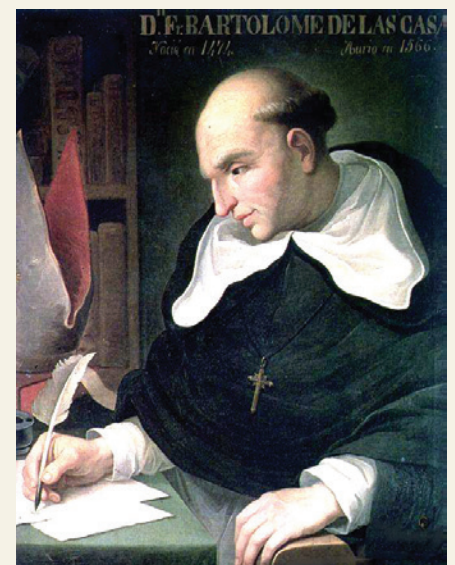
Bartolomé de las Casas

16th century friar, historian, and defender of human dignity.

The first resident Bishop of Chiapas, Mexico.

“...of all men and of each individual there is but one definition, and this is that they are rational. All have understanding and will and free choice, as all are made in the image and likeness of God... Thus the entire human race is one.”

From *Apologética Historia*



Cover Photo: Fr. Bart de la Torre, O.P., provides school supplies for the poor members of our mission in Mexicali, Mexico. Through the kindness of benefactors like you, the friars continue their long history of bringing spiritual and temporal relief to the impoverished of our world.

from the vicar provincial for advancement



Dear Friends of St. Dominic,

From the first Pentecost, emboldened with the Holy Spirit, the Church has set out to preach the Good News throughout the world. The Dominicans have trumpeted this news of salvation to the ends of the earth, both to those who have never heard the Gospel, and those whose faith has grown cold.

In the Americas, the Dominicans were one of the religious orders on the forefront of evangelization. And during the 19th century, **as people moved west for gold, Dominicans moved west for souls.** All along the way, the generosity of friends like you has allowed us to bring many souls to Christ.

In Chiapas and Oaxaca in southern Mexico, Dominican friars preached the Truth of the Gospel and also defended the rights of the indigenous peoples against those who would oppress them.

Like the Franciscans, who evangelized Alta California, the Dominicans evangelized Baja California, creating a string of missions.

In the capital of Baja, on the frontier with the United States, sits the city of Mexicali. One million people have settled in this city, drawn by hopes of a better life and better jobs with the U.S. companies that have set up factories there.

With your help, we Western Dominicans have come too—building churches and preaching the Gospel. Our mission there continues to provide the sacraments, and enflame the hearts of the people in this often tumultuous border region. To date, we have built eight churches in Mexicali, four of which are now fully functioning parishes in the Diocese of Mexicali.

Not to be forgotten, we also have faithful missionaries working in other places around the globe, including Guatemala, Equatorial Guinea and Iraq.

Please keep all our missionaries in your prayers. The generosity and goodness of the people they serve is inspiring. But they are a people in need, and with your help, we can be there to support them, both temporally and spiritually.

Thanks to your prayerful support, the souls in these missionary territories are not forgotten.

In Christ and St. Dominic,

Very Rev. Fr. James Junípero Moore, O.P.
Vicar Provincial for Advancement

When the World Says ‘No’ to Commitment, Dominicans Say Yes

With your support, these friars are ready for a life of service

In recent years, the Church has expressed disappointment in a culture that routinely rejects lifetime commitment, noting that our world sees things as too provisional and fears definitive commitments.

But a lifetime devotion to our vocation is what offers us the safety and peace needed to persevere through the trials of life as we journey towards Heaven.

Thankfully, not everyone rejects lifetime commitment. And with the help of friends like you, three of our brothers have had the support and prayers needed to persevere in giving their lives completely to God, and to you, forever.

Brs. Cody Jorgensen, O.P., Andrew Opsahl, O.P., and Pius Youn, O.P., took their solemn vows this past April, making them Dominicans for life. If you can imagine the joyful anxiety of a wedding day, then you can understand the excitement around solemn vows.

“When I think of solemn vows I see the manifestation of God’s will in my life,” shared Br. Cody. “After almost a decade of discernment, there’s a renewed peace in my heart that ‘Yes, this is where God has called me.’ It’s very freeing to abandon myself so completely to God.”

“The graces that a religious receives by his or her commitment to the evangelical counsels lead one to a state of joy,” says Br. Pius. “In a culture where commitment is not entirely respected, especially a lifetime commitment, I’m happy to give my life to Christ.”

In a world that’s always looking for the “next best thing,” thank you for supporting these faithful sons of St. Dominic in giving their lives—forever—in service to you, to God and to His Church.

Br. Andrew (top), Br. Cody (middle), and Br. Pius (bottom) pose with their families at the celebration following their Mass of Solemn Profession. Thank you for investing in their vocation!





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During their Mass of Solemn Profession at St. Albert the Great Priory, in a beautiful moment of humility, the brothers prostrate themselves in the shape of a cross. The community then invokes the Holy Spirit and prays for their perseverance in a life devoted to the service of God.

The faithful from our mission in Rabinal, Guatemala process through the streets during Holy Week in an inspiring expression of our Catholic identity. Even in the midst of serious economic and social collapse, the people share their faith with joy and hope.



Faithful Service at the Edges of Society

When you support us, we have the means to bring hope to the hopeless

Dominicans have always had a missionary spirit. As itinerant preachers, friars often go out to the areas in most need of the Gospel message—the edges of society. Sometimes those edges are just around the corner, other times they lay far away.

Because of your generosity, Dominicans in our province are able to serve thousands of souls through our international missions, some of which lay just across our southern border.

Wherever God calls us, you give us the means to defend and advance the Catholic faith in those communities often overlooked by governments and the rest of society. You give us the means to share hope. We'd like to share with you what your support is helping us accomplish in the name of Christ

What the Analysts Miss in Guatemala *By Fr. Timothy Conlon, O.P.*

For the last 18 years I've served our Dominican mission in Guatemala. I reside in a parish in the Chucach mountains in a town called Rabinal, which is almost the geographical center of the country. You must cross a couple of mountains ranges during a four hour car ride from the capital to get there. About 7,000 live here, and another 35,000 scattered in the villages around us.

There are a lot of colorful and some distressing aspects to recount about this rather remote but famous place, and it is sometimes hard for people in the U.S. to even begin to understand what happens here. But none of the noteworthy aspects can compare to the one thing that is the great marvel of my role as a missionary, which is communicating faith in Jesus Christ.

A missionary could run programs of education, save the environment, find ways to grow better crops, build water systems, run natural family planning programs, and build wells and latrines. All of these projects, and more, I have done as a missionary. But it all pales in comparison to celebrating Mass, anointing the sick, hearing confessions, preaching,

catechizing or any activity that directly promotes the faith. Obviously, both programs and sacraments are needed as they each harmonize with the other, but what the world most hungers for is a lived faith in God.

Something that is often misunderstood by the anthropologists and cultural analysts is that the Catholic faith does not stand alone against the world or its cultures, although it definitely stands against any dehumanizing aspects in them. The faith is often portrayed here as submersed and breathing its last except for a few folk remnants.

What is rather amazing is that amid a really desperate economic, social and moral collapse in Guatemala, as perhaps in much of the third world, there are moments of exultant triumphalism of a faith that has many times been pronounced dead. So, for example, what we see in Holy Week or major festivals is the beautiful expression of the deepest layer of a many layered cultural identity.

In the normal, everyday world we see people making a tremendous struggle to survive the poverty, crime, and corruption. The Church is present in their lives in

the key moments of the sacraments, and offers consolation and hope, but the overarching preoccupation is survival. The great temptation is to leave Guatemala, and the brightest and best usually do. They cross Mexico and try to make a stake in the United States and send money back to help their loved ones. That is the great temptation: to abandon the homeland, but it is in order to try to save it. This is one of the curses to my programs to give scholarships to youths. There are no jobs here so they leave for the U.S. Now I am trying to find ways to help them get jobs.

So in the midst of this banal effort to survive, in which the Church is a minor part

to all outside observers, there is no stunning rise of religiosity, but then suddenly out of nowhere, we see an explosion of creative expression in Holy Week.

It is a faith that is alive and much deeper than the superficial glance can detect. Many do not want to admit it, yet they are fascinated by it, but it is our great treasure and we must live it. That we do here.

If you have never experienced it you have missed something important in your understanding of how to keep the faith alive in our world. It must touch the lives of people. Get busy and make sure your faith does that.

“If the missionary is humble and silent, he will find much to learn; with luck and grace, he will discover God’s presence and the fruits of what He has already planted. Because the Gospel should not be tied to any one cultural understanding, missionaries must be creative and imaginative with the bridges they attempt to build, having the message received and accepted by assent rather than by coercion or allures.” —Fr. Miguel Rolland, O.P.



The Blessing & Curse of the Maquiladoras in Mexicali By Fr. Martin Walsh, O.P.



Our Novice brothers make their way to our mission church in Mexicali. At one time this church was so poor it had no walls.

Our Dominican Master General, Fr. Bruno Cadoré, O.P., stated that we are the only Dominican community [Province] in the whole world that is located exactly on the border of two different countries.

From the window of my room in our “convento” [Priory] I can see the fence that separates Mexico and the United States. “Life on the border” is a strange combination of two cultures and involves a unique ministry. Sometimes I think that the “Spanglish” that is spoken here could almost be called a dialect on its own. Even the names of the two border cities, Calexico and Mexicali, are a combination of Mexico and California.

A few years ago a group of politicians, psychologists and professors met to analyze the problems of Mexicali society. I assumed that they would announce that the greatest problem in the city is drug violence. However their response was that of “disintegration of the family.” My impression is that the family suffers from two factors: the work source and migration.



From our earliest days, Dominicans have gone out to every corner of society to preach the Good News. Here, our Novices pose with Fr. Anthony Rosevear, O.P., Novice Master, in front of a mission church in Mexico during their Southern Tour. The tour, among other things, exposes them to the beauty of our missionary zeal and compassion, and the unique needs of the souls in impoverished areas.



When she began at the Casa de Cuna (a refuge for Mexicali children orphaned or in dysfunctional families), Amalia (pictured), was sad and introverted; after just a few weeks she is now sweet and precocious.

When I was introduced to her, I put my hand to my chest and in cavalier fashion, proclaimed, “Soy Padre Martin. ¡Mucho gusto!” And since then, every time I visit, she runs to welcome me, putting her hand to her chest, bending forward and, looking up with her huge, impish eyes, proclaims, “Soy Padre Martin. ¡Mucho Gusto!” And my heart melts. *Thank you for supporting the Dominicans and our efforts to bring stability and the love of Christ to children like Amalia.*

—Fr. Martin

Mexicali has gone from an economy based on agriculture to one based on industry with factories known as maquiladoras. Well known American corporations have built maquiladoras that are a blessing for the workers of Mexicali—but also can be, in some cases, the cause of social problems.

Within the boundaries of our parish is a large area in which are located a multitude of maquiladoras, providing work for hundreds of employees. However, in many cases, it is the women who have a priority of employment opportunities, sometimes leaving the husband or father without work.

This results in many single mothers who must take long bus rides to factories where they put in 12 hour days (or nights) followed by another long bus ride home and a few hours sleep before the cycle begins again. Their children are inadvertently abused when they are left alone for hours, often without food, and certainly without adult guidance or protection.

Confusion Reigns in Mexicali

The city of Mexicali is largely populated by people who have come to the border because of the attraction of work in the factories. They come from all parts of the Mexican republic and many have left behind family connections and are set adrift here among other migrants. This often results in confusion and abandonment of past culture and religion. Children are raised without the sacraments. There is a great deal of confusion among all of the different Protestant denominations that come from the United States and loss of connection to the Catholic Church.

Here in Mexicali, our small community of Fr. Miguel de las Casas Rolland, O.P., Fr. Bart de la Torre, O.P., and Fr. David Bello, O.P., and I serve a community and city with love and devotion. And our service is received with love by the people of our parish and the City of Mexicali.

God can work miracles anywhere. And with your prayers, we will continue to do whatever God calls us to do to bring faith and hope to the people of Mexicali.





HELP THE DOMINICANS

Have philanthropic goals? Want to help people know and love God? Support the Dominicans with a gift that has an impact today, tomorrow and forever.

✦ TODAY

Visit opwest.org/donate

Have an Immediate Impact

Discover a list of all the ways you can help the Dominicans right now, including making an online gift today.

✦ TOMORROW

Join our 1216 Society for Monthly Giving

Extend Your Impact

As mendicant friars (beggars), your regular support allows the Dominicans to focus on preaching for the salvation of souls. Visit opwest.org/1216 to join.

✦ FOREVER

Use Your Estate

Leave a Legacy of Impact

Unite your legacy with the 800 year preaching legacy of the Dominicans. Visit opwest.org/plannedgiving for information on making the Dominicans the beneficiaries of your will, retirement/life insurance plan, trust or other estate plan.

Want more information on these or other options? Email us at development@opwest.org or call (510) 658-8722 and ask for Chris Hanzeli or Hien Dao in our Development Office. **We'd love to hear about your philanthropic goals and how we can help.**

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

Photo Credits: Fr. Lawrence Lew, O.P., Br. Joseph Marie, O.P., Fr. Stephen Maria Lopez, O.P., Br. Thomas Aquinas Pickett, O.P., Fr. Timothy Conlan, O.P. and Fr. Martin de Porres Walsh, O.P.

A Profile in Generosity: Nino and Ivi Fandino's Commitment to Service

Volunteering and putting their gifts at the service of the Lord

Nino and Ivi Fandino are active members of St. Dominic's Church in San Francisco, giving generously of their time and talent to partner with the Dominicans. In doing so, they help create and enhance ministries that touch hundreds of souls, such as the Catholic Hackathon, St. Dominic's Choir, Lectio Divina Group and the St. Dominic's Artists Guild.

How did you get connected with the Dominicans?

[Ivi] One evening, Nino and I decided to attend the "last call" Mass at 9pm at St. Dominic's. We were parishioners of another parish at the time, but when we heard Fr. Xavier Lavagetto, O.P., preach, we were hooked and made St. Dominic's our home. We've enjoyed the friendship of the Dominicans ever since.

[Nino] I treasure how much St. Dominic's is alive with the energy of the Holy Spirit.

What's your favorite memory of working with Dominicans?

[Ivi] One of my favorite ministry projects was working with Fr. Emmanuel Taylor, O.P., on a month-long series of seminars called *The Art of Dying: living life to its fullest*. It goes to the heart of our faith and asks us to prepare for life here, and ultimately, eternal life with God.

Out of *The Art of Dying* we created the St. Dominic's Artists Guild, which is a group of artists who gather in community to put our talents at the service of the Dominican mission of evangelization.

I also worked with various friars and parishioners on the Catholic Hackathons. I loved them! Hackathons are weekends where people from tech, creative fields, and people with ideas come together and work as teams on projects that use technology to evangelize.

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

[Ivi & Nino] Dominicans are very solid preachers. They take it very seriously, giving it immense thought, reflection and effort. That Dominican charism of preaching is so valuable in today's society because most people's exposure to the faith is regulated to Sunday Mass, so the priest's homily is crucial in inspiring, awakening, and motivating people to learn, assimilate, and live the Gospel.

Why do you choose to support the Dominicans?

[Ivi] We support the friars because they need our help! We love the Dominicans and feel privileged to know more and more about them as individuals, as well as a community.

We want to help them in any way we can, financially and through time and talent. It's a mutually beneficial relationship.

[Nino] The Order feels focused on what God intends for our Church's clergy and for living in community. We're blessed to be able to give to them after all they've given to us.

What has surprised you most about working with the Dominicans?

[Ivi] The Dominicans are creative! The Western Province is an incredibly dynamic province. They are always encouraging you to use your gifts and try new things.

Interested in learning how you can get involved? Find a Dominican ministry near you at opwest.org and learn more about your opportunities to get involved.



Ivi and Nino Fandino share their time, talent and treasure with the community at St. Dominic's Church in San Francisco. Dominicans have always relied on the help of the faithful to extend their preaching mission.



Br. Michael James Rivera, O.P., Ivi, Charles-Axel Dien, and Br. Emmanuel Taylor, O.P., at the first Catholic Hackathon, a ministry working to bring together artists, programmers, engineers and others in the technology industry to help discover new ways of preaching the Gospel in the 21st century.