

# CENTRAL PROVINCE



## CANDIDACY I FORMATION

### UNITS 1 & 2: THE LAITY

# **“I HAVE COMPASSION FOR THE CROWD” (MATT. 15:32)**

## **APOSTOLICAM ACTUOSITATEM**

### **DECREE ON THE APOSTOLATE OF LAY PEOPLE**

Now as received members of the Lay Dominicans it is fitting that we begin our study with the role of the Laity in the Church. We have been called through our Baptism to play an important part in the Church’s apostolate. We must understand exactly what that is and how being a Dominican ties in with it. To paraphrase Abraham Lincoln: It is obvious that God loves the Laity because He made so many of us.

*Apostolicam Actuositatem* is the Second Vatican Council’s *Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity*. It was approved by the Bishops 2340 to 2 and promulgated by Pope Paul VI on November 18, 1965.

The importance of the Laity is noted in the Introduction: “Indeed, the Church can never be without the lay apostolate; it is something that derives from the layman’s very vocation as a Christian...The need for this urgent and many-sided apostolate is shown by the manifest action of the Holy Spirit moving laymen today to a deeper and deeper awareness of their responsibility and urging them on everywhere to the service of Christ and the Church.” (AA 1)

Since an understanding of our role in the Apostolate is so important and serves as a foundation for our Formation Program, our study is composed of two units. There is much to read and study in these two months. Especially note how the Dominican way of life fulfills perfectly what Christ and His Church expect of us as lay men and women.

**“He sent them to proclaim the kingdom of God.”**

**(Luke 9:2)**

## **UNIT 1:**

1. Introduction (1)
2. The Vocation of the Laity to the Apostolate (2-4)
3. Objectives (5-8)
4. The Various Fields of the Apostolate (9-14)

## **STUDY QUESTIONS:**

1. What is the Lay Apostolate?
2. Who assigned this obligation of the Apostolate to the Laity?
3. Upon what does the fruitfulness of this Apostolate depend?
4. What makes up the temporal order?
5. What are the fields of the Apostolate?
6. What is the Apostolate of “like towards like”?

## **UNIT 2:**

5. The Various Forms of the Apostolate (15-22)
6. External Relationships (23-27)
7. Formation for the Apostolate (28-32)
8. Exhortation (33)

## **STUDY QUESTIONS:**

1. What are the various forms of the Apostolate?
2. What could you do as an individual?
3. How could a group perform the Apostolate?
4. What aids are suggested for the Laity for formation?
5. Do Lay Dominicans fulfill the obligation for the Apostolate?
6. How does a Lay Chapter mirror the proposals of this Decree?

## **RESOURCES:**

*Vatican Council II: vol. 1: The Conciliar and Postconciliar Documents* ed. Austin Flannery OP This volume should be in every Dominican's library

For an easy-to-read internet version of this Decree:

<http://www.ewtn.com/library/COUNCILS/v2laity.htm>

Also Donald Goergen OP: "The Call to the Laity"

<http://www.spiritualitytoday.org/spir2day/833536goergen.html>

# CENTRAL PROVINCE



**CANDIDACY I FORMATION**

**UNIT 3: ST. DOMINIC**

**“HE MUST HAVE A FIRM GRASP OF THE WORD THAT IS TRUSTWORTHY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TEACHING, SO THAT HE MAY BE ABLE BOTH TO PREACH WITH SOUND DOCTRINE AND TO REFUTE THOSE WHO CONTRADICT IT.” (Titus 1:9)**

St. Dominic (1170-1221) was the founder of the Order of Preachers, known as the Dominicans. When you read the Gospel of St. Matthew (which Dominic carried with him and knew by heart), you are struck by the confluence of his life with that of the Master. Both were itinerant preachers; both collected a group of followers; both gave their lives to preach the ‘Good News.’ And yet neither wrote much, if anything, for their followers. It is fitting that we should study the life of our Founder early in our Formation.

There are many good biographies of St. Dominic available. The book *Praying with Dominic* by Fr. Michael Monshau OP has an excellent succinct biography of St. Dominic with extended treatments of his life and examples. The volume *Early Dominicans* edited by Fr. Simon Tugwell OP treats the life of St. Dominic and his times. Our cover picture is the oldest picture of St. Dominic, painted in the 14<sup>th</sup> century by an unknown artist.

For our purposes we will study “The Life of St. Dominic” by Fr. Gregory Anderson OP. This is available on the internet and also – attached.

<http://domcentral.org/blog/the-life-of-st-dominic/>

As you read this study, ask yourself, “What is there about St. Dominic that struck me the most?”

# **The Life of St. Dominic**

**by fr. Gregory Anderson, OP**

## **I. The Formative Years**

### **A. The Man and the Boy**

Blessed Cecilia, one of the early nuns to put herself under the guidance of St. Dominic, described him thusly:

He was of medium height: his figure supple, his face handsome and slightly sanguine, his hair and beard blond with a slight reddish tinge, his eyes beautiful. From his brow and eyes there emanated a certain radiant splendor which won the admiration and veneration of all. He always appeared joyous and smiling except when moved with compassion at some affliction of his neighbor. His hands were long and handsome and his powerful voice noble and sonorous. He was not in the least bald and wore the religious tonsure entire, sprinkled with a few white hairs. (Relation of Sister Cecilia, no. 14)

St. Dominic's cheerfulness and joyousness are characteristics remarked upon by a number of people who knew him. And yet, some of his biographers, Bede Jarret, O.P. among them, present him as a rather serious sobersides when he was a boy, not given to sports or play. That is hard to accept. As a boy, there had to be in him the same cheerfulness and joy that marked him as man. There had to be a certain liveliness and vivacity of spirit that we see in the adult. Personalities just do not change that radically in the course of our lives. Certainly, he must have loved games and playing in the fields around his home. He was a real boy and showed something of the leadership ability he had as a man.

He was born in the year 1170 in the small town of Calaruega in Old Castile about a hundred miles north of Madrid. His father was the lord of the surrounding area. To know how he got that position you must remember that in 711 the Moors from North Africa had conquered all of Spain except for one corner in the rugged mountainous area in northwestern Spain known as the Asturias. From there the Spaniards began a long and bloody reconquest of their country, known in Spain as the Reconquista. It did not end until 1492 with conquest of Granada, the last Moorish outpost in Europe.

About 200 years before the birth of St. Dominic the Spaniards had pushed their way as far south as Calaruega. One of his ancestors was given the land around where the town is now with the provision that he set up a fortification in case of inroads of the retreating Moors. Part of that fortification was to be a tower to serve as a lookout. The remains of many of these towers can

still be seen throughout Old Castile. In fact, the territory is called Castile because of these towers or castles. Sentries were posted on the top to keep a lookout for hostile troops. If any were sighted the alarm was given so that the local knight and his retainers could take defensive action. The enemy, incidentally, was not always the Moors; it could be a neighboring knight who wanted to expand his territory or a detachment of soldiers of one of the several kingdoms that made up Spain in those days bent on plunder and loot.

The tower built by St. Dominic's ancestral knight — we do not know his name — is still there and has been maintained in good condition. It is about five stories high. If you climb to the top of it you can look out over the vast plain that stretches to the south and east. One can see 30 to 40 miles so the sentry could spot an enemy force coming long before it got there. But how about the north and east? It is extremely rugged country in those directions so that no effective force could get through. As you stand there, you can imagine the boy Dominic running up the stairs and looking out over the same scene that you can see. It has changed very little since then.

Dominic's family name was Guzman. A Spanish Dominican who taught me at St. Albert's when I was a student there had a most interesting and plausible explanation for its origin. In his opinion it was originally Goodman, an English name, which in Spanish would quickly be transformed into Guzman. But how would an Englishman get to Spain? In the Europe of that time, the eldest son inherited the title and estate of the father. The second son was destined for the Church. There were few opportunities for any other sons. Very often what they did was to join in some military campaign going on in the hope of getting a title and estate of their own. The Crusades were one possibility and Spain was another for there Christians were also fighting the infidel, the Moors being Islamic. Thus, according to this priest's theory, the third or fourth son of an English nobleman joined the Spaniards and did get a title and estate of his own. He became the lord of Calaruega and ancestor of St. Dominic.

By the time St. Dominic was born the Spaniards had pushed the Moors so far south that there was no longer any danger. The area was quiet and peaceful. St. Dominic's father, Felix Guzman, had married a woman from another noble family of the area, Jane D'Aza and they had three sons and perhaps one daughter, for we read that two nephews of St. Dominic also joined the Order. It was an extraordinary family. Felix has been declared a Venerable by the Church, the first step toward canonization. His mother is Blessed Jane D'Aza. His older brother, Mannes, who joined the Order, is also a Blessed. The oldest brother, Anthony, became a priest and Canon of St. James, devoting himself to the service of the poor and sick, but he has not been beatified. Here in this one family you have one saint, two blesseds and one venerable. We do not know who inherited the title and estate of Felix, for the Guzman line, as far as we know, died out with this family.

The story is told that while Blessed Jane was carrying St. Dominic she had a dream in which she bore in her womb a dog who broke away from her and ran through the world setting it on fire with a torch he carried in his mouth. She was troubled by this dream and went to pray at the Benedictine abbey of San Domingo de Silos which lies in a pleasant valley about 20 miles north of Calaruega. The answer was, of course, that her son would set the world on fire by his preaching. That abbey, incidentally has become famous recently because of a record of their Gregorian chant that has become a best seller throughout the world. At any rate, when her child



was born she named him after the founder of that monastery, St. Dominic de Silos. Another extraordinary sign occurred at his baptism when his godmother saw a bright star shining on his forehead as the water was being poured.

These two incidents have become a part of Christian art. Usually, statues and pictures of St. Dominic show him with a star over his forehead and a dog with a torch in his mouth which is often shown with the saint.

## **B. The Schoolboy and Student**

He spent his earliest years, the most impressionable ones, in this atmosphere of love of God and neighbor, good works for the poor and needy, deep piety and high moral standards provided for him by his parents. His two older brothers were studying for the priesthood so it was only natural that at an early age the idea of being a priest himself would be formed in his mind. His parents were willing so at the age of seven he was sent to his uncle, his mother's brother, who was the parish priest of Gumiel d'Izan, a small town about ten or twelve miles to the west, for his primary studies which included Latin. This may strike us as rather heartless, this sending of a child so young away from home. But this was common in those days and it was not as bad as it may sound at first. He went to the house of his uncle, a man who must have had many of the qualities of his mother, so that he would be a loving and kind guardian and teacher. Besides, there was no other alternative, there being no schools in his native village. Besides, Gumiel d'Izan was close enough so that he could return home or his parents go visit him from time to time.

We are told, however, that he was an apt student so that by the time he was fourteen years old, he was ready to go to the University at Palencia, the first university in Spain. There he studied was known as the Trivium, consisting of grammar, rhetoric and logic. After learning them he passed on to the Quadrivium, which consisted of arithmetic, geometry, music and astronomy. This was the common course of studies in medieval times. All of this took six years, which means he was twenty when he started his study of theology. It was during this time, to balance the dryness of his studies, that he increasingly turned to prayer to set the divine truths he was learning on fire with divine love. This would be a characteristic with which he would endow his Order in later years.

He lived very simply in those days, his only extravagance being books which he carefully annotated in his own writing. But he sold even those to help the refugees of war that poured into Palencia. He explained this drastic action in these words: "I could not bear to prize dead skins when living skins were starving and in want." Undoubtedly, this compassion for the poor and suffering was instilled into him by the example of the good works done by his father and mother during his childhood. This would be a quality that would stay with him all his life.

## **C. Priest and Canon at Osma**

At about the age of twenty-four or twenty-five he was ordained a priest for the diocese of Osma in which Calaruega was located. He then became a canon of the cathedral. Canons were priests who lived a religious life under the rule of St. Augustine. They recited the Divine Office daily in

the Cathedral, did some priestly duties such as caring for the religious needs of the people of the parish and going out to neighboring parishes who did not have priests (there was a shortage in those days too) or were too poor to support a pastor. This was what St. Dominic did for nine years. It was a quiet life, affording him ample opportunity for study, prayer and contemplation.

He was elected subprior of his chapter in 1199. When the prior, whose name was Diego d'Azevedo, became bishop in 1202, Dominic was selected to succeed him as prior. This would provide him with administrative experience which would stand him in good stead in the years ahead.

We want to keep the name of Bishop Diego in mind for he will play an important role in the next stage of St. Dominic's life, which we will be talking about in our next section.

## **II. Laying the Foundations**

At the end of our last chapter you were asked to remember the name of the Bishop of Osma, Diego D'Azevedo. It was he who was responsible for catapulting Dominic into a whole new sphere, radically different from the peace and quiet of the cloister of Osma where he had intended to spend the rest of his days. In 1203, the king of Castile sent Bishop Diego to arrange a marriage of his son, Ferdinand, with "a noble lady of the Marches." Scholars agree that the "Marches" were what is now known as Denmark. The identity of the noble lady is not certain, but it seems probable that she was the niece of King Vademar II of Denmark, the daughter of his sister, Sophie, and Count Siegfried of Orlamünde. Since Prince Ferdinand was only 15 years old she probably was at least as young. The bishop asked Dominic to go with him. After they had crossed the Pyrenees, or, what is more likely, gone around them, they had to cross the district of Toulouse in southern France. The first night they spent in an inn whose owner had rejected his Catholic faith and joined a great heresy that was raging in the Toulouse and had practically taken over the entire area. It was called the Albigensian heresy.

It was based on the very ancient idea that matter was evil and spirit was good. It has been around for a long time and is still with us in the form of theosophy, Christian Science and those who go in for Buddhism and other Eastern religions. It appeals to people who have vague and hazy minds and do not want to do any serious thinking. Albigensianism had the additional twist in that it did develop a logical and clear theological system. Marriage was evil, sex was sinful, flesh and meat was forbidden, austerities were the in thing, and suicide was the preferred way of death. This would not, of course, appeal to many people, but Albigensianism had an answer for this. Only a few, the perfect, were obliged to this form of life. The rest were free to live as normal human beings. They were required only to renounce the Catholic faith and the Sacraments.

The lords, of course, were all in favor of this approach for it meant that they could have the lands and income of the Church, which was the same tactic Luther used in Germany and Henry VIII used in England. The result was that it was a deep-seated heresy and difficult to eradicate.

Dominic was appalled that anyone could fall for this nonsense. He and the innkeeper got into an argument that lasted the whole night, but in the morning the innkeeper fell on his knees and asked to be reconciled to the Church. This experience changed Dominic's life forever. He could never go back to the cloister at Osma. He did, however, have to continue on the journey to the Marches, return to the court of the king of Castile with the result of their successful negotiations, and then go back to the Marches to escort the young princess back to Castile. But on they were on this last leg of their mission, word came to them the bride-to-be had died, or, as some think, entered a monastery. In either case, she was dead to the world and marriage was out of the question. The retinue of courtiers broke up to return home in any way they wanted. Diego and Dominic decided to go by way of Rome.

Diego shared with Pope Innocent III some ideas close to his heart. One was the situation in southern France, another was a desire to resign his see so he could go and convert the Tartars or Tatars, a warlike Mongolian people who had invaded what is now Russia and were threatening to move further westward. St. Dominic would adopt the same dream and grow a beard so he could be ready to leave at a moment's notice. Monks and friars were usually clean-shaven so this made the saint distinctive. The Pope, however, refused Diego's requests and told him to go home for there was greater work to be done there.

In obedience, the bishop and his prior started back home but the Albigensian heresy was always in the back of their minds. On their trip they stopped at Citeaux, the great monastery founded by St. Bernard of Clairvaux and the mother abbey of innumerable others of the Cisterian Order throughout Europe. The Pope had entrusted the mission of preaching to win back the heretics to the Church to the monks of Citeaux. Diego was so impressed with the Cisterians that he received their habit and persuaded a group of monks to return to Spain with him.

On their journey, they met at Montpellier the Abbot of Citeaux and two other monks, Pierre of Castelnau and Raoul of Fontefroide who had been preaching in southern France with no success. The monks were discouraged and frustrated, for the heretics proved to be unmoved by their efforts. Bishop Diego quickly pointed out the reasons for their failure. They had gone there as papal legates surrounded by all the pomp and circumstance that attended papal legates, fine horses, splendid regalia, impressive robes, comfortable living quarters and good food. The Cisterians actually lived very austere lives, but they felt they had to take on all the trappings of papal legates. As Diego made clear, this was no way to impress people whose leaders led lives of extreme austerity. Actually, the Cisterians would have been more successful if they had gone there as simple Cisterians, living their own austere lives.

They took Diego's words to heart as did Dominic. In fact, he went them one better. He was even more austere than the most austere of the leaders and he let it be known how much he denied himself. He would not sleep on a bed, but on the floor; one Lent he lived only on bread and water; he had the discipline given to him — in other words, he was whipped. In all of these he made sure that everyone knew the extent of his penances. They may have been done for show, but the hard floor was real, the emptiness of his stomach was real, the lashes he received were real. They impressed even the heresy's leaders who wondered at his physical endurance that they could not equal.

At the same time he engaged in public debates with the heretical leaders and won one after another. One common way of deciding the winners was to throw the resume of their arguments into the fire. In every case, the resumes of the heretics were burned but Dominic's were thrown back out of the fire intact. In one case, the charred beam of the fireplace that his document hit as it flew out of the fire can still be seen. In other words, it was so hot that it could char a wooden beam but miraculously it was not consumed by the heat as great as it was.

One evening in 1206, outside the north gates of the village of Fanjeaux, St. Dominic sat reading about St. Mary Magdalen whose feast day it was. As he reflected on the life of the saint he was moved to ask God for guidance in what he should do. He also asked for a sign from the Blessed Virgin to help him. Just then a globe of fire came out of the heavens, hovered a bit and then in a blaze of glory settled over the forlorn and desolate church of Prouille which was nearby. The saint could not believe his eyes. He came back to the same spot the next evening and the sign was repeated. He returned again on the third evening and sure enough the vision appeared again. He took this as the sign he had prayed for and determined that the church at Prouille was the place God wanted him to begin his work. This vision is known as the Seignadou, "the sign of God" in the language of the place and time.

The way he began his work was to collect a group of women at Prouille and form them into nuns. This was not just a gathering of a group of pious women. Rather it was a daring tactic to counteract a strategy of the Albigensians who used similar groups of women who had attained the rank of "perfect" to teach the children of impoverished Catholic nobles and raise them in the heresy. These convents also served as apostolic centers where people could go for instruction and help. This is exactly what St. Dominic intended to do, but only for Catholic women, specifically, those who had been heretics but had returned to the Church. The initial group was nine in number. He gave them a simple white habit with a black veil. They were cloistered but not in the strict sense that our present day cloistered nuns are. Rather they were more like the Religious of the Sacred Heart or as the Ursulines used to be. They could not go out of the cloister but people could freely come to them for instruction, encouragement and assistance.

Bishop Diego highly approved of this move as did the bishop of Toulouse who in addition gave the sisters title to the church and land as well as the tithes and first fruits due to it. Thus, the financial security of the new foundation was assured. In addition, St. Dominic moved the little band of men who were working with him on to the property so it became a kind of "double monastery" which was not uncommon at the time.

The following year, 1207, Bishop Diego decided it was high time for him to return to his diocese of Osma with the intention of returning as soon as possible. But this was never possible for he died the following year. Upon his departure, Dominic was left in charge of the mission. He became a close friend of the Bishop of Toulouse, Foulques, a most apostolic pastor who saw in Dominic a kindred spirit who could be of great help to him in fulfilling his pastoral duties.

The situation would be greatly complicated the following year, 1208, when the papal legate in charge of the preaching mission to the Albigensians, was killed by the heretics. This brought on a bloody crusade led by Simon de Montfort, an English nobleman. Dominic was highly respected by Simon but he never expected the saint to participate in the battles that went on nor did he

serve as an inquisitor. In fact, he saw that war was no way to overcome a well-established heresy so he wanted nothing to do with the so-called crusade.

In February of 1213, the bishop of Carcassonne went to France to see if he could get more troops to help in the Crusade. He appointed Dominic as his vicar general during his absence which lasted several months. This gave him an insight into the working of a diocese and administrative experience. It was in this position that he realized that the parochial system alone was inadequate to handle situations such as those of Southern France. Something more was needed.

All during this time Dominic continued to preach, engage in debates with the heretics and give lectures. His cheerfulness and joyousness of spirit never deserted him even in the face of threats against his life. He was fearless. Once, he walked alone through a village that he knew was bitterly against him singing at the top of his voice so that if they wanted to harm him they had their chance. Another time a group of heretics asked him, "Have you no fear of death? What would you do if we siezed you now?" Dominic laughed and said, "Oh I would just ask you not put me to death all at once; but gradually limb by limb to make my martyrdom a slow one, so that hardly human in form, blinded and a mass of blood, I should have a really much finer place in heaven." What can you do with a man who wants to be a martyr? Bodily harm or even a cruel death would play right into his hands. The result was that they left him alone.

In 1215, a wealthy merchant of Toulouse, Peter de Seila, gave St Dominic and his companions some houses in the city. Later on he was to join the Order as a brother and took care of finances. He used to say that it was not the Order that received him but it was he who received the Order. This was his little joke that he used repeatedly. As soon as the brethren had moved into the house Dominic took them to the lectures of Alexander of Stavensby, a distinguished theologian who was teaching in Toulouse at the time.

It was during this period that Dominic began to realize that that something more that was needed over and above the parochial system was a world-wide Order that would be devoted to preaching divine Truth. Its members would have to be learned, live a life of austerity and be contemplative. He saw that the problems of the Church were not confined to Southern France but were universal.

In that same year, 1215, he attended the Third Lateran Council in Rome as canon theologian for Bishop Foulques. There he had a chance to talk with Pope Innocent III about his ideas for a preaching Order. His basic problem was that the idea of a world-wide Order under one head was radical. It had never been done and Dominic had no models to build on. Another difficulty was that Rome and the bishops were wary of a group of preachers because they had had bad experiences with other groups such as the Humiliati. The major obstacle was that the Lateran Council had forbidden the founding of new Orders. New religious rules were out. There were to be no more of them.

The upshot was that Pope Innocent III told St. Dominic to go back to his little community of six brothers and select which one of the approved rules they would follow. He hurried back only to find that his group of six were now sixteen. There was really no problem in the selection. The Rule of St. Augustine, which St. Dominic and most of his other brethren had lived by for years

was the obvious choice. It was a rule written by a cleric for clerics. They also adopted some customs in regard to eating, fasting, sleeping and wearing wool. These were the beginning of what would develop into the Dominican Constitutions.

One other obstacle remained. Despite the houses of Peter de Seila they had no real religious house. It so happened that a priory was vacant in Toulouse, dedicated to St. Romain, with a hospital attached. Bishop Foulques and his canons gave it to St. Dominic and his companions. Although it was small it was remodeled ( a practice which Dominicans are still used to) and was made into a serviceable house.

In 1216, Dominic set out for Rome with everything in proper order for papal approval. When he got there he found out that Pope Innocent III had died and a new Pope, Honorius III, was the man to deal with. How that turned out we must leave to the next section.

### **III. The Building of the Edifice**

At the end of our last session, we saw that when St. Dominic arrived in Rome in 1216 with everything all in order for papal approval of his new foundation, he found that Pope Innocent III had died. This meant that he would have to go all through the process of persuading Innocent's successor that his Order would be good for the Church. As it turned out, the man elected to succeed Innocent was Honorius III who was even more supportive of Dominic than his predecessor had been.

The first thing Honorius did was to give a bull of approval of the Order on December 21, 1216. On the following day, he issued a second bull of confirmation in which are the words so dear to the hearts of Dominicans, "We, considering that the brethren of the Order will be the champions of the Faith and true lights of the world" and so on. On January 26th. of 1217 he issued third bull which called the Dominicans "preachers" This was the one St. Dominic really wanted. That title given by the Holy See was a radical one. It meant that now priests, and not just bishops, were authorized to preach the Word of God. This was completely new in the Church.

Dominic was eager to return to Toulouse, but the Pope held him in Rome. He was made the theologian to the Pope, the office of Master of the Sacred Palace, an office that has been held by a Dominican since that time. The present one is Cardinal Chiapi. Finally, in May he was allowed to return home. On August 13th., 1217 he summoned his brethren to Prouille, the place where he had begun to found the Order. There he took another radical step. On the Feast of the Assumption, he dispersed his small band of followers, some to Spain, others to Bologna, but the largest number to Paris, the greatest center of learning in the west at that time. There were those who thought this was a foolish move, but he said, "Do not oppose me, for I know very well what I am doing." Usually, St. Dominic deferred to the wishes of his brethren, but in this case he was insistent and he was right. The Order grew tremendously as a result. Upon the suggestion of the saint, the brethren chose Matthew of France to be Abbot in case he was incapacitated. But as time would show, the title just did not fit so Matthew was the first and last abbot in the Dominican Order. Then Dominic set off again for Rome.

He arrived there in January of 1218. The Pope gave him the ancient church of San Sisto Vecchio, which is right across the street from the baths of Caracalla and down a short way from the Circus Maximus. The Pope, however, had another project in mind involving Dominic. He wanted to bring together all the nuns of Rome who were living in various monasteries all over the city. Their discipline was lax and they needed to be brought back to a stricter way of life. He saw Dominic as the man who could persuade them to leave their various places and take on a more rigorous rule of life. This was a big order but somehow or another the saint was able to bring it off. As soon as the remodeling of San Sisto was complete the nuns were to be brought there. This meant that the Dominican Fathers and Brothers had to have some place to move to. The Pope came through again and gave the Friars the magnificent basilica of Santa Sabina on the Avelline Hill overlooking the Tiber River. It had been built in the fifth century and is certainly one of the most beautiful churches in Rome. It is still the headquarters of the Order. Sometime after their arrival there St. Dominic planted some lemon trees in the courtyard of the cloister. Cuttings from those trees were planted in the courtyard of St. Albert's Priory in Oakland and they are flourishing.

Since the dispersal of the brethren there were houses of the Order all over Europe and the numbers would continue to grow, for vocations came in great abundance. Many of the men entering were distinguished scholars already. One of the most notable was Reginald of Orleans who held the chair of canon law at the University of Paris. He was the one to whom the Blessed Mother appeared and gave him the white scapular that we all wear and is the most important part of the Dominican Habit. He also was a most eloquent preacher and attracted a great many young men into the Order. One of those was Blessed Jordan of Saxony, who would succeed St. Dominic as General of the Order. He would attract over a thousand novices into the Order, among them two future popes, two canonized saints, numerous blessed and countless intellectual giants of the time, one of whom was St. Albert the Great. Entering during this period were also St. Hyacinth, who preached not only in his native Poland but in other countries of northern Europe as well, and his brother, Blessed Celsus, who worked in Bohemia and Silesia.

The Order grew very quickly then. St. Dominic began visiting the various houses to insure that all these new members understood his ideals and purposes, to encourage them in their work and inspire them to greater apostolic zeal and regular observance. Keep in mind, he walked every step of the way. There was no public transportation or good roads. He would not ride a horse or a mule or even a donkey. He walked thousands of miles, to Spain, all over France as far as Paris and to Rome and other cities of Italy. He never stayed long anywhere. When he got outside of town he would take off his sandals and go barefoot even over rocky ground. He carried with him a staff and a little bundle on his shoulder. In it, among other things, of course, were the gospel of Matthew and the epistles of St. Paul which he read constantly. Every where he went he preached and drew great crowds to hear him. He always lived an austere life no matter where he was, fasting, praying most of the night, and scourging himself. He did have one weakness in the line of food. He loved turnips, which most of us might consider a penance.

One fact quickly became obvious. There was a urgent need for a written rule of Constitutions. The Friars had already chosen the Rule of St. Augustine as the basic law of the Order and had adopted a few regulations, but the Rule needed to be made more specific and applied to the purpose and spirit of the Order. For this reason, a General Chapter consisting of delegates from

the various houses of the Order was called to meet in Bologna on May 17, 1220. We do not know the names of those who were present with the exception of Jordan of Saxony who has left us a brief account of the chapter proceedings. This is the only record we have of it. Jordan, incidentally, had been in the Order only two months when he was selected as one of the four delegates from Paris.

From his account we know that several characteristics were built into the Order's legislation. The first was a democratic spirit that was totally unheard of at that time. Every superior was to be elected, even the Master of the Order, for definite terms of office. Poverty was to be observed with the brethren living on alms. We still do it that way. Even the work we do in the St. Jude Office and on our mission band is a form of begging. Instead of going from door to door asking for food and money as they did in the Middle Ages, we write letters to people or preach asking for money to educate our students for the priesthood. The capitular fathers also re-affirmed that preaching was the primary work of the Order hand in hand with study, for ignorant preachers were causing problems. Both preaching and study were so essential that a superior could grant dispensation from regulations of the Rule if they would interfere with either one. One piece of legislation was that Chapters were to be held every year alternating between Bologna and Paris. This had to be abandoned later on when the Order grew so large that it became impractical.

We do not know how long the Chapter lasted for Jordan does not tell us. We do know that on May 24th., a week later, St. Dominic was on the road again travelling all over northern Italy.

In May of 1221, the second General Chapter was held once again in Bologna. We know even less about it than the first for Jordan was not there. By this time he was the Provincial of the Province of Lombardy in northern Italy. We do know that the Order was divided into eight provinces each with its own Prior Provincial. They were Spain, Provence, France, Lombardy, Rome, Germany, Hungary and England. Further refinements were made in the Constitutions, but we are not certain what they were for the records of it have not come down to us.

In June, Dominic was in Venice, conferring with Cardinal Ugolino, his close friend, the one who as Pope Gregory X was to canonize Dominic. In July, the saint returned to Bologna feeling tired in body but tireless in spirit. It was a unusually hot summer and on top of it, he had a fever. It was decided to move him to higher ground in the hills above Bologna where it was cooler. He talked about his life's work to the brethren present. He made a public confession to them and admitted that although he had preserved chastity all of his life he had taken more pleasure in conversing with younger women than with older ones. He then made his last will and testament: "These are, beloved ones, the inheritances I leave you as my sons: have charity among you, hold to humility, possess voluntary poverty."

It was now obvious that the end was near. He requested to be taken back to Bologna to die among his brothers. They had to carry him back very slowly for it seemed as though he would die on the way. They finally made it, his body burning with fever. He told the friars around his bed not to weep for him for, in his words, he was going to where he could serve them better. They wanted to begin the prayers of the dying, but he told to wait. A little later on, he said "Begin." At the words "Come to his help, you holy ones of God; come out to meet him, you angels of the Lord, taking his soul, and offering it in the sight of the Most High." He repeated the



words, opened his eyes, sighed and died at six o'clock on Friday evening, August 6, 1221. He was only fifty -one years old.

In five short years, from 1216 to 1221, St.Dominic had accomplished the almost incredible. He had founded a religious Order with just six followers at the beginning. When he died they were in the thousands. It was a totally new form of religious life made up of highly educated men whose mission was to preach the Good News of salvation. Yet he intended that they should follow what we call the monastic observances — Divine Office said in choir, silence and penance. Oh yes, he met with opposition. Those who consider themselves conservatives who never like anything new and they were the ones who attacked the whole idea of a world-wide Order under one head who were itinerant preachers, but learned men who roamed all over Europe helping the bishops to fulfill their office of preaching. One critic complained that “they have the world for their cell, and the ocean for their cloister.” Dominicans gleefully seized upon this statement as an apt description of their way of life.

We may well ask: how faithful are present day Dominicans to this ideal? In the opinion, of most, very well. We are certainly are faithful to our office of preaching. The Order has produced some of the greatest preachers in the history of the Church. Names that come to mind are Savanarola, Lacordaire, Tom Burke and Ignatius Smith, whom Life Magazine selected as the only great Catholic preacher in American history. In our own Province there have been men like Reggie Lewis and Stan Parmisano. We have had a mission band for as long as I know about, one that is still active and doing great work in the Western States and Canada. They are itinerant preachers and it is a hard life but those called to it love it. Over the years many people say that the quality of preaching in Dominican churches is higher than in other churches. That is something we should be proud of.

As far as learned men are concerned, all of us have a thorough theological education and we have produced many outstanding theologians, men like St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Albert the Great, Cardinal Cajetan and John of St. Thomas. But they are not just in the past. Many of the top theologians of today are Dominicans, men like Chenu, Congar and Schillibex. In our own Province, the Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology in Berkeley is probably the most distinguished faculty in the country. St. Dominic, as you recall sent his men out to universities. We are still doing that. Our province has more student centers or Newman clubs than any other province in the Order. It is something to be proud of.

We still celebrate Office in choir every day. Our living conditions are not luxurious. In fact, I think most people would consider them unacceptable. Community life is a reality. We love to be together and find our strength and spirit coming from the community of our brothers. We are still a democratic Order and we have proof of that as we elect a new Provincial every four years. St. Dominic would be happy with his sons of this day and age, seven hundred and fifty years later.

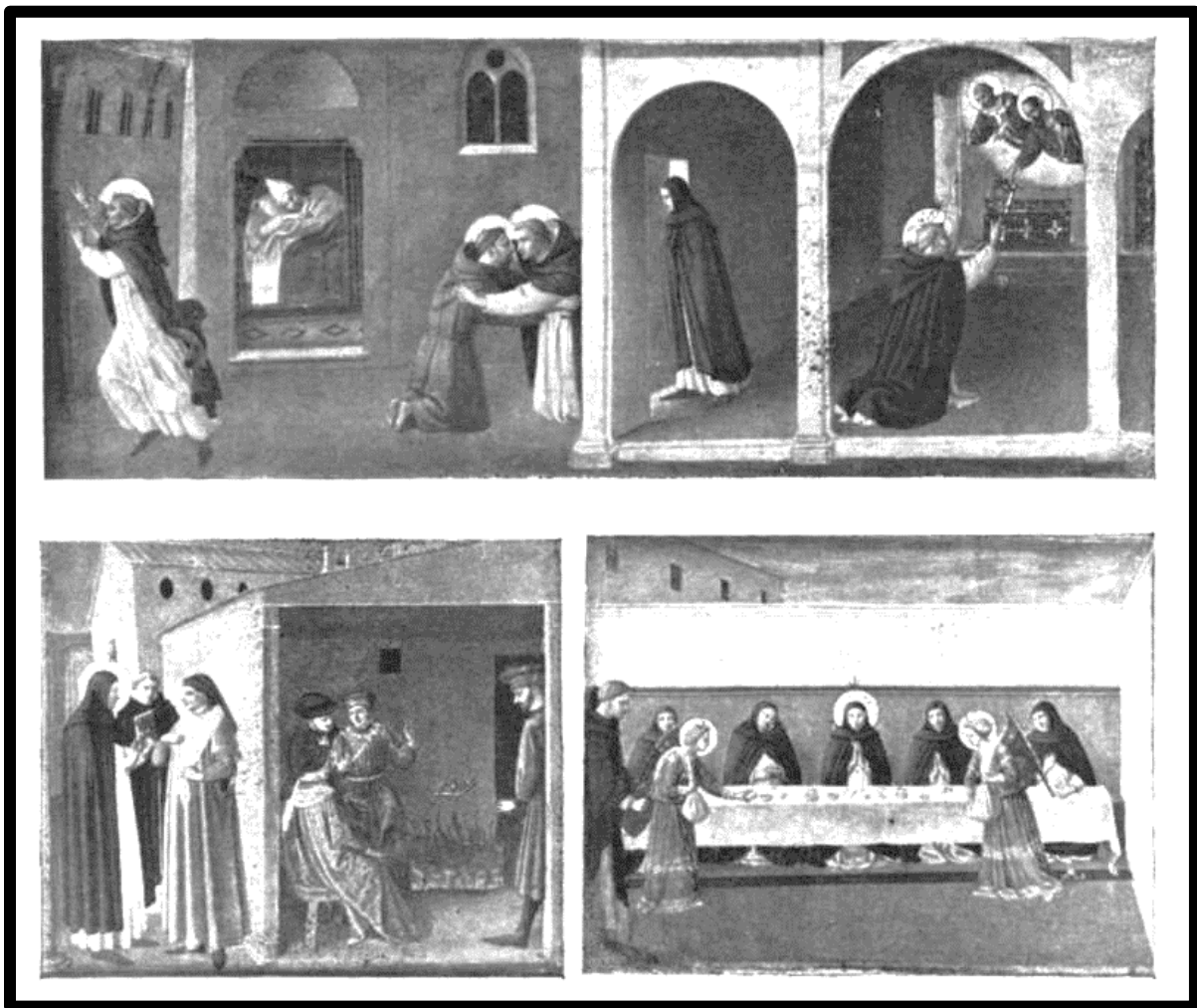
Let us close with this tribute by the poet Dante in his Paradiso:

*With Apostolic sanction guaranteed,  
Equipped with doctrine and zeal as well,  
Like some high torrent thundering down at speed*

*On briars and brakes of heresy he fell  
Uprooting them, and still was swift to go  
Where opposition was most formidable.*

*From him, unnumbered rillets took their flow  
To irrigate the Catholic garden-plot  
Thenceforth, whence all its bushes greener grow.*

(Canto VII, nn. 97-105, Translation of Dorothy L. Sayers)



*Fra Angelico – Life of St. Dominic*

# CENTRAL PROVINCE



## CANDIDACY I

## UNIT 4: THE DOMINICANS

**“HE SUMMONED THE TWELVE...AND HE SENT THEM TO  
PROCLAIM THE KINGDOM OF GOD...THEN THEY SET  
OUT AND WENT FROM VILLAGE TO VILLAGE  
PROCLAIMING THE GOOD NEWS.” (LUKE 9:1-6)**

**Dominic de Guzman** (1170-1221) founded the **Order of Preachers** (Ordo Praedicatorum), known as the **Dominicans**, at the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. The world he knew was in turmoil much as ours is today. In a letter to the Nuns at Madrid, he referred to himself as “Friar Dominic, Master of the Preachers.” The new Order would consist of Friars, both brothers and priests, Nuns, cloistered (the original members of the Order), Sisters, Apostolic with over 25 different congregations, and the Laity who were with the Order in one way or another from the beginning. They have been called: *Domini Canes, Hounds of the Lord*.

*The Primitive Constitutions of the Order of Friars Preachers* states, “Our Order was founded, from the beginning, especially for preaching and the salvation of souls.” (Prologue) Dante saw Dominic and Francis as helmsmen of the “ship of Peter” (*Par.* 11.118-120) and as twin wheels of the chariot of the Church (*Par.* 12.106-111).

An old proverb, translated from the Latin follows:

*Bernard loved the valleys, Benedict the mountains,  
Francis the towns, Dominic the populous cities.*

There is quite a selection of material to choose from on the Dominicans. Articles can be found in “The Catholic Encyclopedia” and “Wikipedia.” Benedict M. Ashley OP and William A. Hinnebusch OP are available on the internet.

We will use “*The Dominican Story*” by Gregory Anderson OP and it is attached:

# THE DOMINICAN STORY

## CHAPTER I: THE GOLDEN YEARS

by fr. Gregory Anderson, OP

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It would be impossible to condense the 773 years of Dominican history into the short space we have. If you are interested in getting that kind of history Benedict Ashley's *The Dominicans* or William Hinnebusch's *The Dominicans: A Short History* are recommended. If you really want to go into full detail, including warts and all, Father Hinnebusch has a three volume work that will give you practically everything.

What we will try to do in these chapters is to give the highlights of our history, show the major trends and developments in the life of the Order over the centuries. This will, we hope, give you an appreciation of the glories of our Order, its contributions to the life of the Church and what we can expect from it in the future. The emphasis will be on the Friars although we will touch on developments in the other branches as they occur. It can be safely said that as the Friars go, so does the rest of the Order.

We will begin with what can aptly be called the Golden Years, a period of 82 years from the death of St. Dominic to 1303.

### **Jordan of Saxony**

The Order was fortunate to have a series of great Masters all during most of that period. The first of these was Blessed Jordan of Saxony who was Master from 1221 to his death in 1237, a period of sixteen years. Jordan had only been a Dominican for two years when he was elected to succeed St. Dominic as Master of the Order, but he had so completely captured the ideals and spirit of Dominic that he was able to carry out the plans Dominic had in his mind at his death and make his dreams a reality. During Jordan's time as Master the Order grew tremendously in numbers. By 1250, there were 13,000 friars, 10,000 of them priests. At the time of Dominic's death, there were 8 provinces; by the time of Jordan's death there were twelve, one of them in the Holy Land, which at that time was under the rule of the Crusaders. When Dominic died, there were 15 priories; by 1227, there were 404. Each priory had a theological school attached to it under the direction of a lector as professor. All the friars had to attend his lectures. In addition, the Order was firmly established at all the major universities of Europe, including Paris, Oxford, and Bologna.

In 1237, Jordan was drowned in a shipwreck while returning from the Holy Land where he had gone on pilgrimage as well as to make a visitation of the Province there. But all was not lost. He was succeeded by St. Raymond of Pennafort.

## **Raymond of Pennafort**

St. Raymond was one of our greatest Dominicans although not appreciated as he deserves to be. He was a Spaniard from Catalonia, born in 1175. He became an expert in Canon Law, being educated in Bologna, the greatest school of Canon Law in Europe. He became a professor there but later returned to Barcelona where he met St. Dominic on one of his journeys through there. That and the impression made by the Dominicans he knew in Bologna moved him to enter the Order in 1222. At that time, he was 47 years old and already recognized as the greatest canon lawyer in the Church. His entry into the Order understandably made a great impact on the academic community. The result was that many other academics were inspired to become Dominicans.

After his novitiate was over, he was called to Rome by Pope Gregory IX, the great friend of St. Dominic, to be his confessor. Since this was not, obviously, a full time job, he was set to work by the Pope to write the *Decretals*, an orderly codification of the laws of the Church which until that time had never been collected or organized, which, quite possibly, was the real reason Gregory called him to Rome. Raymond's decretals were to remain the basic law of the Church until 1918 when a new code of canon law was issued. When this massive work was completed Raymond was offered an archbishopric which he turned down only to be elected Master of the Order in 1238 to succeed Blessed Jordan of Saxony.

As Master, he revised the Order's Constitutions, putting them in strict canonical form. Various General Chapters had passed a great deal of legislation but it had never been put into a coherent body. The result was no one was completely sure of what the law of the Order was. Raymond's successors certainly appreciated his work. After this necessary task was completed, the saint resigned the office of Master in 1241 on the grounds of poor health and old age. He was 66 years old. He still had 34 years to live, dying at the age of 100.

During his "golden years" he became interested in converting the Moors and Jews in Spain and to that end he asked St. Thomas Aquinas write one of his greatest works, The *Summa Contra Gentes* which was a summary of arguments to be used against the teachings of the Muslims and Jewish rabbis who were especially learned in Spain. He also established schools to train Dominicans in the languages of the Near East, in addition to a number of other activities aimed at developing an apostolate to Islam.

Canon lawyers are generally thought of as being cold and legalistic. Raymond was not that at all. He was rather a kindly, compassionate and understanding confessor whose advice to his fellow confessors was most pastoral and gentle.

## **John the Teuton**

He was succeeded in 1241 as Master by John the Teuton, who had great talents as a diplomat. He was first a priest and professor at the University of Bologna and received the habit of the Order from St. Dominic and made profession to him in 1219. At the time he was over 40 years old. In 1227, he was made provincial of the Province of Hungary and then bishop of Hungary. It was a very difficult position requiring all his diplomatic talents. He acquitted himself with great success

but finally the situation got so bad that he resigned as bishop and went back to the discipline of the Order. But he was still a bishop because bishops are bishops forever. Nonetheless, he was made the provincial of Lombardy, another hot bed of trouble where once again he was able to prevent a blow up between the Holy Roman Emperor and the Pope. He did so well, in fact, that he was elected Master of the Order to succeed Raymond. He was unique among our Masters for he was the only one to be a bishop at the same time.

John continued the policies of his predecessors in regard to study, regular observance, liturgy and preaching. He also carried on the work of St. Raymond of Pennafort with the Muslims, supervising the foundation of the schools for instruction in the languages, customs and belief. In addition, he extended the work of the Order in the Middle East. He died in office in 1252.

### **Humbert of Romans**

He was succeeded by one of the greatest Masters of the Order, Humbert of Romans. Despite his name he was a Frenchman and he got his name from the fact that he was born in the French town of Romans in the year 1193. In 1224, while he was a professor at the University of Paris he joined the Order. As a Dominican, he was transferred to the University of Lyons. He was elected Provincial of Lombardy. In 1244, he was Provincial of France. He was nearly elected Pope at the conclave that chose Gregory IX, St. Dominic's great friend. He succeeded John the Teuton as Master in 1252. Among his contributions to the life of the Order was his commentaries of the Constitutions and the Rule, a letter on the vows and instructions on the offices of the Order. His commentary of the Rule was still being used until recently. He was also responsible for our Dominican Liturgy that remained in use until the nineteen sixties.

### **John of Vercelli**

In 1264, Humbert. resigned as Master of the Order. He was succeeded by Blessed John of Vercelli who had been the Provincial of Lombardy, which seems to have been the training ground for the early Masters of the Order. Blessed Jordan of Saxony had given him the habit of the Order in Paris where he was professor of canon law. When elected, he was in his sixties and was crippled. As Master he followed the example of his predecessors and walked all over Europe visiting houses of the Order. It was during his term that the relics of St. Dominic were transferred to the tomb that now holds them. When Pope Clement IV died, John was almost elected to succeed him, but he got out of town fast so that a friend of his was elected instead.

His greatest accomplishment was the acceptance for the Order of the commission given by the Council of Lyons to preach reverence for the Holy Name of Jesus — they swore in those days too. From this came the Holy Name Society which has been the most powerful organization of men in the United States for many years. The Society is now engaged in a campaign to get Blessed John canonized as a saint. He also laid the cornerstone for the Church of Santa Maria Sopra Minerva, commonly known as the Minerva, in Rome where St. Catherine and Blessed Fra Angelico are buried. He died in 1283.

## **Munio of Zamora**

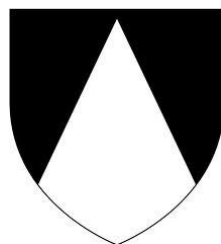
He was succeeded by Munio of Zamora, a Spaniard, who should be held in the greatest reverence by the Dominican Laity for it was he who recognized that the lay people who had associated themselves with the Order needed a rule to guide them which he issued in 1285. It was tacitly approved by Pope Honorius IV in 1286 and received explicit papal approval in 1404. Munio had been Provincial of Spain before he was elected Master but he was one of the most beleaguered Masters of the Order. His own brothers made unproved charges against him and even though the General Chapter of the Order exonerated him he was disposed from office by Pope Nicholas IV. He then retired to his native Spain where he was made bishop of Palencia where St. Dominic had done his university training. He continued to be assailed by his enemies in that position. He had had enough. He resigned and retired to Santa Sabina in Rome. He died in 1300 and is buried there in the middle of the church where you can see the mosaic on the marble slab that covers his grave to this day.

## **Etienne de Besançon Nicholas Boscasini**

Then came Etienne de Besançon who was a famous preacher and theologian but he only lived for two years before he died. He was elected in 1292 but died in 1294. After him came Nicholas Boscasini who served less than two years before being made the Cardinal-Bishop of Ostia. In 1303 he was elected Pope with the name of Benedict XI. He was later beatified as Blessed Benedict XI.

Thus ended the golden age of the Order. Father William Hinnebusch, O.P. sums it up in these words:

The Order's first century (1215-1303) witnessed the flowering of its ministry, the formation of its school system, the eminence of its scholarship, and the leadership of an exceptional number of able masters general who gave every sign of listening to the Spirit. Under their fearless leadership friars developed apostolates as preachers, inquisitors, ambassadors, legates, mediators and arbitrators, attended general councils and worked for the union of the eastern and western churches. The holiness displayed by these early Dominicans illustrates that the tension caused by the Order's thrust towards both contemplation and ministry can be harmonized, and most perfectly so at the summit of excellence. It is an excellence resulting from conformity to Christ the Preacher; the poor, chaste, and obedient God-man who proclaimed the Good News of salvation. Dominican men and women, prayerfully pondering and experiencing the word of God, both Incarnate and written, become like Christ, contemplative apostles working for the Kingdom of God and the salvation of men. (The Dominicans: A Short History, page 44).





# CENTRAL PROVINCE



## CANDIDACY I FORMATION

### UNIT 5: LAY DOMINICANS

**“I HAVE CALLED YOU FRIENDS...IT WAS NOT YOU WHO  
CHOSE ME, BUT I WHO CHOSE YOU AND APPOINTED  
YOU TO GO AND BEAR FRUIT.” (JOHN 15:15-16)**

The Lay Dominicans have been with the Order from the beginning in one way or another. Richard Weber OP in his History quotes Ronald Knox who wrote that medieval men and women had a “nostalgia for the Sermon on the Mount.” The “Order of Penitence” was a lay-reform movement of the Church from the ground up. Knowing our beginnings is an excellent way to light our future.

As we learned in the “Bologna Document,” the Lay Dominicans are an integral part of the Dominican Order. Our Rule states: “As members of the Order, they participate in its apostolic mission through prayer, study and preaching according to the state proper to the laity.”(4) This is a real *vocation* given to us by the Holy Spirit and must be taken very seriously. By following the Lay Dominican Rule, we have a map which guides us through this life toward our heavenly reward. Know your Rule; live your Rule.

There are many resources for understanding our vocation. Today many of them are available on the internet. Imagine: St. Dominic has a *FACEBOOK* page! We have an excellent Provincial web page which should be used; perhaps your Chapter has or will have one too.

Read below: ***“History of the Dominican Laity”*** by Fr. Richard Weber OP, a classic

You can also read (time permitting) ***“Franciscan and Dominican Influences on the Medieval Order of Penance”*** by Fr. Thomas Johnston OP. This is very interesting.

# History of the Dominican Laity

by **Richard Weber, O.P.**

In 1974, on the seventh centenary of the death of St. Thomas Aquinas, I delivered a paper entitled: “A Modern Dominican Looks at His Out-Dated Patron.” Though the title was meant to be facetious, its intent was serious: St. Thomas, not “Thomism,” is the valuable heritage of Dominicans and the model of theologians.

The publication of that talk in *Challenge*, however, provoked some comment. One Dominican director warned his chapter about “smart aleck, young Dominicans” who “attack” St. Thomas today and will soon, he warned, be “attacking” St. Dominic.

This present article is based upon a talk I gave to the Provincial Council of the Dominican Laity. Their acceptance of its thesis has encouraged me to prepare it for publication. But I feel that some who “read as they run” may misinterpret this article as well. Some may feel that somehow St. Dominic is “attacked,” for I must state clearly and positively that the Third Order was not founded directly by Dominic.

This opinion is not set forth in any mood of iconoclastic deprecation; I do not mean to shock anyone by playing the role of destructive critic. Truth — Veritas — is the motto of our Order; and it is a far better guide than legends, however pious. My intent is not to make the Third Order less “Dominican” but rather to show just how essentially Dominican it is. My appreciation of the Third Order has been deepened by examining its history. I present this paper to my Dominican brothers and sisters in the hope that it will also help them to deepen their love of our Order.

## **Beginnings**

Historians are under an obligation to discover how things really happened. This task sometimes makes them less than welcome partners. Cardinal Manning, in the 19th century, stated that, “the appeal to history is treason to the Church.” Yet in the 20th century, Hubert Jedin has written that, “without a knowledge of history, a purified love of the Church is impossible.” Welcome or not, historians must begin. And here they have developed an annoying habit. They have a compulsion to go far back in beginning their stories. John Tracy Ellis, for instance, in writing about Catholics in colonial America, began with the Emperor Constantine in A.D. 312.

Thus, it is not surprising that the “history” of the Third Order does not begin in 1285, when the Master General Munio de Zamora officially promulgated its Rule, nor back to the early years of the 13th century, when St. Dominic lived and worked. The “history” of the Third Order goes

back many decades before that. To understand what the Third Order is and whence it came, we have to look at the Church of the Middle Ages and the society in which it lived.

For at least a century and a half, romantic notions of the Middle Ages have colored our perceptions of the reality of that time. Slogans such as “The Thirteenth, the Greatest of Centuries” have no place in a serious discussion. Medieval society was complex. These were not “the best of times”; many medieval men believed indeed that they were the worst times. Vincent of Beauvais, writing in the mid-13th century, declared that the end of the world must come very soon, since the world could get no more sinful than it was then.

Yet, though the picture of the Middle Ages as “the Ages of Faith” is overdrawn, it is undeniable that certain Christian attitudes and ideals were helping to shape the lives of many people and influencing society. One such idea was that of *creatio* (creation). This was God’s world; though men and women might be in revolt against God’s law, the idea of God informed and shaped the thinking of both saint and sinner about the world. A second attitude was that of *perigrinatio* (pilgrimage). Life was seen as a journey through this world of tears and sorrows to a better world beyond death. Our conduct on this journey was all-important.

A most important concept was that of *ordo* (order). Everything in the universe is shaped according to a divine plan. The heavens run according to God’s order; the earth, too, runs according to His plan. There is as well an order in human society and in human affairs. These various “orders” are interrelated; they mirror each other. The macrocosm, the universe, is matched by the microcosm, man. Society must exhibit this order.

How were these attitudes and concepts applied in practice? The men and women of the Middle Ages faced enormous problems in adjusting a Christian concept of life to the intractable demands of daily existence. The majority of people still lived upon the land, in an agricultural society. Villages were isolated and poor; the people were without education. The rural clergy, like the people they served, were rustic and ignorant. Leadership in this society had for centuries been the prerogative of a feudal nobility. These knights, romanticized in novels and movies as dashing, chivalric paragons of virtue, were often, in reality, a ruffianly lot: mafia-types in armor, living in drafty and unsanitary stone and timber stockades.

## **Problems**

In the 11th century, however, the stagnation of the early Middle Ages in its feudalistic and manorialistic ruts began to end. An “urban revolution” occurred: people began to move into rapidly developing towns; commerce and industry began to revive; new lifestyles developed; and a bourgeois middle class began to emerge. The towns challenged all the established conventions of the Middle Ages; they challenged the Church as well. People became interested in making money. The rough communalism of the early Middle Ages was challenged by a rising individualism.

Paradoxically, the greatest problem was the false assumption that this culture was a “Christian” culture. The Church was “established,” the hierarchy was rich and powerful. Yet although

everyone called himself “Catholic,” the level of religious commitment was low; although the clergy were powerful, they were also largely corrupt.

The greed and ignorance of the clergy are a constant theme in the writings of the Middle Ages. Learned treatises and popular songs and stories told of the parish priest who knew only enough Latin to mumble through a Mass; of the priests who never preached; of the priests so avaricious that they would not administer the sacraments unless paid.

Besides the greed, there was also superstition. The conversion of tribes and kingdoms had often taken place by the simple command of a king or chief. The former shrines of pagan gods and goddesses had been transformed into shrines of Christian saints or of Mary. But people still visited these shrines with pagan ideas such as: “If I burn this candle for you, you must protect my crops,” or “I will make an offering in return for your assistance.” Too often the level of Christian observance was merely formal. Beneath the observance of Christian feasts and ceremonies the life was often unchristian.

## **Reform Movements**

But the picture is not unrelievedly dark. Throughout the Middle Ages there was a constant demand for reform. It came from all classes of society. In the 10th century the German emperors tried to reform the Church; in the 11th, the reforming movement was led by monastic groups like Cluny and later the Cistercians. In the 12th, the call and dynamism for reform came from the laity.

Changed social conditions helped to call forth this lay reform movement. Towns and cities had grown up; trade and industry had revived. A demand grew for a deepening of Christian faith. An example of this can be found in the wool-weaving trade. While weavers sat around doing their work, someone read to them, often from the Bible. Between readings the weavers began to discuss what had been read. For many it was the first time they had heard the Bible. They began to contrast what the Bible said a Christian should do with what they are doing; they contrasted what the New Testament said a preacher of the Gospel should be with how their own priests lived.

Such a movement for reform had varied effects. In some cases it led people to a deeper union with the Church, to work for reform within the body of the Church; in other cases, it led people out of the Church, to proclaim a “Gospel” that was set up against the “Church” of corruption and sin.

The lay-reform movement had no definite founders; it had no definite program, except for a return to the Gospel. This call for evangelical simplicity and values ran deep in the Middle Ages; medieval men and women had a “nostalgia for the Sermon on the Mount,” as Ronald Knox expressed it.

## “Order of Penitence”

The name generally applied to the movement at the time was “the Order of Penitence.” This “order” expressed the deep medieval concern for the order that must underlie all of human society. The members of the movement were called “penitents.” The movement cut across all borders and across all social classes. Penitents would appear in one area, then reappear in another. Orthodox or heretical, they were bitterly critical of the “establishment” in the Church: the bishops who were more concerned with politics, the lazy, greedy monks, the ignorant, grasping priests. Their cries against this kind of clergy found an echo at Rome where Pope Gregory VII had seized leadership of a reform movement that would transform the Church. The cross currents are vividly illustrated in the incident of Ramihrad, a layman of Cambrai in France. He was a “penitent” who preached against the corruption of the local clergy. He was seized and burned at the stake for heresy, in 1077, at the very time when the Pope in Rome was advocating the same thing.

The origins of the Third Order can be found in this lay reform movement, among the Penitents. The Third Order thus comes out of an unruly, pious, evangelistic, radical group, men and women unhappy with the decadence of clergy and religious, repulsed by the formalism and superstition of the merely nominal “Christians,” and deeply anxious to live a truly evangelical life.

All the reform groups of the later Middle Ages will have some connection with this movement. The Franciscan and Dominican movements will have a close relation with it. Out of this group as well will come all the heretics of the 13th century. There is thus an extraordinarily complex relation here, one that must be examined.

## Third Orders

One type of relation is exemplified in the group called the *Humiliati*. These lay people had dressed in a kind of “habit”; most importantly, they insisted upon their right to preach. In 1184 they were excommunicated for heresy. In 1201 Pope Innocent III reconciled a portion of this group to the Church on the basis of a distinction: those who would preach must become clerics and be ordained. They became a clerical Order of Humiliati. Those who remained as lay people would form a lay Order of Humiliati, in dependence upon the clerical Order. The lay Humiliati are the first group to be described as a “Third Order.”

Another type of relation is shown in the history of the Franciscan Order. In the past it has often been alleged that St. Francis founded a lay Order, and that out of this lay Order finally evolved, to the founder’s chagrin, a clerical order. Father Cajetan Esser, a contemporary Franciscan historian, has disproved this. Francis founded first a clerical order. The Franciscans were “from the beginning a canonical order, although certainly with novel and new features.” Francis founded an order of men that was never consciously a lay movement nor yet exclusively a clerical community, but rather a combination of the two. But this Franciscan *fraternitas* was profoundly influenced by the lay reform movement and had close ties with it. Around the year 1221, Francis decided to found a group of lay people associated with his original group. This was the founding of the Franciscan Third Order.

Here it is important to realize what the words “religious” and “religious order” meant in the 13th century. Profession of a particular rule and the wearing of a particular habit made one then a “religious.” Canon law of the time held that those who bound themselves “to a more difficult and holier life” are *religious*, contrasting them to those who lived a completely secular life. The contrast was between those who lived a “regular” life — the life of profession to a rule (*regula*) — and those who lived a totally secular life. In the 13th century meaning of the term, therefore, members of a “Third Order” were truly *religious* and their association constituted a truly *religious order*.

## **The Dominicans**

At length we come to St. Dominic Here the relation, in one sense, is simple. Dominic founded a clerical religious order. He himself was a cleric, a canon; he founded his Order on the Rule of St. Augustine, a rule for clerics; the members of this order were clerics. But the inspiration of his Order, the spirit of his order, was the same inspiration and spirit that informed the lay reform movement; the integral gospel, an apostolic spirit, and evangelical poverty. The aims of the lay reform movement were applied now to clerics.

The Dominican Order captured the spirit and the thrust of the times. It appealed to men from the middle classes of the towns and cities; it appealed to the students of the universities that had grown up with the towns. Dominicans were so visibly associated with this class of people that when Thomas Aquinas, scion of a great, noble family, wanted to join them, he was forcibly restrained from doing so for a year by his brothers. The family of Aquinas had determined that Thomas would be a Benedictine — an order worthy of nobility; they would not allow Thomas to lower himself in social status to join the Dominicans, a non-noble community.

The Dominican orientation was, from the beginning, toward the people of the towns, towards the universities. And these were the same people most affected by and interested in the “penitent” movement. From the first appearance of the Dominicans in their town, large number of laity sought theological and spiritual direction from the Friars Preachers. The Dominicans, when they went to Paris and Bologna, Cologne and Barcelona, found that the people who welcomed them were the laity, not the parish clergy. Again and again the records speak of friction with the local clergy; but always the records speak of an eager acceptance by laity who were seeking help to live a Christian life.

The relation between the Dominicans, a clerical community, and the lay reform movement is, therefore, one of mutual help. Dominicans find support and material help from the laity; the laity find among the Dominicans their spiritual directors and counselors. The origins of a Dominican “third order” can be found in the “association” of the two groups, the lay groups associating and affiliating with the friars.

## **“Penitents of St. Dominic”**

From 1225 onward, we begin to hear mention of the “Penitents of St. Dominic.” The depth and the extent of the association of these groups with the Order of Friars Preachers cannot always be accurately judged. It seems certain, however, that there was some kind of dependence upon local

Dominican priories. Humbert of Romans gave a sermon to a group called the “Brothers of Penance,” obviously an important group of laity but not yet a “third order.” A small group of laymen entered into a close association with the Order: the “oblates.” They were laymen who gave their money and goods to the Order and lived in the convent under religious obedience.

The association of a “penitent” group with the Order is illustrated also by an incident in 1260 at Perouse. A holy hermit living in that locality — Rainier, by name — was distressed at the bitter struggle between the two factions of Guelfs and Ghibellines. Feuds and bloodshed were the results of this division. Rainier began to preach a crusade of reconciliation and attracted large crowds of people. He began a march upon the city, followed by the huge throng of people singing hymns and chanting prayers

The civil and religious authorities of the town, fearing a disturbance, diverted the crowd into smaller groups, directing one group to enter by the north gate of the city, a second to enter the south gate, and still a third group to use the west gate. The groups became identified with the church nearest the respective gate. In that city, henceforth they were known as the “Penitents of St. Augustine,” the “Penitents of St. Francis,” and the “Penitents of St. Dominic.”

## **Dominican Third Order**

In 1280 two factors operated toward some kind of regularization of this relation. First of all, by 1280, many of these lay penitent groups were drifting into heresy. From criticism of an individual priest there developed criticism of the entire sacramental system. “Why pay money to the priest, to give out the sacraments?” The question was then asked: “Why have sacraments at all? Why not be in direct contact with God, without priest or sacraments?”

The second reason was that Munio de Zamora, Master General of the Dominicans at that time, decided that an organization of some sort had to be devised for these people. Accordingly, in 1285, Munio de Zamora published a “Rule for Penitents of St. Dominic.” This is the foundation, the origin of the Third Order. 1285 is your birthday.

## **Early Rule**

The Rule of Munio de Zamora was in 22 chapters. In order to enter the Order of Penitents of St. Dominic (we read in one chapter) one had to have a certificate that attested to one’s moral life, good reputation, and orthodox faith. According to the Rule, postulants must acquire the zeal of Dominic for the defense and propagation of the Faith. The apostolic end of the Order was clearly stated; all penitential practices were to be

directed to the apostolate. The Dominican Third Order was never conceived of as a way of making salvation easier, or subjecting one to certain customs or obligations. It was from the outset to be an apostolate in the world. The Rule of Zamora demanded that one must have settled all his debts and been reconciled to all his enemies. The habit was a white tunic and black cloak of simple material.



Approval of a majority of those who belonged to the Third Order chapter was needed for a postulant to be received. Once accepted, he was forbidden to leave, except to enter another religious order with solemn vows. In other words, one could not leave to enter another Third Order, or return to “secular life.” The ceremony of profession was a real canonical entrance into an Order.

There was an obligation to recite the Divine Office, so far as possible. On Sundays and feast days from November 1 to Easter, members of the Third Order were obligated to recite the night office, Matins at 2 A.M. There were severe rules on fast and abstinence: fast every Friday and, of course, on the eve of all principal feast days; no meat was allowed except on Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday. Members were to give up all worldliness, all banquets, revelries (the word used for “revelries” is basically the word for “wedding parties”), and dances.

Tertiaries were under obedience to their directors to such an extent that they could not leave town without his permission. There were obligations to sick members, and obligations to certain suffrage prayers.

Expulsion was possible for grave and scandalous faults. The director of the Third Order chapter was chosen by the Order and named to his office. The chapter itself elected a prior or a prioress from among its senior members.

## **A Second Tradition**

There has been a somewhat divergent tradition about the origin of the Third Order. This tradition holds that the Third Order evolved from the “Militia of Jesus Christ,” a group founded directly by Dominic. The tradition rests upon a statement by Raymond of Capua in the 14th century. It is the tradition that is repeated by Benedict XV in his encyclical letter of 1920 to the Third Order. But the tradition had been undermined by historical research.

First of all, this “Militia of Jesus Christ,” even if it had been a part of the penitent movement (and we are not exactly sure whether it was or was not), had a different focus. It was for the military defense of the Church and Church members in those areas where heretics had taken over the administration of towns. In those cases the “Militia of Jesus Christ,” a “vigilante” organization, protected the property of the Church and the Catholics. The aim of the penitents, on the other hand, was ascetic and evangelical.

Secondly, we have the documents that prove that the Militia was founded by Fulques, Bishop of Toulouse, a close and intimate; friend of St. Dominic. But no document associates Dominic with its founding. It seems very probable that Raymond concluded that since Dominic’s good friend founded it, Dominic also must have some relation with it. But there is no evidence to that effect. The bishop of Toulouse is its sole founder.

Later the Dominicans did assume some responsibility for the Militia. The Militia was officially approved by Pope Gregory IX in 1233; two years later, in a letter to the Dominican Master General, the Pope instructed the Dominicans to take over the spiritual direction and guidance of the “Militia of Jesus Christ.”

Dominicans were acquainted with the work of the “Militia of Jesus Christ,” and, in northern Italy, Militia chapters were founded by Dominicans. For example, the Dominican Bartholomew of Vicence began the Militia in northern Italy. This is where the tradition arises. The picture is somewhat confused. But it is well established now that the origins of the Third Order are to be found in the “Penitent” movement and not in the “Militia of Jesus Christ.”\*

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\* The “Militia of Jesus Christ” has been revived in our own time, especially in France and attempts have been made to institute chapters in this country. The Master General of the Dominican Order was petitioned by members of this *Militia* to be associated with the Dominican Order but he has refused permission.

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Munio de Zamora, then, gave the Rule to the Third Order in 1285. But this action antagonized the incumbent Pope, Nicholas IV. Pope Nicholas was a former Minister General of the Franciscan Order. He had an idea of what to do with the Penitent movement: attach all the penitent groups to the Franciscan Order. Thus, he was quite unhappy with de Zamora’s action in affiliating a substantial sector of the penitent movement with the Dominicans. This, along with several other grudges which he seems to have had against Zamora, caused him in 1290 to demand that the Dominican General Chapter remove this Master General from office. The General Chapter met, and refused to remove him. In the next year, 1291 — Pope Nicholas deposed him personally. But by now the Third Order was firmly established, and survived.

### **Subsequent History**

Historians of the Order have noted that the subsequent history of the Third Order follows the pattern of the First Order. There is a flourishing, a decline, a reform, another flourishing, a decline, and a reform. In 1316, for instance, Pope John XXII complains in a letter that “tertiaries” and “beguines” in large numbers were falling into heresy. But then he adds, “I exclude the Dominican tertiary whose faith and docility to the Church are irreproachable.”

By the 14th century both the Third Order and the First Order were in deep decline and seriously in need of reform. Raymond of Capua, who became Master General in 1380, complained that there were no men in the Third Order, that at least in northern Italy, it was simply a group of pious old ladies. These groups were called the *Mantellata*. The Mantellata would receive no young ladies, only widows of mature age. Catherine of Siena, for instance, found it difficult to break into this religious elite. Raymond criticized the Mantellata, declaring that while they may have been pious, they were much too exclusive.

While he was Master General he reformed the First Order, and approved the work of another Dominican, Friar Thomas Coffarini, to reform the Third Order. Friar Thomas began in Venice; he preached the Third Order, opened it up to men and women and to young and old. Raymond wrote to Thomas that what he was doing was especially pleasing to him because it honored the Blessed Catherine, “my mother.” An eminent co-worker of Coffarini in reviving the Third Order

was John Dominici, Dominican Prior in Florence, and one of the greatest preachers of the 14th century. In 1405, in the Bull *Apostolicae Sedis*, Pope Innocent VII gave canonical approval to the Third Order. Vincent Ferrer in the 14th century preached the Third Order throughout France. In the 16th century the Third Order was taken by Dominican missionaries to their missions in the Orient: to Japan, to China, and to Indo-China. A great many Dominican martyrs from those regions were members of the Third Order.

But, once again, as with the First Order, there was a decline during the 17th and 18 centuries. By the time of the French Revolution, the Third Order as well as the First, were in decline. After the French Revolution the decline continued. Chapters of the Third Order in France were described as “parochial societies.” In the mid 19th century, when Father Lacordaire renewed the First Order, he asserted that the first order of business was to renew the Third Order, and by way of underlining its renewal, in a ceremony in Notre Dame Cathedral, gave the Dominican habit to four youths, in 1844.

## Conclusion

The conclusions I would draw from this brief history are these:

The Third Order has its origin in the desire of the laity for a radical, evangelical style of life. The Third Order found its origin in this and, I think, finds its continued reason for existence in this.

The Third Order became associated with the Order of Preachers because it found that the Dominican apostolate and the Dominican spirit of action and contemplation, was its aim, also.

3. The Third Order is truly an Order, an *ordo*, and Tertiaries are truly *religious* in the medieval sense of those words and the medieval sense of these words is much more relevant to contemporary conditions than the words of modern canon law.

The Third Order and the First Order are bound together in what I call a “symbiotic” relation. Webster defines “symbiosis” as “the living together in more or less intimate association or close union of two dissimilar organisms”: “a mutually beneficial relationship.”

The Third Order requires a clear program of apostolic aims for full flowering and productivity.

Throughout the presentation I have referred to the Third Order. The name has now been changed; it is now “Dominican Laity.” I think that this is to say, at least, a mistranslation, since it transposes the adjective and the noun. From 1217 to 1285 the term “Dominican Laity” would have been acceptable, but the history of our Order leads me to conclude that the term should be “Lay Dominican.” You are members of the Order by historical association and conscious profession. Remember the groups led by Rainier the hermit. “You have gone in by the gate of St. Dominic.”



# ***Franciscan and Dominican Influences on the Medieval Order of Penance: Origins of the Dominican Laity***

[*Spirituality Today*, Summer 1985, Vol. 37 No. 2, pp. 108-119]

by Thomas J. Johnston OP

THE emergence and development of what is popularly known today as "Dominican Laity" is difficult to specify with great accuracy. What we are investigating in this article are those groups of lay men and women who gathered together in associations known to the medieval world as an "order of penance" and that formed common juridical ties with the Order of Friars Preachers. Throughout their history they have accepted changes in name, not only to signify their tie with the fraternal branch of the preachers' order (Brothers and Sisters of Penance of Saint Dominic, 1286, [\(1\)](#) or their juridical position in the canonical structure of the church (Third Order of Penance of Saint Dominic, 1434, [\(2\)](#) but also to indicate their active involvement in the life, mission, and ministry of the church (Dominican Laity, 1968). [\(3\)](#)

The primary reason for the difficulty in pinpointing the emergence of a Dominican lay group is that it is a natural outgrowth of the developing penitential movement popularized by Francis of Assisi. When the grace of God inspired the thirteenth-century mind and heart of this saint, he cried out: "This is what I wish, this is what I seek, this is what I long to do with my whole heart." [\(4\)](#) With these words the wealthy cloth merchant's son began an exemplary, self-styled life as the "Herald of the Great King." It was not a noble life of pomp and glamour, however, nor was it a path unknown to others before him. The Poverello only wished to live the timeless life-style of penance, that is, conversion to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Francis received oral confirmation for his personal form of life from Pope Innocent III in 1209. Throughout the following years, after Francis brought his God-given brothers to the Portiuncula chapel of Our Lady of the Angels, he spent his time traveling about the Spoleto Valley exhorting others as he was moved by grace. The chroniclers of this poor man of Assisi mention that he went about the towns and villages, announcing the kingdom of God, preaching peace, teaching salvation and penance unto the remission of sins" [\(5\)](#); and "in passing through towns and castles he exhorted all men and women to fear God and to do penance." [\(6\)](#) Those moved by his example and words began to imitate his life and patterned their own life according to his "direction, guidance, and discipline. [\(7\)](#)

Saint Bonaventure, who succeeded Francis as the eighth minister general of the friars minor, noted that "it was not just the masses that were stirred by the fervor of the moment; great numbers were seized with the desire to imitate the perfection of Christ and these followed the footsteps of Francis, making light of the fleeting attractions of the world." (8) Earlier in his *Major Life* of the saint, Bonaventure observed that Francis "instituted" the way of penance "common to all those who are on the road to heaven and so this way of life includes members of both sexes, clerics and lay folks, married or simple." (9)

Francis envisioned his followers in every age to be marked by their conversion of heart. By turning from sin to life with God through the observance of God's commandments, they were assured of forgiveness. Living such a virtuous life made them citizens of the kingdom of God and filled them with hope for the fulfillment of their salvation. By his followers' exemplary conduct, Francis was confident that "very many people will be converted to the Lord and he will multiply and increase this his family in the whole world." (10)

## AN EARLY "RULE"

The Franciscan friar Bernard of Bessa alludes to the fact that Cardinal Ugolino, the future Pope Gregory IX, helped to organize and compose the inspirations of Francis into a rule around the year 1221. (11) Although this rule has not been preserved, history has handed down a copy of the so-called Capistrano *propositum* of 1228, known simply by its opening word *Memoriale*. (12) This *propositum* is a design for men and women who wish to live pious lives, voluntarily renouncing the vain attractions of society, while living in their own homes. Anyone who accepted this life-style was recognized as a quasi-religious person who lived a life publicly devoted to God.

The rule provided for the acceptance of men or women as members of the "penance." Those who were free from heresy were to make a last will and testament three months after their reception as a "brother" or "sister." Women needed the consent of their husbands for admission to a sorority. Dissensions were to be settled peacefully, and consultation was to be made between the local bishop and civil authorities in the event of trouble. Each fraternity or sorority was moderated by two annually elected "ministers" and a treasurer. Members were to show simplicity in their clothing and were to fast and abstain over and above the prescriptions of ecclesiastical law. They were obliged to recite, or to be present at the singing of, all the canonical hours (divine office) of the church. No one was permitted to bear arms or to take an unnecessary oath. Members were to gather monthly into their separate fraternities or sororities to hear Mass and listen to the instruction and spiritual direction of a "male religious." Confession and communion were enjoined upon them three times a year. The penitents were to be engaged in works of charity and were mandated to offer prayers for the dead and to attend funeral and burial rites of their deceased members. Each fraternity was to be visited by a representative appointed by the bishop; this delegate was to denounce their shortcomings in living up to their form of life and to punish infractions or grant appropriate dispensations. Finally, by 1228, after associations with, and influence from, Dominican religious, a stipulation was added that no point of the *propositum* obliged under the pain of sin.

This *propositum* is the result of various factors. Although space does not permit their thorough development here, they must be cited to manifest the sources that have brought this document into existence.

First, we must acknowledge that Francis perceived himself and all men and women to be children of the Most High God who created them for his love and service. Openness to the created universe disposed men and women to God's revelation of the divine glory. By a life of personal testimony, Francis demonstrated that all could live in harmony with the created order. What humans had marred by weakness and the burden of their sin, God could restore through their repentance and conversion to the gospel life.

Second, the development of an "order of penance" is a mark of the spirit of the times that witnessed the rapid development of lay piety during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Men and women wished to imitate the early apostolic communities, living in simplicity and at times communally, and not infrequently engaged in expounding the Scriptures. The twentieth-century Dominican historian, Père Mortier, observed that the development of this lay piety owed nothing to the secular clergy for "instead of being among the people models of continence, of unselfishness, or of penance, they flaunted, with a kind of self-satisfaction, the abandonment of their morals, their greediness for gain, and their luxurious manners." (13) Francis daily saw the danger of the faithful who detached themselves from the pastors of the church and sought to rectify this through his *propositum* whereby men and Women were to be obedient to the governance of their bishop and the guidance of a religious.

Third, and perhaps most important, was the contemporary theological understanding of forgiveness reflected in the common devotional piety. In an era marked by the possibility of sudden death from war, plague, and unexplained natural disasters, the contemporaries of Francis feared the pains of hell brought upon One who might die unrepentant. Confession was the means to obtain God's mercy; satisfaction of the temporal punishment due to sin, however, could be merited only by the exercise of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Those who voluntarily accepted the *propositum* of Francis out of devotion were, therefore, taking full advantage of the graces God was extending to them in this life.

This view is clearly manifested in a model sermon composed by Humbert of Romans, the fifth master of the Dominican order, for members of the order of penance. Humbert remarks that God does not wish the death of sinners, for God gives to them the place and time of penance. There are those who claim not to be able to do penance in the world and who also do not wish to enter the cloister because they dread its rigor or because they are married. Providence has come to their aid and has removed from them every excuse. God has, in effect, established in the middle of the world a certain means of doing penance which is approved by the Holy See, and which is enriched by it with many graces and indulgences. It is this means that is practiced by those who are called the "Brothers and Sisters of Penance." (14)

## LAY PENITENTS AND THE FRIARS

Throughout Italy, especially in the northcentral territories of Lombardy and Tuscany, groups of lay penitents and friars were undergoing a rapid development in both numbers and association. As an example, there is the relationship between the lay penitents and friars in the city of Florence. When the friars minor arrived in Florence in 1218, they were warmly received by the lay penitents who operated the hospice of San Gallo. The following year, the friars preachers were equally greeted and housed by other lay penitents at the hospice of San Pancratio. Together, the lay penitents and friars chiefly provided for the city's public charitable works. The penitents yielded the necessary financial and social foundations for the work, while the friars ministered to the spiritual formation of the penitents and the pastoral care of the hospice residents.

These associations were so agreeable to both friars and lay penitents that by the mid-thirteenth century a dissatisfied secular cleric was able to write a letter to Peter of Vineis, minister of affairs to the Holy Roman Emperor, Frederick II, stating that since the creation of these penitential associations by the mendicant orders "scarcely one man or woman remains whose name is not written in the registers of one or the other." (15) But as the century marched on, the growing concern of the secular clergy over the privileges accorded to the mendicants, coupled with the decline in the fervor of the lay penitents, tested and strained the earlier relationships.

Although Francis of Assisi gave one popular form of organization to the order of penance, he never explicitly entrusted it to the care of his brethren in the recorded writings or sayings that have come down to us. No doubt the friars minor were closely associated with the lay penitents; but, as the mid-thirteenth century controversies increased, the friars minor were more reserved in their association with, and direction of, penitent fraternities and sororities. So reserved were the friars minor that Pope Innocent IV issued bulls to the Franciscan provincials of Italy and Sicily in 1247 stating: "We command that at an opportune time, through yourself and through brethren of your order appropriate for this, you provide [the penitents] with the office of visitation and that, forming them in regular discipline, you correct and reform them in both head and members, which you know need the visitation, restraining those in opposition through ecclesiastical censure with the possibility of appeal being denied." (16)

Unrest and dissension among the penitent fraternities and sororities continued to foment throughout the remainder of the century. During the administrative term of Bonaventure as minister general of the friars minor (1257-73), we can find evidence that, although the friars minor were encouraged to exhort the laity to imitate the penitential life of Saint Francis, they did not promote the order of penance. In the collected works of Bonaventure, (17) there is found a document whose authorship is questioned by modern-day scholars but which nevertheless reflects the attitudes

that prompted the friars minor not to promote the Brothers and Sisters of Penance. Among the twelve "responses" cited, the author mentions that the friars' liberty to do their own work would be hindered if they assumed the pastoral care of the penitents; that the friars would be expected to negotiate for the penitents if they were in trouble or to finance their possible debts; that the friars would be expected to work for the release of imprisoned Penitents or to assist those who came to them in perilous times. A response was even put forth that if the Sisters went astray,

people would say that the friars were responsible for causing the "barefoot women to bring forth little barefoot children."

Even though the friars preachers of St. Dominic were founded, in a sense, to curb the excesses of lay pietism, they were frequently cautious in dealing with the dissenting lay penitents. This was so for two reasons. Like the friars minor, they were victimized by the scathing attacks of the secular clergy; but, more important, because of their primary apostolic mission of preaching the word of God, the friars preachers tended to leave the settlement of disputes to diocesan bishops, unless they were called upon to be a bishop's designated apostolic visitor. Consequently, relations between the friars preachers and lay penitents tended to be slightly more cordial than those between friars minor and laity during the tension-filled years of the mid-thirteenth century.

While some penitents gathered around the friars preachers for spiritual direction and guidance, others chose to be allied with them for economic security. As noted earlier, when the friars preachers arrived in Florence, they were received by the lay penitents of San Pancratio who were engaged in providing public works of charity. Shortly after the friars' arrival, the penitents donated to them the sanctuary of their meeting church, Santa Maria Novella. From this group was to come the strongest and most influential charitable work because it was backed by the most substantial financial capital of all the Florentine penitent associations.

Economic control of the public charitable works (18) by the penitents of Santa Maria Novella was the concrete, political source for the civil controversies among penitent groups. Since penitents were admonished by their 1228 *propositum* not to be concerned about such worldly matters, the Florentine penitents not associated with the Church of Santa Maria Novella could accuse those penitents of laxity in living the regular life of penitential discipline prescribed by the *propositum*. Indeed, this laxity had become a problem in every area of Italy. Along with this problem, there is evidence from 1275. (19) that the penitents that associated most closely with the friars preachers separated themselves from the general order of penitents in the manner of dress. Whereas other penitents wore a gray habit, the Dominican penitents had so thoroughly identified themselves as being under the direction of the friars preachers that they assumed for themselves the permission to wear the *habitus nigri* -- the black mantle and capuce for the brothers and the black mantle and white veil for the sisters.

in the year 1284, the bishop of Florence was the Dominican James of Castelbono. To obviate what might appear as patronage to the "black-habit" penitents, Pope Honorius IV appointed the friar minor *custos*, Fra Caro, as apostolic visitor of the Holy See. In light of later events when Pope Nicholas IV would incorporate the rule (*formula*) (20) of Fra Caro in his own bull *Supra montem*, (21) it appears that the apostolic visitor was entrusted with the task of settling the dispute in Florence in such a way that it would be normative for all Italy. Despite his efforts, however, some of the "black-habit" penitents were dissatisfied.



## MUNIO OF ZAMORA'S RULE

By their refusal to accept the *formula* of the apostolic visitor, some of the penitents of the *habitus nigri* showed the friars preachers their pride and exercise of will against the church's call to reform and commitment to peace. The friars, however, did witness the good faith of some devoted penitents and probably sought counsel with the recently elected Munio of Zamora, the seventh master of the Dominican order. (22) He was then completing his first round of visitations of the friars and their apostolates in the Italian provinces.

Soon after, a rule seems to have appeared that was composed for the "Brothers and Sisters of Penance of Saint Dominic." (23) An examination of this rule reveals that it uses the formula of Fra Caro as a guide, but it has reorganized and tightened the structure and added some elements to give it a particularly Dominican spirit. If this rule appears to us today as severe or, even worse, undemocratic, it can be explained by the rebellious spirit of some members of the "black habit."

Among the major revisions we must note that those penitents who wish to belong to this association must be willing to be totally under the direction and correction of the master of the Dominican order or the local provincial of the friars preachers. This is done "for their greater preservation and promotion ... in those things that pertain to their manner and formula of living."

Each fraternity is to request a Dominican friar priest from the master of the order or the local provincial. This priest is to convoke the monthly meetings of the fraternities and sororities either in the penitents' meeting place or the church of the friars preachers. He is to preach and celebrate Mass for the group. This is to be followed by a reading and explaining of the penitents' rule. The friar priest has complete authority to correct the penitents who may have transgressed or neglected the rule. Explicit permission must be granted by him or the local prelate for penitents to travel, even if they are planning on making a pilgrimage.

The friar is also responsible for establishing the prior of the fraternity or the prioress of the sorority with the advice of the elders of the chapter. A subprior or subprioress and vicar may also be appointed in a similar fashion. The rule explicitly states that the prior or prioress is to be confirmed annually during the octave of Easter, after counsel with the association's oldest members.

Those to be received into the society's membership must be "like a singular child of St. Dominic in the Lord ... an outstanding example and zealous for the truth of the Catholic faith according to his [or her] capacity." Later, these people are referred to as "servants of Christ." They are to be received by the friar master, director, or their appointed vicar in the presence of the prior of the group and other penitent members. Other friars preachers are to be present as well.

Reception follows exactly the rite of reception into the friars preachers. Those to be received petition the master to be admitted to the habit of the Brothers and Sisters of Penance of Blessed Dominic for a probationary period. The postulants then receive the habit, which has been blessed; and the master along with the other friars preachers sing the hymn *Veni, Creator Spiritus*. Following the recitation of the Lord's Prayer and prayers for the newly received, the

master sprinkles them with holy water and presents the newly received to the assembled penitents for the "kiss of peace."

After the probationary time has been satisfactorily fulfilled, the novices may be professed when they are willing to dedicate themselves permanently to the penitential life. Once professed, there is to be no turning back, no "return to the world." By profession "to the honor of Almighty God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and of the blessed virgin Mary and blessed Dominic," the novices declare "to live henceforth according to the form and rule of the Brothers and Sisters of Penance of Blessed Dominic until death."

Profession obliged them to the recitation of the canonical hours of the church. Those who were engaged in daily manual labor could say the hours "exclusively between morning and evening." In other words, they were dispensed from rising for prayer in the middle of the night. Those penitents who did not know the psalms could recite a designated number of Our Fathers and an equal number of Hail Marys "to the honor of blessed Mary ever virgin."

The penitents are reminded "to visit the churches of which they are parishioners and to highly revere the prelates of their own churches, namely, bishops and their subordinates." Four times a year they are to carefully confess their sins and receive Communion on Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, and the feast either of Mary's assumption or of her nativity. With the permission of their priest, they could devoutly receive communion more frequently.

Finally, there is the same clause as found in the Constitutions of the Friars Preachers, namely, that what is contained in the penitents' rule over and above the precepts of the church, the general ecclesiastical law, and the natural moral law does not bind the brother or sister of penance of Blessed Dominic under the pain of sin. In other words, the rule of the penitents was not to be perceived as a moral burden but as a means voluntarily chosen to convert themselves to the living God. Failure to live up to their profession brought admonition and correction from the friar master or prelate, but this failure was not to be accounted as a morally culpable fault before God unless clearly a sin on other grounds.

## **PAPAL ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

With the bull *Congruum existimantes* the Brothers and Sisters of Penance of Blessed Dominic was acknowledged by the papacy as a legitimate branch of the order of penance that "gives pleasing service to God." This bull granted by Honorius IV gave them the privilege "to attend divine services and receive the sacraments of the church during the time of general interdict in churches where they are celebrated by favor of the Apostolic See, provided ... [they] were not the cause of the interdict." Thus, incorporated into the Order of Preachers and strengthened by the favor of apostolic privilege, the Brothers and Sisters of Penance of Blessed Dominic began to live anew the gospel life in its fullness.

Although groups of penitents were brought into formal existence by growing economic and social unrest, from the early arrival of the mendicant orders they nurtured their spirituality under

the guidance and direction of the order of their choice . Inspired by the original exhortations of Saint Francis and shaped by the direction of the friars preachers, the rule and life of the Brothers and Sisters of Penance of Blessed Dominic emerge as the model for the establishment of other branches of the order of penance during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Despite the increasing diversity of expression brought about by the penitents' associations with other mendicant communities, all branches have sought to be faithful to their basic founding charism to imitate the perfection of Christ through a life converted to the values of the gospel.

## NOTES

1 Honorius IV, *Congruum existimantes*, 28 January 1286, in *Bullarium Ordinis FF. Praedicatorum*, vol. 2, ed . Thomas Ripol (Rome, 1730), p. 10.

2 Eugenius IV, *Sacrae religionis*, 6 December 1434, in *ibid.*, vol. 3, ed. Thomas Ripol (Rome, 1731), p. 32.

3 *Acta Capituli Generalis Provincialium Ordinis FF. Praedicatorum* (River Forest, Illinois), chap. 11, par. 107 (Rome, 1968), p. 66.

4 Thomas of Celano, *The First Life of Saint Francis*, no. 22; and Anonymous, *The Legend of the Three Companions*, no. 25.

5 Thomas of Celano, *First Life*, no. 36.

6 *Legend of Three Companions*, no. 33.

7 *Ibid.*, no. 54.

8 St. Bonaventure, *Major Life of Saint Francis*, chap. 4, 7.

9 *Ibid.*, chap. 4, 6.

10 *Legend of Three Companions*, no. 36.

11 Bernard of Bessa, *Liber de laudibus*, in *Analecta Franciscana*, vol. 3, p. 679.

12 Gillis Gerard Meersseman, *Ordo Fraternalitatis: Confraternità e pietà dei laici nel medioevo* (Rome: Herder, 1977), pp. 390-94; and *Dossier de l'ordre de la pénitence au XIII siècle*, *Spicilegium Friburgense*, 7 (Fribourg: Editions Universitaires, 1961), pp. 92-112

13 D.A. Mortier, *Histoire des maitres généraux de l'ordre frères Prêcheurs*, vol. 2 (Paris: Alphonse Picard and Sons, 1905), p. 221.

14 Humbert of Romans, *Ad fratres de Poenitentia*, in Meersseman, *Dossier*, pp. 125-28.

15 *Epistolae*, bk. 1, chap. 37 (Basel, 1566), p. 234, as cited in Hilarin Felder, *The Ideals St. Francis of Assisi*, trans. Berchmanns Bittle (New York: Bensinger Brothers, 1925), 481, n. 30.

16 Meersseman, *Dossier*, p. 57.

17 St. Bonaventure, *Opusculum* 17, pt. 2, ques. 16, in *Opera omnia*, vol. 3 (Quaracchi, 1898), pp. 368-69; and Meersseman, *Dossier*, pp. 123-25.

18 Cf. M.-H. Vicaire, *Dominique et Ses Precheurs*, *Studia Friburgensia*, n.s., 55 (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1977), p. 403.

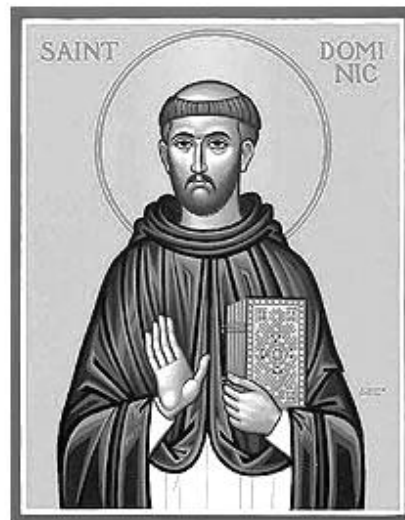
19 Meersseman, "Testaments of Cittadino Bonasere de Passignano and Bello Ferrantini, Citizens of Florence," *Dossier*, pp. 196, 198.

20 Meerseman, *Dossier*, pp. 128-38; and *Ordo Fraternitatis*, pp. 394-400.

21 Nicholas IV, *Supra montem*, 18 August 1289, in *Seraphicae Legislationes Textus Originales* (Ad Claras Aquas, 1897), pp. 77-94.

22 Munio was elected on the vigil of Pentecost, 12 May 1285. Sometime between this date and that of the bull by Honorius IV, *Congruum existimantes*, 28 January 1286, the rule would have been composed.

23 Meersseman, *Ordo fraternitatis*, pp. 401-8; and *Dossier*, pp. 144-56. The reader should be aware that it is alleged that Munio wrote this rule. This allegation is, however, only an oral tradition, for no known autograph of this rule exists from the late thirteenth century.



# CENTRAL PROVINCE



## CANDIDACY I FORMATION

### UNIT 6: DOMINICAN SAINTS

## **“TO ALL GOD’S BELOVED...WHO ARE CALLED TO BE SAINTS.” (ROM. 1:7)**

Do you remember that upperclassman you admired, the one who was such a good student and a gifted athlete? You tried to emulate him or her, sometimes successfully, sometimes not. Or the uncle or aunt who seemed to lead an exciting, successful life? You imitated and patterned your life after that student or relative. Perhaps you even surpassed them or at least you were better for it. There is a reason we are encouraged to give ‘good example.’

As Catholics we continue to value the example contained in the lives of our fellow Catholics who have gone before us. “From the Church [the Christian] learns the example of *holiness*...in the spiritual tradition and long history of the saints who have gone before him and whom the liturgy celebrates in the rhythms of the sanctoral cycle.: (CCC: 2030)

We are so fortunate to celebrate an abundance of Dominican Saints and Blesseds. We must remember that being a Saint does not mean that one is perfect but that there is something about a Saint that is worthy of imitation. This is why reading the biographies is encouraged. Such a practice converted St. Ignatius Loyola. **NOTE:** The practice of a member giving a short report on a Dominican Saint at the Chapter meeting from that month’s calendar should be scheduled in each Chapter.

Our Rule encourages us to follow “the examples of Saint Dominic, Saint Catherine of Siena and our predecessors who illumined the life of the Order and the Church...” (Rule: 5) We do believe that we have been “moved by the Holy Spirit to live a life according to the spirit and charism of St. Dominic...” (Rule: 2)

Who is your favorite Dominican Saint or Blessed?

## RESOURCES

The “*Litany of Dominican Saints and Blesseds*” is attached.

For a very through listing of Dominican Saints and Blesseds for the entire year with description consult:

<http://tinyurl.com/o294auz>

**Read about two of our greatest Lay Dominicans:**

**St. Catherine of Siena** (1347-1380) is one of our outstanding Dominican Saints from the Middle Ages. She was the second Doctor of the Church which appointed her the patroness of the Fraternities of St. Dominic. Study:

<http://www.ewtn.com/library/MARY/CATSIENA.htm>



**Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati** (1901-1925) is a wonderful modern Saint, especially for youth, a tireless servant of the poor. He was a student, an athlete, a “Man of the Beatitudes.” Study:

<http://www.bettnet.com/frassati/>



**Lastly**, each Candidate could pick another example and give a short report.

## Litany of Dominican Saints and Blesseds

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.  
Christ, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.  
Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.  
Christ, hear us. Christ, graciously hear us.

God, the heavenly Father ... have mercy on us.

God, the Son, Redeemer of the world ... have mercy on us.

God, the Holy Spirit ... have mercy on us.  
Holy Trinity, one God ... have mercy on us.

Holy Mary ... pray for us.

Holy Mother of God ... pray for us.

Holy Virgin of Virgins ... pray for us.

All you holy angels and archangels ... pray for us.

All you holy Patriarchs and Prophets ... pray for us.

All you holy Apostles and Evangelists ... pray for us.

All you holy martyrs ... pray for us.

All you holy virgins and widows ... pray for us.

All you holy men and women ... pray for us.

Saint Michael ... pray for us.

Saint Gabriel ... pray for us.

Saint Raphael ... pray for us.

Saint Joseph ... pray for us.

Saint John the Baptist ... pray for us.

Saint Mary Magdalen ... pray for us.

Holy Father Augustine ... pray for us.

Holy Father Francis ... pray for us.

Blessed Jane of Aza ... pray for us.

Blessed Reginald ... pray for us.

Holy Father Dominic ... pray for us.

Holy Father Dominic ... pray for us.

Blessed Bertrand ... pray for us.

Blessed Mannes ... pray for us.

Blessed Diana ... pray for us.

Blessed Jordan of Saxony ... pray for us.

Blessed John of Salerno ... pray for us.

Blessed William and Companions ... pray for us.

Blessed Ceslaus ... pray for us.

Blessed Isnard ... pray for us.

Blessed Guala ... pray for us.

Blessed Peter Gonzalez ... pray for us.

Saint Zdislava ... pray for us.

Saint Peter of Verona ... pray for us.

Blessed Nicholas ... pray for us.

Saint Hyacinth ... pray for us.

Blessed Gonsalvo ... pray for us.

Blessed Sadoc and Companions ... pray for us.

Blessed Giles ... pray for us.

Saint Margaret of Hungary ... pray for us.

Blessed Batholomew of Vincenza ... pray for us.

Saint Thomas Aquinas ... pray for us.

Saint Raymond of Penyafort ... pray for us.

Blessed Innocent V ... pray for us.

Blessed Albert of Bergamo ... pray for us.

Saint Albert the Great ... pray for us.

Blessed John of Vercelli ... pray for us.

Blessed Ambrose ... pray for us.

Blessed Cecilia ... pray for us.

Blessed Benvenuta ... pray for us.

Blessed James of Varazze ... pray for us.

Blessed James of Bevagna ... pray for us.

Blessed Benedict XI ... pray for us.

Blessed Jane of Orvieto ... pray for us.

Blessed Jordan of Pisa ... pray for us.

Saint Emily ... pray for us.

Blessed James Salomonio ... pray for us.

Saint Agnes of Montepulciano ... pray for us.

Blessed Simon ... pray for us.



Blessed Margaret of Castello ... pray for us.  
Blessed Augustine Kazotic ... pray for us.  
Blessed James Benefatti ... pray for us.  
Blessed Imelda ... pray for us.  
Blessed Dalmatius ... pray for us. 3  
Blessed Margaret Ebner ... pray for us.  
Blessed Villana ... pray for us.  
Blessed Peter Ruffia ... pray for us.  
Blessed Henry ... pray for us.  
Blessed Sibyllina ... pray for us.  
Blessed Anthony of Pavonio ... pray for us.  
Saint Catherine of Siena ... pray for us.  
Blessed Marcolino ... pray for us.  
Blessed Raymond of Capua ... pray for us.  
Blessed Andrew Franchi ... pray for us.  
Saint Vincent Ferrer ... pray for us.  
Blessed Clara ... pray for us.  
Blessed John Dominic ... pray for us.  
Blessed Alvarez ... pray for us.  
Blessed Maria ... pray for us.  
Blessed Peter of Castello ... pray for us.  
Blessed Andrew Abellon ... pray for us.  
Blessed Stephen ... pray for us.  
Blessed Peter Geremia ... pray for us.  
Blessed John of Fiesole ... pray for us.  
Blessed Lawrence of Ripafratta ... pray for us.  
Blessed Anthony della Chiesa ... pray for us.  
Saint Antoninus ... pray for us.  
Blessed Anthony Neyrot ... pray for us.  
Blessed Margaret of Savoy ... pray for us.  
Blessed Bartholomew of Cerverio ... pray for us.  
Blessed Matthew ... pray for us.  
Blessed Constantius ... pray for us.  
Blessed Christopher ... pray for us.  
Blessed Damian ... pray for us.  
Blessed Andrew of Peschiera ... pray for us.  
Blessed Bernard ... pray for us.  
Blessed Jane of Portugal ... pray for us.  
Blessed James of Ulm ... pray for us.  
Blessed Augustine of Biella ... pray for us.  
Blessed Aimo ... pray for us.  
Blessed Sebastian ... pray for us.  
Blessed Mark ... pray for us.  
Blessed Columba ... pray for us.

Blessed Magdalen ... pray for us.  
Blessed Osanna of Mantua ... pray for us.  
Blessed John Liccio ... pray for us.  
Blessed Dominic Spadafora ... pray for us.  
Blessed Stephana ... pray for us.  
Saint Adrian ... pray for us.  
Blessed Lucy ... pray for us.  
Blessed Catherine Racconigi ... pray for us.  
Blessed Osanna of Kotor ... pray for us.  
Saint Pius V ... pray for us.  
Saint John of Cologne ... pray for us.  
Blessed Maria Bartholomew ... pray for us.  
Saint Louis Bertrand ... pray for us.  
Saint Catherine de Ricci ... pray for us.  
Blessed Robert ... pray for us.  
Blessed Alphonsus and Companions ... pray for us.  
Saint Rose ... pray for us.  
Saint Dominic Ibanez and Companions ... pray for us.  
Blessed Agnes of Jesus ... pray for us.  
Saint Lawrence Ruiz and Companions ... pray for us.  
Saint Martin de Porres ... pray for us.  
Blessed Peter Higgins ... pray for us.  
Blessed Francis de Capillas ... pray for us.  
Saint Juan Macias ... pray for us.  
Blessed Terence ... pray for us.  
Blessed Ann of the Angels ... pray for us.  
Blessed Francis de Posadas ... pray for us.  
Saint Louis de Montfort ... pray for us.  
Blessed Francis Gil ... pray for us.  
Saint Matteo ... pray for us.  
Blessed Peter Sanz and Companions ... pray for us.  
Saint Vincent Liem ... pray for us.  
Saint Hyacinth Castaneda ... pray for us.  
Blessed Marie ... pray for us.  
Blessed George ... pray for us.  
Blessed Catherine Jarrige ... pray for us.  
Saint Ignatius and Companions ... pray for us.  
Saint Dominic An-Kham and Companions ... pray for us.  
Saint Joseph Khang and Companions ... pray for us.

Blessed Francis Coll ... pray for us.  
Blessed Hyacinthe Cormier ... pray for us.  
Blessed Pier Giorgio ... pray for us.  
Blessed Bartolo ... pray for us.  
Blessed Michael Czartoryski ... pray for us.  
Blessed Julia Rodzinska ... pray for us.  
All holy Dominican brothers and sisters ...  
pray for us.

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of  
the world, ... spare us, O Lord.  
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of  
the world, ... graciously hear us, O Lord.  
Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of  
the world, ... have mercy on us.

Let us pray...  
God, source of all holiness, you have  
enriched your Church  
with many gifts in the saints of the Order of  
Preachers.  
By following the example of our brothers  
and sisters,  
may we come to enjoy their company  
for ever in the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus  
Christ,  
Your Son, who lives and reigns with You  
and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and  
ever.  
Amen





# CENTRAL PROVINCE



**CANDIDACY I**

**UNIT 7: DOMINICAN  
SPIRITUALITY**

# **“I AM THE WAY AND THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE.”**

## **(JOHN 14:6)**

Some have questioned whether there is such a thing as *‘Dominican Spirituality’*. The word *‘spirituality’* was not part of the vocabulary of the Middle Ages. Early Dominicans saw themselves as Preachers of the *‘Good News’*. Today it can be said that there does exist *‘Dominican Spirituality’*.

**THE WAY.** Jesus is the ‘Way’ to the Father, to Jerusalem and Resurrection, to Salvation. The ‘Way’ is mystical union with Jesus achieved through Contemplation in prayer and study. Our motto: *Contemplari et Contemplata Aliis Tradere* sums up our spirituality. Contemplation is our ‘way’ to the ‘Way.’

**THE TRUTH.** Jesus is ‘the Truth,’ the Word spoken by the Father, the Revelation of God. The ‘Truth’ is revealed Truth as contained in the Words of Scripture and Tradition. Dominicans have been in the forefront of the study of Scripture since the beginning with St. Dominic who carried the Gospel of St. Matthew and the Letters of St. Paul. In *Dominican Spirituality* by Denis Gagnon OP, translated by Maria Dominica OP, we learn: “A Dominican studies the Word; a Dominican celebrates the Word; a Dominican lives by the Word”. Dominicans know that St. Jerome was right when he said, ***“Ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ”***.

**THE LIFE.** Peter was so right when he said, “You have the words of eternal life”. (John 6: 68) The words of Jesus, contemplated and studied, will transform our lives. Most people lead lives of “quiet desperation’ but we can lead a transformed life, a life in the Kingdom. “For behold, the kingdom of God is among you.” (Luke 17:21) Indeed, when our life is transformed, that ‘Kingdom’ is truly within us. Our will is united with the will of God. We can then say, even if only in part, with St. Paul: “Yet I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me”. (Gal. 2: 20)

Paul Murray OP in *The New Wine of Dominican Spirituality* sums this up by quoting a medieval Dominican, “What is needed is study, then reflection within the heart, and then preaching”. (p. 13) He later mentions some of the Dominicans who have contributed to Dominican Spirituality: Bartolome de las Casas, Johannes Tauler, Meister Eckhart, Catherine of Siena, Albert the Great, Humbert of Romans, Girolamo Savonarola, Martin de Porres, Thomas Aquinas, Margaret Ebner, and Beato Angelico (p. 29).

To sum up Dominican Spirituality in one word: **‘JOY’**. ‘Joy’ is the thread throughout our glorious history.

## RESOURCES

*“Dominican Spirituality”* by William A. Hinnebusch OP. It is many things but most importantly: *Contemplative*. Read the **attached** chapter below and discover why we are an active contemplative Order.

“Dominican Spirituality and Vatican II’s Expectations of Lay People” by Christopher Kiesling OP: [http://www.dominicanwitness.com/?page\\_id=1016](http://www.dominicanwitness.com/?page_id=1016)

“The Nine Ways of Prayer of St. Dominic”:

<http://www.racinedominicans.org/prayer.cfm>

## WEB 2.0

Fr. Gabriel O’Donnell OP discusses “Dominican Spirituality”:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GBLB\\_hlyvmg](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GBLB_hlyvmg)

# **Dominican Spirituality: Principles and Practices**

**By William A. Hinnebusch OP**

## **Chapter III**

### **DOMINICAN LIFE is CONTEMPLATIVE**

The Christian is the image of Christ. The Dominican is the image of St. Dominic. As a canon of Osma, before he became an apostle, he was a contemplative. Here is how Jordan of Saxony describes these years at Osma: “Day and night he frequented the church, giving himself without interruption to prayer. Redeeming the time by contemplation, he scarcely left the walls of the monastery.” Then St. Dominic went into southern France to begin his years of ceaseless apostolic activity. He became an apostle but did not stop being a contemplative. Abbot William Peter of St. Paul’s monastery in Toulouse, who had known Dominic personally, testified that he had never seen anyone pray or weep so much. Dominic’s prayer was so intense that it forced him to pray aloud: “O Lord, have mercy on Thy people . . . what is to become of sinners?”

#### **The Dominican Order is Contemplative**

St. Dominic founded an Order that is contemplative in all its branches — the First Order, Second Order, Third Order Conventual, and the Third Order of Tertiaries. Any Dominican who is not eager to become a contemplative is falling short in his Dominican spirit.

Some people hold that it is impossible to unite the contemplative and active lives, because each of these lives is so engrossing. The life of prayer claims all the attention of a person; activity claims all his attention also. When Dominic founded the Friars Preachers, some people said it was impossible to have an Order that combined both features. They knew only two kinds of Order. There were the contemplative Benedictines, Cistercians, Carthusians, Premonstratentians, and so forth. They led the life of prayer. Not that they never left the cloister, but the vow of stability bound them to one monastery for their whole life. The active Orders were strictly active, the Knights Templars, Knights of St. John, Teutonic Knights, the Orders of Ransom, and Orders that took care of pilgrims and the sick, running inns and hospitals. Only the Canons Regular, leading the contemplative life, undertook a limited, parochial ministry.

St. Dominic founded a new kind of Order, one that pursued an intense life of prayer and yet embraced a general apostolic activity. He personally demonstrated that it is possible to be a contemplative of the highest type and also a zealous apostle. But these two lives can be united only when the apostle gives primacy to contemplation. It must be Christian contemplation, pondering the mysteries of our redemption — Christ’s desire to save all souls, his death on the Cross for the redemption of sinners, the Father’s love in sending Christ to us. That type of prayer

becomes apostolic; the contemplative seeks the salvation of his neighbor, because, like the early Christians, when he “sees his neighbor, he sees God.”

St. Dominic prayed in that way. Jordan of Saxony writes: “He shared the daytime with his neighbor, but the night he dedicated to God.” He spent so much of his night in prayer, that he hardly needed a bed. In fact, his friars testified that he never had a bed of his own. When he slept, he slept in a chair, on the floor, leaning against the altar, or dozed at table. At night he prayed as long as his body could endure it. When sleep overpowered him, he rested his head, like the patriarch Jacob, upon a stone. After a short rest, Jordan notes, he would rouse his spirit and renew his fervent prayer. He was first and foremost a contemplative, and his children must be contemplatives.

Contemplation is the chief purpose of the Order. The Dominican does not contemplate because he wants to become an apostle. That would make it a means to an end. Contemplation is so superior, that it cannot be subordinated to anything lesser. The Dominican seeks contemplation for its own sake, because contemplation unites him to God. “Seek first the kingdom of God and his justice, and all these things shall be given to you besides” (Matt. 6:33).

## **Contemplation — the Source of the Apostolate**

When a friar prays, he hopes his prayer will become deep and profound, filling his own soul with such grace and spiritual energy that they will overflow on the souls of others. The image of his life is a deep well. It fills slowly until its pure water reaches the top; then the water runs over the brim and begins to irrigate the whole countryside. The well never empties itself in watering the fields, but gives of its abundance. The Dominican must sanctify himself before he can go out to help his neighbor. The end of the Order, in all branches, is a contemplation that fructifies in the apostolate. A Dominican’s life is a life hidden in God with Christ, lived in the solitude and silence of the religious house. There he dwells alone with God while his exterior activity is the voice of cloistered silence.

The Dominican goes into the pulpit, the classroom, or the sick-room because obedience sends him, because his apostolic yearning to help souls impels him to go. He does not undertake these works through natural eagerness to exercise his talents, or to fulfill his personality. Of course this does not mean that if a priest likes to preach, he must no longer delight in it; nor if he loves teaching, that he must curb the joy he experiences. It means only that his motive in going out to work is not personal gratifications but the glory of God and the good of neighbor.

All other motives urging him onward to works of the apostolic life are less worthy. With his usual acuteness, St. Thomas describes the failure of most religious who plunge into the apostolate: “They are led to engage in external works rather from the weariness which they feel for the contemplative life, than from a desire to attain to the fulness of divine love” (*De perf. vitae sp.*, c. 23). “There are some who are deprived of freedom for divine contemplation and immersed in secular affairs willingly or without regret; in these persons very little or no charity is evident” (*De carit.*, a. 11, ad 6).



But Thomas finds not only activists, weary with the contemplative life, but also selfish contemplatives. “They so enjoy divine contemplation,” he writes, “that they do not want to forsake it, even to consecrate themselves to the service of God by saving their neighbor” (*De carit.*, a. 11, ad 6).

The true Dominican resembles neither of these types. If his neighbor did not need him, he would stay in his religious house with God, but because of his neighbor’s dire necessity, he longs to give him the fruits of his own interior life. There is an intimate connection between his prayer and his apostolic yearnings. This distinguishes him from the purely contemplative monk who may go forth out of obedience, as did St. Bernard, to work for the salvation of his neighbor. The Dominican, seeing God in his neighbor, is constrained by the impetus of his own contemplation to bring that neighbor to God. Therefore, as St. Thomas observes:

” . . . at the expense of his much loved contemplation, he devotes himself, for God’s sake, to his neighbor’s salvation. Hence, it is a proof of a greater perfection of charity to be willing, for the love of God and neighbor, to work for the salvation of others, even though, by so doing, contemplation be somewhat impaired, than to cling so closely to the sweetness of contemplation as to be unwilling to sacrifice it, even for the salvation of others” (*De perf. vitae sp.*, c. 23).

Tormented by a passion for souls, the Dominican brings them a message that has been matured in silent prayer before God, that has “been shaped in the sanctuary, the choir, and the cloister:”

This eminent ideal, this search for contemplation that fructifies in the apostolate, has been expressed concretely in the oldest, the simplest, and the most beautiful Dominican rule of conduct. It comes directly from the practice of St. Dominic. The canonization witnesses tell us that he spoke only with God or of God. We shall let Stephen speak for them all:

It was his custom to speak always of God or with God whether he was in or outside the priory or on a journey. He strongly urged the brethren to act in the same way and he had this placed in the Constitutions.

Speaking thus of God, in conversation or in sermons, Dominic’s contemplation spilled over the brim of his prayerful soul to the sanctification of those who heard him.

The Dominican saints learned this lesson from their father. They also spoke with God and of God. Bl. Raymond of Capua writes this about St. Catherine of Siena:

. . . if she had intelligent people to tally to, she could have gone on talking to them about God for a hundred days and nights without stopping for food or drink. She never got tired talking about God. On the contrary, as time went on, she seemed to grow ever more lively and enthusiastic. Again and again she has told me she knew of no greater consolation in life than talking and arguing about God with people of understanding. And anyone who ever worked with her can vouch for this from personal experience.

Raymond goes on for another page, telling how he fell asleep once when Catherine was talking to him about God. She awoke him with a rebuke: “Is this all you care about the salvation of your soul?”

St. Thomas gave theological expression to the Order’s motto when he said that an apostolic religious must “contemplate and give to others the fruit of his contemplation” (*Summa theol.*, II, II, p. 188, a.6). The Dominican apostle must “speak with God or of God”.

## **Contemplation — Inherent in Dominican Life**

Is it possible to prove that the Order is contemplative? This can be done by first considering the kind of Order St. Dominic founded: an Order of Canons Regular. The bull of confirmation issued by Pope Honorius III on December 22, 1216, began with the words *Religiosam vitam*. Hundreds of similar bulls open with the same words and with the same general content. They vary in detail but are always given in favor of chapters of canons regular. The chief duty of the canons was contemplative — the worship of the Holy Trinity. The canons existed to carry out the divine worship of the Church in a solemn manner. They were attached to the cathedrals precisely for that purpose: to worship God officially, to participate in the solemn Mass, to chant the Divine Office in the name of the Church. They were officially “pray-ers”. The issuance of the *Religiosam vitam* by Pope Honorius served notice on the Friars Preaches that they were Canons Regular and that their chief function was to worship God in a contemplative way.

St. Dominic also adopted the monastic observances — the community life, cloister, silence, austerities of fasting and abstinence, bowings during the Office and Mass, venias, the scapular — from the contemplative Orders. The first part of the primitive Constitutions was almost exclusively devoted to these things. The Founder took them from the Premonstratensians, who borrowed them from the Cistercians, a most strict, contemplative Order. Dominican nuns and sisters have taken these observances from the fathers. Tertiaries perform the bows when they recite the Office during their meetings. Even in their private recitations, the members of the Order should bow their heads reverently at the Gloria Patri. The observances are a sign to the friar that he must be a contemplative.

The second part of the early Constitutions also clearly demonstrates the contemplative character of the Order. This part, governing preaching, study, and apostolate, held before friars going out to preach a vivid portrait of their contemplative apostolic career:

They shall receive a blessing and then go forth as men desirous of their own salvation and the salvation of others. Let them bear themselves with religious decorum as men of the Gospel, treading in the footsteps of their Savior and speaking with God or about God to themselves and their neighbor . . . .

The present Constitutions prescribe the same ideals, repeating the words of 1220:

It is known that our Order was founded from the beginning for the express purpose of preaching and the salvation of souls . . . .

This end we ought to pursue, preaching and teaching from the abundance and fulness of contemplation, after the example of our most holy father Dominic, who used to speak only with God or of God to the great benefit of souls.

The means set by that most holy patriarch for the attainment of that end are, besides the three solemn vows of obedience, chastity, and poverty, regular life with its monastic observances, the solemn recitation of the Office, and the assiduous study of sacred truth. Among us these means cannot be abolished or substantially altered, though it is permissible (the vows, of course, excepted) to temper them somewhat, opportunely, so that they might be more suited for a facile reaching of the end and possess greater efficacy and be more suited for a more expedite attainment of the end.

The ***Rule of St. Augustine***, chosen by St. Dominic as best suited for his purposes in founding the Order, likewise imposes the duty of contemplation. It opens with a statement, in different words, of the Order's great intention to speak only "with God or of God:" "Before all things, dear brethren, love God and after him your neighbor." These words are a trumpet call to contemplation. The Rule first ascends to the very throne of God to look on him in loving contemplation; then it descends, bringing his love to souls. Humbert of the Romans, fifth master general, makes a beautiful application of these words to the Dominican preacher in his comment on the Rule:

It is the duty of the preacher at times to devote himself to contemplating the things of God; at times, however, to exert himself in action for his neighbor. The love of God raises him up to the first; the love of neighbor carries him down to the second . . . but because each one owes more to himself than to his neighbor, he must give himself more to the quiet of the contemplative life than to the works of the active, like the workers of Solomon, who rested more than they worked. He must seek the things of God more than he seeks the things of his neighbor, and must preach more to himself than to others, preferring the love of God to the love of neighbor, because that is the first and the greatest commandment. Therefore, there is an order in these things and it is rightly written: 'Before all things love God, and then the neighbor.'

The words of the Rule illustrate the sublimity and spirituality of the Dominican vocation. Above all else, it urges the fulfillment of the two great commandments: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. And the second is like it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself" (Matt. 12:37-39).

## **Contemplation and Preaching**

The contemplative character of the Order is demonstrated from the special end that St. Dominic established — preaching for the salvation of souls. The primitive Constitutions clearly state this purpose in their prologue: "It is known that our Order was founded from the beginning for preaching and the salvation of souls." Spreading the word of God for souls demands a contemplative life from the apostle. St. Peter clearly taught this truth when the first deacons were chosen. Pointing out the need for the new office, he spoke for the Twelve:

It is not desirable that we should forsake the word of God and serve at tables. Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, that we may put them in charge of this work. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word (Acts, 6:2-4 ).

He even wanted contemplation for the “active” deacons. They must be men “full of the Spirit and of wisdom.”

St. Dominic, an apostle among the Albigenses, devoted himself “to prayer and the ministry of the word”, giving “his day to his neighbor, his night to God”. Humbert of the Romans, in his Commentary on the Rule shows how well the first sons of St. Dominic imitated their Founder:

The state of a religious is the state of a contemplative. The things that are preached are learned in contemplation. Speaking of preachers the blessed Gregory said: “in contemplation they drink in the truths which later they pour out in their preaching.” The office of the preacher is, on the one hand, to give himself to contemplating the things of God, and, on the other, to devote himself to activities on behalf of his neighbor. He must give himself to both the active and the contemplative lives. But since everyone is responsible first for himself, the preacher must devote himself much more to contemplation than to the works of the active life.

## **Contemplation in the Lives of Sisters and Tertiaries**

All that we have said about contemplation applies equally to Dominican sisters. This is clear regarding the nuns of the Second Order, but the sisters of the Conventual Third Order are also committed to the Order’s spiritual life. Dominican spirituality is the same, in its basic principles, for all members of the Order. No congregation of sisters or brothers can be affiliated with the Order unless the master general is satisfied that its constitutions and customs faithfully reflect the spirit of the Friars Preachers. A congregation enjoying such affiliation can be sure that the Order is satisfied with the contemplative character of its laws and customs. All parts of the Order, except the secular Third Order, follow the *Rule of St. Augustine*. Read regularly in the refectory, the Rule continually challenges the brethren with these words:

Before all things, dear brethren, love God and after him your neighbor, because these are the principal commands which have been given to us. These, then, are the things which we command you who live in the monastery to observe: first, that you dwell together in unity in the monastery and have one mind and one heart in the Lord, for this is the reason why you have come together.

The Constitutions of the sisters, as those of the fathers, commit them to the contemplative life. The Friars Preachers were founded by St. Dominic for the sanctification of its members and the salvation of souls. The sisters “as true daughters of their holy Founder and Patriarch, must always remember this twofold object and strive with all their energy to attain it” The first emphasis is on their own salvation. The Order was founded to sanctify its members, to make them “perfect in charity”. In the second place it seeks the salvation of souls. The principal and essential purpose the Dominican has in entering the religious life, is to achieve his personal sanctification. This he does through the three vows of religion and by keeping the Rule and

Constitutions. These guiding documents for Dominicans, together with the sisters' customary, oblige them to follow the contemplative monastic observances as they were set down in 1216 by St. Dominic.

The sisters also take the vows, follow their Constitutions, and keep the Rule. They wear the Order's habit with its scapular, the badge of a contemplative Order. They have the fasts and abstinences, the enclosure, community life, silence, the Office and all the many Dominican sacramentals which help lead their souls to God.

## **Infused Contemplation — the Dominican Ideal**

When St. Dominic placed contemplation before his children as the primary end of their lives, he intended infused contemplation. The thirteenth century did not know the distinction made by later spiritual writers between "infused" and "acquired" contemplation. The Founder did not rule out vocal prayer, mental prayer, or other kinds of active prayer. He practiced them himself and enjoined them as dispositive agents preparing for the higher types of prayer.

Contemplation is primarily an act of the intellect, but it begins in love, an act of the will. When the soul loves God, it longs to be united to him. Ardent love for God leads to the contemplative act. Once the soul has found God in contemplation, its love, by a reciprocal process, is increased. In the presence of the one we love, we experience delight; this, in turn, leads to an increase of love. Contemplation, therefore, is a circular motion (*Summa theol.*, II II, q. 180, a. 6). It begins in love of God; it leads to our gazing upon him; thus lost in our enjoyment of him, we learn to love him more intensely.

Some might object that infused contemplation is a gift of God; it cannot be acquired. God gives it to whom he pleases, when he pleases, and as much as he pleases. It is given when the Holy Spirit makes his Gifts, especially wisdom, knowledge, and understanding, active in the soul. Then the soul is made docile and readily responsive to the whisperings of the Spirit. If that is true; if contemplation is a gift of God; if we cannot acquire it by our own efforts, then how can we be true Dominicans? Not every one, and maybe only a few are given this gift. Of course, we do not know who has it or who does not have it. Sometimes a person may have it and not be aware of it himself. Or a soul may experience contemplation once, a few times, or frequently. So the difficulty remains, how can we be true to our vocation if here and now we are not contemplatives? We are true to our calling if we live our contemplative vocation sincerely, if we try habitually to dispose ourselves for the higher prayer. This is required even of a person who enjoys the act of contemplation. It is an act, and, therefore, transitory; it lasts for a time and then ceases. Even one so gifted must constantly be disposing himself, otherwise he will lose God's blessing.

## **Preparing for Contemplation**

How can this be done? St. Thomas prescribes hearing, reading, meditating, and praying (*Summa theol.* II II, q. 180, a. 3 ad 4). A Dominican prepares for contemplation when he listens to sermons, when he reads spiritual books, when he prays mentally or vocally. Chanting Office in

choir, during which the soul savors the sacred texts and listens to the whispering of the Invisible Teacher, was the means preferred by St. Dominic to dispose his children for contemplation.

The Dominican should constantly and humbly beg God for this gift. It is a higher grace directly conducive to sanctity and may, therefore, be legitimately desired. Our Lord, in the words spoken to the woman who had come to Jacob's well to draw water, encourages us to ask for the contemplative graces: "If thou didst know the gift of God, and who it is who says to thee, 'Give me to drink,' thou perhaps, wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water" (John, 4:10) . The Book of Wisdom teaches that such prayer made humbly and perseveringly can expect an answer: "I called upon God and the spirit of wisdom came upon me" (Wisd., 7:7) . The soul prays humbly for this grace when it realizes that it is God's gift and the answer depends on his Will. He may not answer this prayer in the present life, or he may answer it later when the soul has done more to dispose itself. He may answer it only once, or he may answer it more abundantly. We may pray for contemplation without presumption, because infused contemplation is the normal flowering of the life of grace, which should continue developing until it reaches its maturity in contemplation. Should this not take place, it will occur in eternity, following the purifications of purgatory. When trials and sufferings come into his life, the religious should never complain; rather he should welcome them as purifications which will cleanse his soul, show him his weakness, and draw him gradually toward union with God. Many souls lose all the purgative value of sufferings when they rebel or fall into self pity.

The Dominican who appreciates the Divine generosity, will beg God incessantly for the higher spiritual gifts. However, this prayer will be presumptuous if it is not matched by unending, vigorous efforts on his part to do everything possible to dispose himself for the higher graces. Utmost fidelity to the prayer and the duties of his religious life are the providential means given to the religious to accomplish this work. Deliberate neglect or habitual infidelity to religious duties will nullify all efforts begging of God the higher forms of prayer.

If the Dominican prays for the grace of contemplation, then he must be ready to pay the price. No one can become a contemplative unless he is willing to die totally to self. Everything in the Order's religious life prepares its members to die to self and live in God. The friar begins to die to self when he commences to live his religious life earnestly; when he begins to mortify, put to death, his own will, desires, likes and dislikes. He must even learn to put aside, on many occasions, his own opinions. If he is faithful to the monastic observances, silence, fasts, abstinence, and the many other things that are so insignificant in themselves, he dies to self. Such fidelity to minutiae prepares him for contemplation by clearing away the obstacles, chiefly self-will and personal vice, which impede it and by requiring the practice of the virtues which promote it, such as obedience, patience, perseverance and charity.

The Dominican lives in God when he enters wholeheartedly into liturgical prayer, study, and the apostolate. The liturgy and loving study of sacred truth place him in direct contact with God, the object of contemplation. The apostolate carries fruits of contemplation to souls. Nothing in the Order's spiritual scheme is useless. Every element in its spirituality is essentially integrated in a master plan for the sanctification of the Dominican and the salvation of souls.

The Order's life, Rule, Constitutions, and customs are grand. They are grand in design, grand in purpose, grand in their effect. A Dominican should live them as well as he can, deeply lamenting when he fails. He should persevere in keeping his Rule and Constitutions all the days of his life, never yielding to discouragement. Only God knows why he gives contemplation to some and not to others; why he gives it early or late; why he gives it occasionally or frequently. St. Augustine teaches that this is a mystery, that if we do not wish to err, we should not inquire. Rather the soul should turn inward to scrutinize its own conduct, to see where it is still failing in complete fidelity to grace. If God gives it the graces of contemplation, it must respond with great gratitude and love.

If the friar does all he can to make himself ready for contemplation, he will certainly work most effectively for the sanctification of his soul. Only failure on his part to pursue the ends of the Order, to use the means it provides, or to use them in proper balance, stand as obstacles to contemplation. Preaching, teaching, nursing, and the vast variety of work done by the Order in the modern world do not prevent a Dominican from aspiring to be, or becoming, a contemplative.

The Order produces contemplatives and has them at the present day. Perhaps the reader may not know of any, but there are many. The saints of the Order exemplify the beautiful balance of Dominican spirituality, the perfect blend of contemplation and apostolicity. They have been among the greatest contemplatives of the Church: St. Dominic, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Catherine of Siena, St. Vincent Ferrer, yet they have been zealous apostles. The pages of Dominican history are sprinkled liberally with great souls who have become saints in the Dominican way, following their rule with utmost fidelity, working faithfully for the good of souls.



# CENTRAL PROVINCE



## CANDIDACY I

### UNIT 8: LITURGY

### OF THE HOURS



# **“SEVEN TIMES A DAY I PRAISE YOU...MAY MY LIPS POUR FORTH YOUR PRAISE.” (PSALM 119:164,171)**

The ‘Liturgy of the Hours’ has always been a strong part of the Dominican prayer life. When traveling, St. Dominic would stop and attend Mass and the recitation of the Office. In the Canonization process (1233) Brother Ventura noted, “He was constant in his attendance at the Divine Office, and used to spend the night in prayer, weeping a lot.” He had been a Canon Regular, leading a semi-monastic life with the singing of the Office. The importance of this practice has continued in all branches of the Order to this day. (Latinists might note that *Mater* is missing in the first line on the front page. This is a version from an Antiphonal of French Nuns, dated 1335. This is an older version and Dominicans at the time preferred the traditional manner. The *Salve* is sung at Night Prayer by Dominicans around the world today.)

## **HISTORY**

This liturgical practice has its roots in the Jewish practice of praying at set hours in the temple and later outside the temple. The Apostles, as observant Jews, continued this practice of praying at the third, sixth, ninth and midnight hours. (Acts) To the Psalms and Jewish Scriptures were added the Gospels, Acts, Epistles and Canticles. This is also observed in the ‘Mass of the Catechumens.’

Various forms have been used through the centuries down through Vatican II. In *Laudis Canticum* Pope Paul VI (1970) approved the latest form. Cardinal Tabera in the Decree (1971) stated, “The Second Vatican Council showed the importance of the traditional discipline of the Church and desired to renew that discipline. It was, therefore, very concerned to bring about a suitable restoration of this liturgy of prayer so that priests and other members of the Church in today’s circumstances might celebrate it better and more effectively.”

*Laudis Canticum* informs us, “The purpose of the hours is to sanctify the day and the whole range of human activity.” (11) And further, “In the Holy Spirit Christ carries out through the Church ‘the task of redeeming humanity and giving perfect glory to God,’ not only when the Eucharist is celebrated and the sacraments administered but also in other ways and especially when the Liturgy of the Hours is celebrated. There Christ himself is present---in the gathered community, in the proclamation of God’s word, ‘in the prayer and song of the Church.’ (13)

## **PRAYING WITH CHRIST**

Indeed this is an amazing thing to meditate on. Imagine- we are united with Christ when we pray the Hours. As the Catechism states, “The faithful who celebrate the Liturgy of the Hours are united to Christ our high priest, by the prayer of the Psalms, meditation on the Word of God, and canticles and blessings, in order to be joined with his unceasing and universal prayer that gives glory to the Father and implores the gift of the Holy Spirit on the whole world.” (1196) Thus it is an honor to recite the Hours.

We assist Christ in saying the Office “for he continues his priestly work through his Church.” (Sacrosanctum Concilium- Sacred Liturgy 83) We are able to heed St. Paul, “Pray without ceasing.” (1 Th. 5:17) “The laity, too are encouraged to recite the Divine Office.” (SC 100) *The Rule of St. Augustine* admonishes us, “Be assiduous in prayer (Col. 4:2), at the hours and times appointed...When you pray to God in Psalms and hymns, think over in your hearts the words that come from your lips.” (II, 1 & 3)

As mentioned the chanting of the Liturgy of the Hours has been an important part of Dominican Spirituality from the beginning. *The Primitive Constitutions* (1228) state, “Matins and Mass and all the canonical hours should be attended by our brethren together...All the Hours are to be said in church briefly and succinctly lest the brothers lose devotion and their study be in any way impeded...All these things shall be observed in varying degrees according to the day.” (III)

We are expected to engage in the Hours by our Rule, “Lay Dominicans draw their strength from...celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours.” (Rule 10: d) “Each member is expected to say some portions of the *Liturgy of the Hours* daily, especially the two principal components: Morning Prayer and Evening Prayer.” (Guidelines 10: d) Finally Professed Lay Dominicans are encouraged to say the entire Office each day. Once this is practiced for thirty days, it becomes a habit and you do not say “if” but “when”. Others in the Order usually work up to this at their own pace. Saying the Office is a ‘Dominican thing.’ This becomes an aid in living the evangelical life by turning our minds to God throughout the day; we are never long from praying to and with Him and thinking of Him, our Master, our Friend.

**CURRENT NAMES AND TIMES OF THE HOURS (WITH TRADITIONAL NAMES AND TIMES GIVEN IN PARENTHESES) AND MINUTES TO PRAY:**

<i>Office of Readings (Vigils or Matins)</i>	15-20 min.	<i>Anytime (Midnight)</i>
<i>Morning Prayer (Lauds)</i>	10-14 min.	<i>6-11 a.m. (Dawn)</i>
<i>(Prime- no longer prayed 6 a.m.)</i>		
<i>Midmorning Prayer (Terce)</i>	5 min.	<i>About 9 a.m. (9 a.m.)</i>
<i>Midday Prayer (Sext)</i>	5 min.	<i>About noon (Noon)</i>
<i>Midafternoon Prayer (None)</i>	5 min.	<i>About 3 p.m. (3 p.m.)</i>
<i>Evening Prayer (Vespers)</i>	10-14 min.	<i>Bet. 4 &amp; 11 p.m. (3-6 p.m.)</i>
<i>Night Prayer (Compline)</i>	7-10 min.	<i>Bedtime (Bedtime)</i>

**NOTE:** “Outside Choir...it is permitted to choose from the three [Daytime] hours the one most appropriate to the time of day.” (L.C. #77)

## **ELEMENTS OF MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS:**

### **MORNING PRAYER**

### **EVENING PRAYER**

**Introduction (Invitatory)**

**Introduction**

**Verse**

**Verse**

**Antiphon**

**Doxology**

**Psalm 95**

**Alleuia**

**Hymn**

**Hymn**

**Psalmody**

**Psalmody**

**Psalm**

**Psalm**

**Old Testament Canticle**

**Psalm**

**Psalm**

**New Testament Canticle**

**Reading (Reflection)**

**Reading (Reflection)**

**Responsory**

**Responsory**

**Gospel Canticle (Zechariah)**

**Gospel Canticle (Mary)**

**Intercessions**

**Intercessions**

**Lord's Prayer**

**Lord's Prayer**

**Final Prayer (Trinitarian)**

**Final Prayer (Trinitarian)**

**Conclusion**

**Conclusion**

# RESOURCES

*“Christian Prayer”* 1 vol. An excellent book to get started with the Hours.

*“The Liturgy of the Hours”* 4 vol. For more advanced Dominicans.

“General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours” USCCB PUB. # 5-528. This also appears abridged in “Christian Prayer” pp. 8-19 and unabridged in “The Liturgy of the Hours” vol.1, pp. 21-98.

*“The Divine Office for DODOS”* (Devout, Obedient Disciples of our Savior) by Madeline Pecora Nugent 2008 Catholic Book Publishing Corp. This 272 page volume answers all questions as a step-by-step guide.

## Web 2.0

Articles appear on Wikipedia (Liturgy of the Hours) and New Advent-Catholic Encyclopedia (Divine Office).

Universalis.com provides the Office for a fee; ‘iBreviary’ is an app for the iphone for free, very good!

The Dominican Calendar with Saints, their description and some links is at:

<http://tinyurl.com/o294auz>

Watch some Swiss Contemplative Nuns chant the ‘Salve Regina’ (‘Hail, Queen’) and ‘O Spem Miram’ (‘O Wonderful Hope’-to St. Dominic), Dominican traditions after Night Prayer: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cP2tTTGuBXU>

Please read the ATTACHED (time permitting) for an understanding of the beginnings of the Liturgy of the Hours.

# Introduction to Medieval Christian Liturgy

## II. 3 The Liturgy of the Hours

### I. Introduction

The early writings of the Christian Church bear witness to a prayer tradition that is rich in eschatological symbols. Christians were to be always praying. Their struggle was not against human agents but against spiritual, cosmic forces that never slept. They knew neither the hour nor the day on which the messiah would return. They owed the divine an unlimited measure of gratitude not only for creation but for the redemption of that creation.

For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm....Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints. (Ephesians, 6: 12-13, 18)

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. (1 Thessalonians 5: 16-17)

According to the canonical gospels, Jesus of Nazareth while encouraging his followers to pray went so far as to compare the divine to an unjust judge who may not give judgement on account of the justice of a plea, but would do it to rid himself of the incessant pleading.

Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray always and not to lose heart. He said, "In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor had respect for people. In that city there was a widow who kept coming to him and saying, 'Grant me justice against my opponent.' For a while he refused; but later he said to himself, 'Though I have no fear of God and no respect for anyone, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will grant her justice, so that she may not wear me out by continually coming.'" And the Lord said, "Listen to what the unjust judge says. And will not God grant justice to his chosen ones who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long in helping them? I tell you, he will quickly grant justice to them. And yet, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?" (Luke, 18: 1-8)

Throughout the early centuries of Christianity, preachers admonished Christians to spend their entire lives in prayer. They encouraged them to pray in the morning and the evening, to rise during the night and keep vigil. Tertullian even encouraged them to use the regularly announced

watches of the day (at the third, sixth and ninth hours) to remind themselves of their obligation to render thanks to God.<sup>1</sup> For early Christians the question was never whether or not they should pray always, only how to accomplish such an extreme demand. Origen (died c.254) encouraged them to interpret acts of righteousness and mercy as acts of prayer so that they might fulfill the command to pray always. He wrote:

He prays without ceasing who combines his prayer with necessary works, and suitable activities with his prayer, for his virtuous deeds or the commandments he has fulfilled are taken up as a part of his prayer. Only in this way can we take the saying "Pray without ceasing" as being possible, if we can say that the whole life of the saint is one mighty integrated prayer.<sup>2</sup>

So while Christians were entreated to pray always in their hearts and in their actions, they also gathered regularly at the beginning and end of each day to pray together. The choice of these times may or may not have been influenced by Jewish traditions that placed particular emphasis on daily prayers at the beginning and end of each day. One such tradition was recorded by Flavius Josephus who wrote his *Jewish Antiquities* soon after the destruction of the Temple by the Romans in 70 C.E.

Let everyone commemorate before God the benefits which he bestowed upon them at their deliverance out of the land of Egypt, and this twice every day, both when the day begins and when the hour of sleep comes on, gratitude being in its own nature a just thing, and serving not only by way of return for past but also by way of invitation of future favors.<sup>3</sup>

Scholars have had a hard time demonstrating in a definitive way the exact relationship between Jewish and Christian traditions of daily prayer. The question of morning and evening prayers is especially difficult, since these times for gathering together are so practical. Christians may simply have chosen them because they only had time to gather regularly before and after the work day.

Whatever the relationship between Christian and Jewish traditions for morning and evening prayers, a great variety of prayer patterns flourished in the Christian Churches throughout the Roman Empire and beyond during the first few centuries of Christianity. Common to all these patterns, though, were the meetings in the morning, the evening and occasionally during the night for prayers. The powerful symbols of light and dark, the rising and setting of the sun came to be an integral part of these prayer services. Morning prayers were focused on the Risen Messiah, evening prayers on the continual need for forgiveness and protection from the cosmic forces, night prayers on the coming of the messiah at the end of time. Cyprian (died c.258) interpreted these Christian prayer times in such a fashion in his treatise on the Lord's Prayer.

One must also pray in the morning, that the resurrection of the Lord may be celebrated by morning prayer...

Likewise at sunset and the passing of the day it is necessary to pray. For since Christ is the true sun and the true day, when we pray and ask, as the sun and the day of the world recede, that the light may come upon us again, we pray for the coming of Christ, which provides us with the grace of eternal light...

So let us who are always in Christ, that is, in the light, not cease praying even at night. This is how the widow Anna, always praying and keeping vigil, persevered in deserving well of God .... Let us who by God's indulgence are recreated spiritually and reborn, imitate what we are destined to be. Let us who in the kingdom are to have only day with no intervening night, be as vigilant at night as in the light. Let us who are to pray always and render thanks to God, not cease here also to pray and give thanks. <sup>4</sup>

After Constantine's conversion, these prayer times (morning, evening, and sometimes in the middle of the night) became common in all the cathedrals throughout the empire. In the West, these services came to be called matins, vespers, and vigils.

## **II. The Shape of Cathedral Matins (Lauds)**

Now the great variety of particulars in liturgical celebrations among the Churches throughout the empire cannot be stressed too often. Each city or region celebrated in their own particular way. On the other hand, for a basic introduction such as this one, general outlines and structures must be delineated lest the inquirer become lost in the forest on account of the variety of trees. As we have already seen, the powerful symbols of time were early on incorporated into the principal hours of the day for communal prayer (morning, evening, and occasionally nighttime). It is not surprising then that throughout all the Christian Churches certain psalms and ritual actions became associated with each of these prayer times. The earliest sources for cathedral matins (morning prayers) speak of psalm 62/63 as the morning psalm.

O God, you are my God, I seek you,  
my soul thirsts for you;  
my flesh faints for you,  
as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.  
So I have looked upon you in the sanctuary,  
beholding your power and glory.  
My soul is satisfied as with a rich feast,  
and my mouth praises you with joyful lips  
when I think of you on my bed,  
and meditate on you in the watches of the night;  
for you have been my help,  
and in the shadow of your wings I sing for joy. (Psalm 63: 1-2; 5- 7)

It is clear, however, that in many places throughout the west, and in Gaul in particular, that the Christian morning began with psalm 50/51.

Have mercy on me, O God,  
according to your steadfast love;  
according to your abundant mercy  
blot out my transgressions.  
Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;  
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.



Restore to me the joy of your salvation,  
and sustain in me a willing spirit.  
O Lord, open my lips,  
and my mouth will declare your praise. (Psalm 51: 1, 7, 12, 15)

Many traditions, such as those at Bethlehem and Antioch, included both psalm 62/63 and psalm 50/51 in their morning prayers.

Three other psalms came to be closely associated with morning prayers in the cathedral: psalms 148, 149, and 150. All of these psalms begin with the command 'Praise the Lord!' In Latin the verb 'to praise' is *laudare*. And so it came to pass that these psalms were known collectively as 'lauds.' Eventually the morning service, most often called 'matins' in early sources often came to be called 'lauds' instead. These three psalms are nothing more than collections of cheerful and exuberant commands to praise the divine.

Praise the Lord!  
Praise God in his sanctuary;  
praise him in his mighty firmament!  
Praise him for his mighty deeds;  
praise him according to his surpassing greatness!  
Praise him with trumpet sound;  
praise him with lute and harp!  
Praise him with tambourine and dance;  
praise him with strings and pipe!  
Praise him with clanging cymbals;  
praise him with loud clashing cymbals!  
Let everything that breathes praise the Lord!  
Praise the Lord! (Psalm 150)

Other common elements of matins included: canticles of praise from the Hebrew Bible, such as that found in Daniel 3; the hymn *Gloria in excelsis*; and the hymn *Te deum laudamus*. Bishops throughout the empire drew upon these elements and other hymns, scriptural readings, sermons, and intercessions to form the matins services celebrated in their cathedrals. The services were more or less elaborate depending upon the day and the particular traditions of the city in question. In his work *Lives of the Fathers*, Gregory of Tours described a matins service for a Sunday morning in Clermont.<sup>5</sup> Robert Taft has reconstructed the service as follows:

Psalm 50/51  
Canticle from Daniel 3  
Psalm 148  
Psalm 149  
Psalm 150  
A short intercessory verse taken from a psalm.

### III. The Shape of Cathedral Vespers

Just as Christians came to associate certain psalms with matins throughout almost all of the Churches, so too did they come to associate particular psalms and ritual actions with vespers. The two most important ritual gestures associated with vespers were the lighting of the lamps (called *lucernare* in Latin) and the offering of incense. First of all, lighting lamps was simply necessary at the end of the day. But this simple gesture was immediately associated (as was the rising sun at matins) with the risen Christ. In Iberia, for example, a member of the clergy lifted a lighted candle before the altar at the beginning of the service and proclaimed, "In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, light and peace!" To which greeting all responded, "Thanks be to God!" In the East a particular hymn, *Phos hilaron* was often sung at this point in the service. In both East and West, Psalm 140/141 was the principal psalm sung at vespers.

I call upon you, O lord; come quickly to me;  
give ear to my voice when I call to you.  
Let my prayer be counted as incense before you,  
and the lifting up of my hands as an evening sacrifice. (Psalm 141: 1-2)

An offering of incense often accompanied the singing of this psalm which brought to mind the evening sacrifices offered in Jerusalem's temple. Another tradition related to the Jewish origins of Christianity was the reckoning of a new day by the singing of vespers. Eventually, this became the custom only for festal days. Sunday, Christmas, Easter, and all other great holidays began, and continue to begin in traditional Christian Churches, at sunset on the eve of the feast. The basic structure of vespers was the following:

Lamplighting ritual (*lucernare*)  
Hymn of light with opening prayer  
Psalm 140/141 with incensation  
Other psalms  
Intercessions and collect  
Concluding prayer (blessing)  
Dismissal

### IV. Monastic Traditions

These cathedral versions of matins and vespers, however, were not the only ones in existence in each city. Monks and nuns also celebrated daily prayers in common. But they did so in a slightly different way than did most of the ordinary Christians. Throughout the period, monastic customs and ideas became increasingly influential on the rest of the Church's life. Monastics attempted to live radical Christian lives and were often in conflict with Christians who continued to live in the world. On the other hand, their extreme asceticism often led other Christians to revere them as holy men and women. Bishops in turn did their best to coopt and control the sanctity of these men and women. In the process, bishops were deeply influenced by monastic ideals. One such monastic ideal was the attempt to sing all 150 psalms within a regularly repeated period of time

such as a week. The monastics' purpose in gathering together to sing the psalms was quite different from that of ordinary Christians in their cathedral services. Ordinary Christians marked the time of day with appropriate rituals and psalmody. Monks and nuns, following an early Egyptian practice, gathered together in order to meditate upon the entire psalter as a spiritual discipline.

Another difference between monastic and cathedral liturgy was its frequency. As we saw above, Tertullian already around the year 200 recommended to his readers, in addition to the obligatory morning and evening prayers, that they use the third, sixth and ninth hours of daylight to remind themselves to pray. On the one hand these particular hours were practical, since they were announced publicly in cities; Christians could use the public announcements as reminders to pray. For Tertullian, though, these hours were also full of specifically Christian symbolism: the Holy Spirit first came upon the disciples at the third hour (Acts 2:15); Peter experienced his vision of the church while praying at the sixth hour (Acts 10: 9); and he cured a paralytic at the ninth hour (Acts 3:1). Later tradition would continue to make these connections between the third, sixth, and ninth hours of daylight and Christian myths with the exception that the ninth hour came to be particularly associated with Jesus' crucifixion. In Late Antiquity many monastic communities met together at these hours, in addition to the hours of morning and evening, to sing psalms and pray. And whereas the civic Church met occasionally during the night to celebrate vigils on the eve of some great feast, monastic communities tended to keep vigils every night. They marked the difference between an ordinary day and a feast day by lengthening the vigil service. Yet even these six prayer times each day were not deemed sufficient in many monastic communities. Quite a few of them ritualized bedtime prayers into a full office called compline and added another morning office, prime, during the first hour of daylight after the sunrise celebration of matins.

Benedict of Nursia in his *Rule* laid out specific guidelines for the celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours that were to become widely used throughout the West. Whereas in the earlier monastic tradition the psalms for matins and all the daytime offices were fixed, and the monks attempted to sing through the entire psalter every week during vespers and vigils, Benedict greatly reduced the burden of these last two offices. He ordained that only the psalms for compline would remain fixed. The rest of the psalter would be spread out in the other services. Eventually, the full Benedictine monastic cursus of hours in the West came to look like this:

Vespers (at the end of the day)  
Compline (upon retiring)  
Vigils (sometime during the night)  
Matins (at sunrise)  
Prime (during the first hour of daylight)  
Terce (at the third hour)  
Sext (at the sixth hour)  
None (at the ninth hour)  
Vespers (at the end of the day)

During the fifth and sixth centuries, western bishops were influenced more and more by monastic traditions of all sorts, not least of them liturgical. Increasingly large numbers of bishops

were themselves monks. The lines between monastic and cathedral liturgies quickly blurred in the west. Bishops like Caesarius of Arles, who had been a monk at the famous island community of Lérins, introduced liturgical celebrations in their cathedrals at terce, sext, and none "so that if some priest or penitent wanted to perform a good work, he could attend the office daily without any excuse."<sup>6</sup> And while the faithful, ordinary Christians continued to sing the traditional morning psalms at lauds bishops also began to add variable psalms to the service. Eventually, all of the psalms sung at vespers in the West became variable.

## V. Conclusion

The influence of this daily round of liturgies on the lives of people throughout the Middle Ages cannot be stressed too much. As discussed earlier, ancient Christianity was primarily an urban affair. The country was fundamentally a Christianity-free zone. Bishops, however, lost little time in encouraging wealthy laymen and women to build churches on their estates. And the enormous success enjoyed by monastic movements proliferated monasteries and priories throughout the countryside. In time, nearly everyone's day came to be marked by the pealing of bells announcing services in the churches, basilicas, and abbeys of both town and country. Bishops and their clergy continued to encourage, cajole, and badger their auditors into attending at least some of these services on a regular basis.

Oftentimes, the congregations involved did not live up to episcopal expectations. Caesarius of Arles faced a congregation that, in his opinion, regularly stayed up too late drinking and carousing in the night, with the result that they were late for matins. (Some aspects of Provençal culture appear to have very ancient roots indeed.) To make matters worse, Caesarius' congregations appear to have been concerned that the service not last more than half an hour so they could get to work on time. Adding insult to injury, they were annoyed when Caesarius chose to preach during the service, even when he started the service earlier so that it would end on time.<sup>7</sup>

Congregations were not always so apathetic, though. At other times, the popularity of a given service would fill spaces to their capacity and beyond with people who had come either out of devotion or out of a simple desire to enjoy the spectacle or perhaps some combination of the two. In one of his numerous letters, Sidonius Apollinaris described a vigils service held in Lyon late in the fifth century in honor of one of the city's dead bishops.

We had gathered at the tomb of St. Justus you were prevented by illness from being present. The anniversary celebration of the procession before daylight was held. There was an enormous number of people of both sexes, too large a crowd for the very spacious basilica to hold even with the expanse of covered porticoes that surrounded it....Because of the cramped space, the pressure of the crowd, and the numerous lights brought in, we were absolutely gasping for breath.<sup>8</sup>

Whether heavily or sparsely attended, the regular rhythm of these liturgies continued to be a very present daily aspect of life for the peoples of Europe until well into the modern era.

## Further Reading

Robert Taft, *The Liturgy of the Hours in East and West: the Origins of the Divine Office and Its Meaning for Today*, (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 1986).

Paul Bradshaw, *Daily Prayer in the Early Church: a Study of the Origin and Early Development of the Divine Office*, (London: SPCK, 1981).

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## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>Tertullian, *On Prayer* 25.

<sup>2</sup>Origen, *Treatise on Prayer*, 32. E.G. Jay, trans., *Origen's Treatise on Prayer*, (London: SPCK, 1954): 114.

<sup>3</sup>Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*, line 212 [Book IV chapter 8 § 13]. *The Works of Josephus Complete and Unabridged, New Updated Edition*, (Peabody, Massachusetts, 1987).

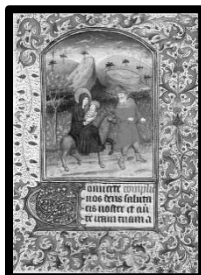
<sup>4</sup>Cyprian, *On the Lord's Prayer*. As cited in Robert Taft, *The Liturgy of the Hours in East and West: the Origins of the Divine Office and Its Meaning for Today*, (London, 1981): 20-21.

<sup>5</sup>Gregory of Tours, *Lives of the Fathers*, Book VI § 7.

<sup>6</sup>Tertullian, *On Prayer*, 25.

<sup>7</sup>*Monumenta Germaniae Historica*, Series rerum merovingicarum III, 457-501.

<sup>8</sup>See Robert Taft, *The Liturgy of the Hours in East and West: the Origins of the Divine Office and Its Meaning for Today*, (London, 1981): 151 ff.



# CENTRAL PROVINCE



## CANDIDACY I

## UNIT 9: THE RULE

**“AND WHEN YOU TURN TO THE RIGHT OR WHEN YOU  
TURN TO THE LEFT, YOUR EARS SHALL HEAR A WORD  
BEHIND YOU, SAYING, ‘THIS IS THE WAY; WALK IN IT.’”  
(ISAIAH 30: 21)**

Perhaps the best way to understand ‘The Lay Dominican Rule’ is to go back to the Latin root: ‘Rule’ comes from the Latin *Regula* meaning rule or guide. So our rule is actually a ‘guide’ on our path in life. An apocryphal statement attributed to an early Pope is right on when he is reputed to say: Show me someone who has followed his Rule faithfully and I will show you a saint. In St. Dominic’s canonization process in 1233 Brother Ventura testified that he “was a great enthusiast for the Rule.” We know that he took the Rule seriously as John of Spain testified, “He punished people who broke the Rule severely yet mercifully. He was very upset whenever he punished anyone for any fault.” Brother Paul of Venice testified, “He wanted the Rule to be observed strictly by himself and by the others. He reprimanded offenders justly and so affectionately that no one was ever upset by his correction and punishment.”

***REGULA VITAE***

Most spiritual writers advise those who take their spiritual progress seriously to have a *Regula Vitae, Rule of Life*. You need a guide to measure against, to ‘keep you on the straight and narrow.’ “But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life.” (Matt. 7:14) In business it is said: Plan your work and work your plan. All motivational speakers advise making goals and plans to reach them. Businesses and nations have six month, five year, etc. plans. Remember in his *Autobiography* Benjamin Franklin had an elaborate plan to acquire the virtues.

Groups of men and women who gathered together to pursue perfection in the deserts and monasteries produced a number of Rules. Four Rules stand out: St. Basil (followed by the Orthodox); St. Benedict (followed by Benedictines, Trappists, Cistercians); St. Augustine (followed by the Dominicans); and St. Francis. John Cassian (c. 360-435) had a lasting influence on collating the wisdom

from the deserts of Egypt to the monasteries of Gaul with his writings, *Institutions* and *Conferences* (the latter carried by St. Dominic). Every religious organization has a Rule which guides their Community in light of their charism. In 2000 over a million men and women in communities followed their Rule (80% were Religious Sisters).

*The Rule of St. Augustine* begins, “Before all else, dear brothers, love God and then your neighbor, because these are the chief commandments given to us.” He ends his Rule with the request to “have it read to you once a week so as to neglect no point through forgetfulness.” This was the Rule adopted by St. Dominic and his followers in the beginning of the Order.

## THE DOMINICANS

The Prologue to *The Primitive Constitutions* (1228) states: “Because a precept of our Rule commands us to have one heart and one mind in the Lord, it is fitting that we, who live under one rule and under the vow of one profession, be found uniform in the observance of canonical religious life, in order that the uniformity maintained in the external conduct may foster and indicate the unity which should be present interiorly in our hearts.”

Two things stand out on the Dominican Rule, both noted by Humbert of Romans (c. 1200-1277) (a Master of the Order) in his *Commentary on the Prologue*, namely, that this ‘unity’ does not stifle legitimate differences which work for the benefit of the Order and that the Rule does not bind under pain of sin. “Since we live among men, it is useful for us to conform ourselves to them in some things rather than to maintain our own unity.” The Dominicans paradoxically encourage variety in unity. A dynamic concept! “So St. Dominic, at the Chapter at Bologna, said, to console the more timid brethren, that even Rules do not always bind on pain of sin. And if this was what people believed, then he would undertake to spend all his time going around convents destroying all Rules with his knife.” Much better to follow the Rule from belief and love, rather than



obligation. This is the action of an adult Christian. “For it is love that I desire, not sacrifice, and knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.” (Hosea 6: 6)

## **DOMINICAN LAITY - HISTORY**

The Dominican Laity have a rich history going back to the beginning of the Order, in one way or another. In the thirteenth century lay people demanded new ways to grow in piety, a revolution from the ground up, the direction of all revolutions. They were looking for more than was offered by the Church at the time. Two ways met this demand: the Order of Penance and new kinds of lay confraternities.

The Dominicans recognized this movement, perhaps because of their freedom to experiment, and set up a Dominican Order of Penance (the most famous member being St. Catherine of Siena, +1380). This was done in 1285 under the jurisdiction of the Master, the official beginning of our incorporation into the Order.

The Dominicans also stamped something of their spirituality on a number of confraternities. The Congregation of St. Dominic, Bologna, issued their Statute in 1244. In the Dominican spirit it states, “We do not want to bind anyone in the sight of God to incur either guilt or a penance in the case of transgression of any chapter or activity contained in this Rule.” They believed that God is more pleased with actions performed out of love. The Fraternity of Saint Mary of Mercy, Arezzo, issued their Statutes in 1262 and ended them with this prayer, “May the Holy Spirit impress on our minds these ordinances which have been made for our salvation and for the comfort of the poor, particularly the embarrassed poor, and for the good and peace of our city; may he also long preserve our fraternity and make it grow, at the prayers of the most glorious Virgin Mary, who is the leader and head of our fraternity.” This concern for the poor, Apostolic in nature, has been part of the Lay Dominicans from the beginning and was taken very seriously. They provided for the poor monetarily, visited the sick, attended funerals of their members and begged in the street for charitable funds.

## LAY DOMINICANS – TODAY

There have been five Rules, beginning in 1285, four in the 20<sup>th</sup> century with the last in 1987. Our Rule fulfills the four Pillars of the Dominican Order: Prayer; Study; Community; Mission. When the 1987 Rule was promulgated by Damian Byrne OP, Master of the Order, he wrote, “Let this Rule be in your hearts and in your fraternities as a gospel ferment to nourish holiness and promote the apostolate together with the whole Dominican family.” He also in an addendum to the Rule gave the Moderators the ability to dispense from the Rule. Our Rule is a guide which contains all we need to order our lives for our good, for the good of the Order and for the good of the world. By faithfully following it we will attain sanctity for ourselves and preach the ‘Good News’ to others.

At your Reception, after the Initiate phase, as a new member of the Order of Preachers, you were given a copy of the Rule to study, since “the study of which proves most important in preparing for temporary profession.” (Guidelines 16 c.) Soon you will finish Candidacy I and enter Candidacy II when you will make your Temporary Profession for three years. At that time you will promise to live according to the Rule for three years. “For my yoke is easy and my burden light.” (Matt. 11: 30) This is a “profession, which is a formal promise to live according to the spirit of St. Dominic, following the way of life prescribed by the Rule.” (Rule 14.) The Guideline states, “The profession (promise) is a formal commitment – without being a canonical vow – to live according to *The Lay Dominican Rule.*” (14. b.)

The following or substantially similar formula is used:

To the honor of almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of Saint Dominic, I, \_\_\_\_, promise before you, \_\_\_\_, The Moderator of this chapter/pro-chapter/group, and, \_\_\_\_, our Spiritual Assistant, representing the Master of the Order of Friars Preachers, that I will live according to the Lay Dominican Rule for three years.

***DISCUSS YOUR RULE AND YOUR PROMISE TO LIVE IT FOR THREE YEARS.***

[Here is *The Rule of St. Augustine* for reference now and in Candidacy II:]

# The Rule of St. Augustine

(Written about the year 400, the Rule of St. Augustine is one of the earliest guides for religious life. A short document, it is divided into eight chapters.)

## Chapter I

### Purpose and Basis of Common Life

Before all else, dear brothers, love God and then your neighbor, because these are the chief commandments given to us.

1. The following are the precepts we order you living in the monastery to observe.
2. The main purpose for you having come together is to live harmoniously in your house, intent upon God in oneness of mind and heart.
3. Call nothing your own, but let everything be yours in common. Food and clothing shall be distributed to each of you by your superior, not equally to all, for all do not enjoy equal health, but rather according to each one's need. For so you read in the Acts of the Apostles that *they had all things in common and distribution was made to each one according to each one's need* (4:32,35).
4. Those who owned something in the world should be careful in wanting to share it in common once they have entered the monastery.
5. But they who owned nothing should not look for those things in the monastery that they were unable to have in the world. Nevertheless, they are to be given all that their health requires even if, during their time in the world, poverty made it impossible for them to find the very necessities of life. And those should not consider themselves fortunate because they have found the kind of food and clothing which they were unable to find in the world.
6. And let them not hold their heads high, because they associate with people whom they did not dare to approach in the world, but let them rather lift up their hearts and not seek after what is vain and earthly. Otherwise, monasteries will come to serve a useful purpose for the rich and not the poor, if the rich are made humble there and the poor are puffed up with pride.
7. The rich, for their part, who seemed important in the world, must not look down upon their brothers who have come into this holy brotherhood from a condition of poverty. They should seek to glory in the fellowship of poor brothers rather than in the reputation of rich relatives. They should neither be elated if they have contributed a part of their wealth to the common life, nor take more pride in sharing their riches with the monastery than if they were to enjoy them in the world. Indeed, every other kind of sin has to do with the commission of evil deeds, whereas

pride lurks even in good works in order to destroy them. And what good is it to scatter one's wealth abroad by giving to the poor, even to become poor oneself, when the unhappy soul is thereby more given to pride in despising riches than it had been in possessing them?

8. Let all of you then live together in oneness of mind and heart, mutually honoring God in yourselves, whose temples you have become.

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## Chapter II

### Prayer

1. *Be assiduous in prayer* (Col 4:2), at the hours and times appointed.
2. In the Oratory no one should do anything other than that for which was intended and from which it also takes its name. Consequently, if there are some who might wish to pray there during their free time, even outside the hours appointed, they should not be hindered by those who think something else must be done there.
3. When you pray to God in Psalms and hymns, think over in your hearts the words that come from your lips.
4. Chant only what is prescribed for chant; moreover, let nothing be chanted unless it is so prescribed.

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## Chapter III

### Moderation and Self-Denial

1. Subdue the flesh, so far as your health permits, by fasting and abstinence from food and drink. However, when someone is unable to fast, he should still take no food outside mealtimes unless he is ill.
2. When you come to table, listen until you leave to what is the custom to read, without disturbance or strife. Let not your mouths alone take nourishment but let your hearts too hunger for the words of God.
3. If those in more delicate health from their former way of life are treated differently in the matter of food, this should not be a source of annoyance to the others or appear unjust in the eyes of those who owe their stronger health to different habits of life. Nor should the healthier brothers deem them more fortunate for having food which they do not have, but rather consider themselves fortunate for having the good health which the others do not enjoy.

4. And if something in the way of food, clothing, and bedding is given to those coming to the monastery from a more genteel way of life, which is not given to those who are stronger, and therefore happier, then these latter ought to consider how far these others have come in passing

from their life in the world down to this life of ours, though they have been unable to reach the level of frugality common to the stronger brothers. Nor should all want to receive what they see given in larger measure to the few, not as a token of honor, but as a help to support them in their weakness. This would give rise to a deplorable disorder - that in the monastery, where the rich are coming to bear as much hardship as they can, the poor are turning to a more genteel way of life.

5. And just as the sick must take less food to avoid discomfort, so too, after their illness, they are to receive the kind of treatment that will quickly restore their strength, even though they come from a life of extreme poverty. Their more recent illness has, as it were, afforded them what accrued to the rich as part of their former way of life. But when they have recovered their former strength, they should go back to their happier way of life which, because their needs are fewer, is all the more in keeping with God's servants. Once in good health, they must not become slaves to the enjoyment of food which was necessary to sustain them in their illness. For it is better to suffer a little want than to have too much.

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## Chapter IV

### **Safeguarding Chastity, and Fraternal Correction**

1. There should be nothing about your clothing to attract attention. Besides, you should not seek to please by your apparel, but by a good life.

2. Whenever you go out, walk together, and when you reach your destination, stay together.

3. In your walk, deportment, and in all actions, let nothing occur to give offense to anyone who sees you, but only what becomes your holy state of life.

4. Although your eyes may chance to rest upon some woman or other, you must not fix your gaze upon any woman. Seeing women when you go out is not forbidden, but it is sinful to desire them or to wish them to desire you, for it is not by tough or passionate feeling alone but by one's gaze also that lustful desires mutually arise. And do not say that your hearts are pure if there is immodesty of the eye, because the unchaste eye carries the message of an impure heart. And when such hearts disclose their unchaste desires in a mutual gaze, even without saying a word, then it is that chastity suddenly goes out of their life, even though their bodies remain unsullied by unchaste acts.

5. And whoever fixes his gaze upon a woman and likes to have hers fixed upon him must not suppose that others do not see what he is doing. He is very much seen, even by those he thinks do not see him. But suppose all this escapes the notice of man - what will he do about God who sees from on high and from whom nothing is hidden? Or are we to imagine that he does not see

because he sees with a patience as great as his wisdom? Let the religious man then have such fear of God that he will not want to be an occasion of sinful pleasure to a woman. Ever mindful that God sees all things, let him not desire to look at a woman lustfully. For it is on this point that fear of the Lord is recommended, where it is written: *An abomination to the Lord is he who fixes his gaze* (Prv. 27:20)

6. So when you are together in church and anywhere else where women are present, exercise a mutual care over purity of life. Thus, by mutual vigilance over one another will God, who dwells in you, grant you his protection.

7. If you notice in someone of your brothers this wantonness of the eye, of which I am speaking, admonish him at once so that the beginning of evil will not grow more serious but will be promptly corrected.

8. But if you see him doing the same thing again on some other day, even after your admonition, then whoever had occasion to discover this must report him as he would a wounded man in need of treatment. But let the offense first be pointed out to two or three so that he can be proven guilty on the testimony of these two or three and be punished with due severity. And do not charge yourselves with ill-will when you bring this offense to light. Indeed, yours is the greater blame if you allow your brothers to be lost through your silence when you are able to bring about their correction by your disclosure. If your brother, for example, were suffering a bodily wound that he wanted to hide for fear of undergoing treatment, would it not be cruel of you to remain silent and a mercy on your part to make this known? How much greater then is your obligation to make his condition known lest he continue to suffer a more deadly wound of the soul.

9. But if he fails to correct the fault despite this admonition, he should first be brought to the attention of the superior before the offense is made known to the others who will have to prove his guilt, in the event he denies the charge. Thus, corrected in private, his fault can perhaps be kept from the others. But should he feign ignorance, the others are to be summoned so that in the presence of all he can be proven guilty, rather than stand accused on the word of one alone. Once proven guilty, he must undergo salutary punishment according to the judgment of the superior or priest having the proper authority. If he refuses to submit to punishment, he shall be expelled from your brotherhood even if he does not withdraw of his own accord. For this too is not done out of cruelty, but from a sense of compassion so that many others may not be lost through his bad example.

10. And let everything I have said about not fixing one's gaze be also observed carefully and faithfully with regard to other offenses: to find them out, to ward them off, to make them known, to prove and punish them - all out of love for man and a hatred of sin.

11. But if anyone should go so far in wrongdoing as to receive letters in secret from any woman, or small gifts of any kind, you ought to show mercy and pray for him if he confesses this of his own accord. But if the offense is detected and he is found guilty, he must be more severely chastised according to the judgment of the priest or superior.

## Chapter V

### **The Care of Community Goods and Treatment of the Sick**

1. Keep your clothing in one place in charge of one or two, or of as many as are needed to care for them and to prevent damage from moths. And just as you have your food from the one pantry, so, too, you are to receive your clothing from a single wardrobe. If possible, do not be concerned about what you are given to wear at the change of seasons, whether each of you gets back what he had put away or something different, providing no one is denied what he needs. If, however, disputes and murmuring arise on this account because someone complains that he received poorer clothing than he had before, and thinks it is beneath him to wear the kind of clothing worn by another, you may judge from this how lacking you are in that holy and inner garment of the heart when you quarrel over garments for the body. But if allowance is made for your weakness and you do receive the same clothing you had put away, you must still keep it in one place under the common charge.

2. In this way, no one shall perform any task for his own benefit but all your work shall be done for the common good, with greater zeal and more dispatch than if each one of you were to work for yourself alone. For charity, as it is written, *is not self-seeking* (1 Cor 13:5) meaning that it places the common good before its own, not its own before the common good. So whenever you show greater concern for the common good than for your own, you may know that you are growing in charity. Thus, let the abiding virtue of charity prevail in all things that minister to the fleeting necessities of life.

3. It follows, therefore, that if anyone brings something for their sons or other relatives living in the monastery, whether a garment or anything else they think is needed, this must not be accepted secretly as one's own but must be placed at the disposal of the superior so that, as common property, it can be given to whoever needs it. But if someone secretly keeps something given to him, he shall be judged guilty of theft.

4. Your clothing should be cleaned either by yourselves or by those who perform this service, as the superior shall determine, so that too great a desire for clean clothing may not be the source of interior stains on the soul.

5. As for bodily cleanliness too, a brother must never deny himself the use of the bath when his health requires it. But this should be done on medical advice, without complaining, so that even though unwilling, he shall do what has to be done for his health when the superior orders it. However, if the brother wishes it, when it might not be good for him, you must not comply with his desire, for sometimes we think something is beneficial for the pleasure it gives, even though it may prove harmful.

6. Finally, if the cause of a brother's bodily pain is not apparent, you make take the word of God's servant when he indicates what is giving him pain. But if it remains uncertain whether the remedy he likes is good for him, a doctor should be consulted.

7. When there is need to frequent the public baths or any other place, no fewer than two or three should go together, and whoever has to go somewhere must not go with those of his own choice but with those designated by the superior.

8. The care of the sick, whether those in convalescence or others suffering from some indisposition, even though free of fever, shall be assigned to a brother who can personally obtain from the pantry whatever he sees is necessary for each one.

9. Those in charge of the pantry, or of clothing and books, should render cheerful service to their brothers.

10. Books are to be requested at a fixed hour each day, and anyone coming outside that hour is not to receive them.

11. But as for clothing and shoes, those in charge shall not delay the giving of them whenever they are required by those in need of them.

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## Chapter VI

### **Asking Pardon and Forgiving Offenses**

1. You should either avoid quarrels altogether or else put an end to them as quickly as possible; otherwise, anger may grow into hatred, making a plank out of a splinter, and turn the soul into a murderer. For so you read: *Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer* (1 Jn 3:15).

2. Whoever has injured another by open insult, or by abusive or even incriminating language, must remember to repair the injury as quickly as possible by an apology, and he who suffered the injury must also forgive, without further wrangling. But if they have offended one another, they must forgive one another's trespasses for the sake of your prayers which should be recited with greater sincerity each time you repeat them. Although a brother is often tempted to anger, yet prompt to ask pardon from one he admits to having offended, such a one is better than another who, though less given to anger, finds it too hard to ask forgiveness. But a brother who is never willing to ask pardon, or does not do so from his heart, has no reason to be in the monastery, even if he is not expelled. You must then avoid being too harsh in your words, and should they escape your lips, let those same lips not be ashamed to heal the wounds they have caused.

3. But whenever the good of discipline requires you to speak harshly in correcting your subjects, then, even if you think you have been unduly harsh in your language, you are not required to ask forgiveness lest, by practicing too great humility toward those who should be your subjects, the authority to rule is undermined. But you should still ask forgiveness from the Lord of all who



knows with what deep affection you love even those whom you might happen to correct with undue severity. Besides, you are to love another with a spiritual rather than an earthly love.

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## Chapter VII

### Governance and Obedience

1. The superior should be obeyed as a father with the respect due him so as not to offend God in his person, and, even more so, the priest who bears responsibility for you all.
2. But it shall pertain chiefly to the superior to see that these precepts are all observed and, if any point has been neglected, to take care that the transgression is not carelessly overlooked but is punished and corrected. In doing so, he must refer whatever exceeds the limit and power of his office, to the priest who enjoys greater authority among you.
3. The superior, for his part, must not think himself fortunate in his exercise of authority but in his role as one serving you in love. In your eyes he shall hold the first place among you by the dignity of his office, but in fear before God he shall be as the least among you. He must show himself as an example of good works toward all. *Let him admonish the unruly, cheer the fainthearted, support the weak, and be patient toward all* (1 Thes 5:14). Let him uphold discipline while instilling fear. And though both are necessary, he should strive to be loved by you rather than feared, ever mindful that he must give an account of you to God.
4. It is by being more obedient, therefore, that you show mercy not only toward yourselves but also toward the superior whose higher rank among you exposes him all the more to greater peril.

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## Chapter VIII

### Observance of the Rule

1. The Lord grant that you may observe all these precepts in a spirit of charity as lovers of spiritual beauty, giving forth the good odor of Christ in the holiness of your lives: not as slaves living under the law but as men living in freedom under grace.
2. And that you may see yourselves in this little book, as in a mirror, have it read to you once a week so as to neglect no point through forgetfulness. When you find that you are doing all that has been written, give thanks to the Lord, the Giver of every good. But when one of you finds that he has failed on any point, let him be sorry for the past, be on his guard for the future, praying that he will be forgiven his fault and not be led into temptation.



# CENTRAL PROVINCE



## CANDIDACY I

## UNIT 10: EVALUATION

# **“DO YOU NOT KNOW THAT THE SAINTS WILL JUDGE THE WORLD.” (1Cor. 6: 2)**

Congratulations! You have now travelled quite a way on your journey. Hopefully you have learned much and, more importantly, grown closer to your Master and Friend. You are building a firm foundation, built on the four Dominican Pillars: Prayer; Study; Community; Mission. The good news is that as you advance you will increase your transformation into a true follower of Jesus, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Now, perhaps, would be a good opportunity to evaluate your progress and the Formation Program. With that in mind we offer a number of questions for your input; you may have some others of your own. Feel free to offer them; we value your opinions. Remember- there are no wrong answers – only your answers.

## **THE PILLARS**

What is the value to you of each:

PRAYER

STUDY

COMMUNITY

## MISSION

### **GENERAL QUESTIONS**

What does the Church expect of a Layperson?

How does the Dominican vocation fulfill this?

What stands out in your mind about St. Dominic?

Who are your favorite Dominican Saint or Saints? Why?

What is 'Dominican Spirituality' to you?

What is your favorite Dominican motto and why?

### **QUESTIONS FOR YOU**

What is the difference in you, since you joined the Chapter?

What part of 'Preaching' appeals to you?

Since Dominicans value 'JOY' in their lives, has yours increased?

## **FORMATION QUESTIONS**

What did you think of the 'Initiate Formation'?

The 'Candidacy I Formation?

Any suggestions for improvements – Meetings? Formation?

## **TEMPORARY PROFESSION**

Why do you want to make it?

Why are you ready?

***THANK YOU SINCERELY FOR YOUR ATTENDANCE AND MANY CONTRIBUTIONS.  
WITH THEM YOU MAKE US ALL BETTER! MAY DOMINIC BLESS YOU!***



# CENTRAL PROVINCE

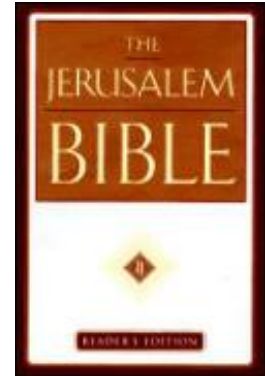


## CANDIDACY II

### UNIT 1: THE BEATITUDES

**“WHEN JESUS SAW THE CROWDS, HE WENT UP THE MOUNTAIN; AND AFTER HE SAT DOWN, HIS DISCIPLES CAME TO HIM. THEN HE BEGAN TO SPEAK, AND TAUGHT THEM.” (MATT. 5: 1-2)**

“Concerning the content of Christ’s teaching, his own sacred words bear witness; thus whoever longs to attain eternal blessedness can now recognize the steps that lead to that high happiness.” (St. Leo the Great, Sermo 95, 1-2) In the original *Jerusalem Bible* the Dominicans at the Ecole Biblique translated *Beati* as *Happy* (the Greek-makarios and the Latin-beatus are translatable as *happy* or *blessed*; so they used the French-*heureux-happy*). Spiritual writers tell us that when the Beatitudes are truly practiced, they do lead to a blissful happiness. To the world they are paradoxical. “Who could be happy, poor and mournful?” they ask.



Much of Jesus’ message is paradoxical. This particular passage is a poetical usage by Jesus. But to the Christian they are “the words of eternal life.” (John 6: 68) The message of the Beatitudes is the message of Christianity, in a nutshell. To bring this message to fruition is the task of a lifetime. Could you spend your life in a better way?



The Beatitudes hold a special place for Lay Dominicans:

“Lay Dominicans should strive, to the best of their ability, to live in true familial communion in accordance with the spirit of the Beatitudes in every circumstance, performing works of mercy and sharing what they have with members of the community...” (Rule 8)

In our study of the Beatitudes which should take three months, we should discuss them and put them into *practice* between our Chapter meetings. We are on the path of '*Transformation*', a path which is not always a straight path. It is not as important where we are in the race, as long as we are in the race.

## THE BEATITUDES IN ST. MATTHEW

How important are the Beatitudes? When you google them, you get 1,410,000 results. Their importance is treated in the *New Advent* edition of the *Catholic Encyclopedia*:

“The solemn blessings (beatitudines, benedictiones) which mark the opening of the Sermon on the Mount, the very first of Our Lord's sermons in the Gospel of St. Matthew (5:3-10).

“Four of them occur again in a slightly different form in the Gospel of St. Luke (6:22), likewise at the beginning of a sermon, and running parallel to Matthew 5-7, if not another version of the same. And here they are illustrated by the opposition of the four curses (24-26).



“The fuller account and the more prominent place given the Beatitudes in St. Matthew are quite in accordance with the scope and the tendency of the First Gospel, in which the spiritual character of the Messianic kingdom — the paramount idea of the Beatitudes — is consistently put forward, in sharp contrast with Jewish prejudices. The very peculiar form in which Our Lord proposed His blessings make them, perhaps, the only example of His sayings that may be styled poetical — the parallelism of thought and expression, which is the most striking feature of Biblical poetry, being unmistakably clear.”



“The Beatitudes Imply

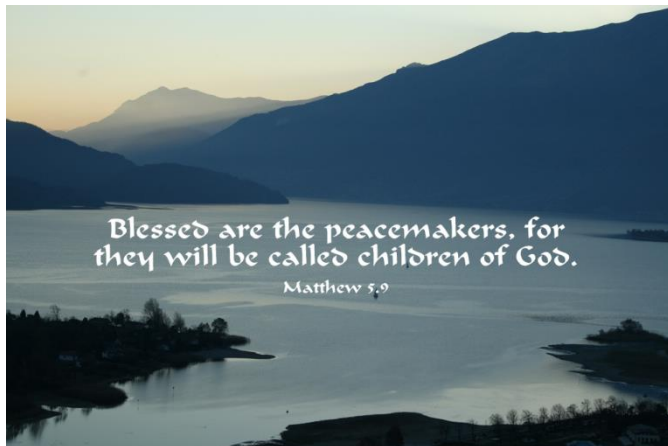
An Approach to Good:

Blessed are they who suffer persecution	All the gifts and perfect virtues
Blessed are the peacemakers	Gift of wisdom
Blessed are the clean of heart	Gift of understanding
Blessed are the merciful	Gift of counsel
Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after justice	Gift of fortitude

A drawing away from evil:

Blessed are they who weep	Gift of knowledge
Blessed are the meek	Gift of piety
Blessed are the poor	Gift of fear.

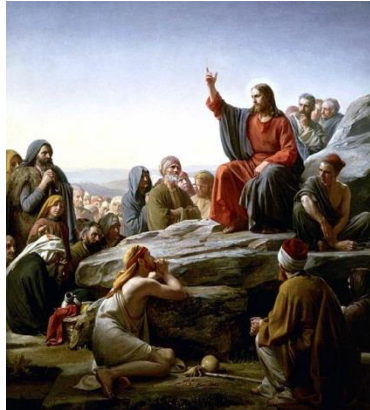
“This is a vivid and concrete description of the greatness of Christian perfection; as grace surpasses nature, it is immensely superior to merely human perfection of which the wise Greeks spoke. And those words throw light on the proposition in



which the whole sermon on the Mount is summed up: *Be you, therefore, perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.* Have that perfection which is supernatural, not merely angelic but divine, whose goal is to see God, as He sees Himself, immediately, and to love Him forever.” (*The Priesthood and Perfection*, ch. 8, *The Beatitudes Measure Priestly Perfection*, by Reginald Garrigou- Lagrange OP)

## HAPPINESS AS AN END

The *Sermon on the Mount* in Matthew's Gospel actually goes through chapters 5, 6 and 7. The Beatitudes are 5: 3-10, the beginning. The reference to "Be perfect" has always been troubling. How can we be as perfect as God? It is



easy to dismiss the very thought. When we go back to the Greek, it makes sense. *Perfect* is translated from *teleios*: mature, complete, having revealed its end (*telos*). We must become adults in our faith; we must mature and be all that an adult can be. Just as a rose is considered perfect when it has reached maturity, so we will be perfect when we have developed our spirituality as well as we can. The Beatitudes are our means to the end, human perfection, human maturity.

Seeking this perfection melds with our desire for happiness. Our desire for happiness, however, often leads us to seek and value the very things which lead to unhappiness, even misery; we fail to mature. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* expresses this:

"The Beatitudes respond to the natural desire for happiness. This desire is of human origin: God has placed it in the human heart in order to draw man to the One who alone can fulfill it:

"We all want to live happily; in the whole human race there is no one who does not assent to this proposition, even before it is fully articulated. (St. Augustine)

"How is it, then, that I seek you, Lord? Since in seeking you, my God, I seek a happy life, let me seek you so that my soul may live, for my body draws life from my soul and my soul draws life from you. (St. Augustine)



"God alone satisfies. (St. Thomas Aquinas) (#1718)

"The Beatitudes reveal the goal of human existence, the ultimate end of human acts: God calls us to his own beatitude." (#1719)

## THE BEATITUDES AND DOCTORS OF THE CHURCH

The Beatitudes, being so central to Jesus' teaching, have precipitated a great number of interpretations through the centuries:

“To behold God is the end by which we are to be perfected, not the end by which we come to nothing (Augustine). The epitome of virtue is the good unmingled with any lesser good, hence the good of God himself (Origen). The reward from God is much greater than that received from others for any human acts of goodness (Chrysostom). When you hear the voice of a beggar, remember that before God you yourself are a beggar. As you treat your beggar, so will God treat you. (Augustine” - *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, Matthew 1-13*, p. 80)

“If anyone will piously and soberly consider the sermon which our Lord Jesus Christ spoke on the mount, as we read it in the Gospel according to Matthew, I think that he will find in it, so far as regards the highest morals, a perfect standard of the Christian life...the sermon before us is perfect in all the precepts by which the Christian life is molded.” (*The Lord's Sermon on the Mount*, Book I, ch. I.I, by St. Augustine)

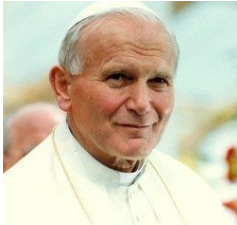


“Accordingly, those things which are set down as merits in the beatitudes, are a kind of preparation for, or disposition to happiness, either perfect or inchoate: while those that are assigned as rewards, may be either perfect happiness, so as to refer to the future life, or some beginning of happiness, such as is found in those who have attained perfection, in which case they refer to the present life. Because when a man begins to make progress in the acts of the virtues and gifts, it is to be hoped that he will arrive at perfection, both as a wayfarer, and as a citizen of the heavenly kingdom.” (*Summa Theologica, Ia IIae, q. 69, a. 2*, by St. Thomas Aquinas)



## THE BEATITUDES AND THE POPES

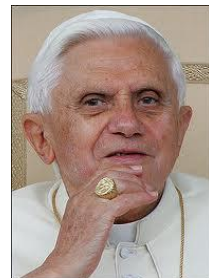
As you can imagine through the centuries the Popes have written and preached much on the Beatitudes. Here are the last two:



“In the end, Jesus does not merely speak the Beatitudes. He lives the Beatitudes. He is the Beatitudes. Looking at him you will see what it means to be poor in spirit, gentle and merciful, to mourn, to care for what is right, to be pure in heart, to make peace, to be persecuted. This is why he has the right to say, ‘Come, follow *me!*’ He does not say simply, ‘Do what I say’. He says, ‘Come, follow *me!*’” (*Homily, Jubilee Pilgrimage, Korazim, Mount of the Beatitudes*, March 24, 2000, by Pope John Paul II)

“The Beatitudes offer a ‘new program of life’ and demand a discipleship through which people today can open themselves up to what is truly good, Pope Benedict XVI explained during his traditional noon audience on Sunday.

“The beatitudes are the new program of life, to free ourselves from the false values of the world and open ourselves to the true good, present and future. The Beatitudes have historically been connected to the sanctity of Christians, because, in St. Paul’s words, ‘God chose the weak of the world to shame the strong, and God chose the lowly and despised of the world, those who count for nothing, to reduce to nothing those who are something,’ he explained.” (*CAN/EWTN News*, Vatican City, Jan. 30, 2011)



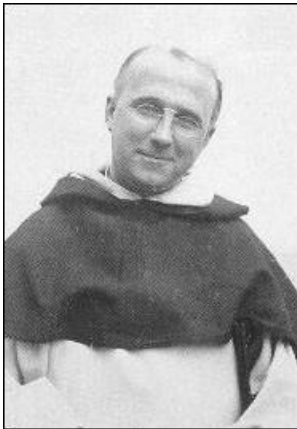
“By his example he proclaims that a life lived in Christ's Spirit, the Spirit of the Beatitudes, is ‘blessed’, and that only the person who becomes a ‘man or woman of the Beatitudes’ can succeed in communicating love and peace to others.” (John Paul II’s sermon at Pier Giorgio Frassati’s Beatification, May 20, 1990)

## CONCLUSION

It is because of the facts that we, according to our Rule, are to be *'Men and Women of the Beatitudes'* like Pier Giorgio Frassati and the centrality of the Beatitudes in any Christian's spirituality that the first unit of Candidacy II concerns the Beatitudes. We are interested in nothing less than our transformation; "Put on the Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. 13: 14)



"The Sermon on the Mount is the abridgment of Christian doctrine, the solemn promulgation of the New Law, given to perfect the Mosaic Law and to correct erroneous interpretations of it; and the eight beatitudes given at its beginning, are the abridgment of this sermon. They thus wonderfully condense all that constitutes the ideal of the Christian life and show all its loftiness.



"Christ's first preaching promised happiness and showed the means to obtain it. Why does He speak first of all of happiness? Because all men naturally wish to be happy. They pursue this end unceasingly, whatever they may wish; but they often seek happiness where it is not, where they will find only wretchedness. Let us listen to our Lord, who tells us where true and lasting happiness is, where the end of our life is, and who gives us the means to obtain it.

"The end is indicated in each of the eight beatitudes. Under different names, it is eternal happiness, whose prelude the just may enjoy even here on earth; it is the kingdom of heaven, the promised land, perfect consolation, the full satisfaction of all our holy and legitimate desires, supreme mercy, the sight of God our Father. The means are quite the contrary of those suggested by the maxims of worldly wisdom, which proposes an entirely different end." (*The Three Ages of the Interior Life*, ch. 9, *The Grandeur of Christian Perfection and the Beatitudes*, by Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange OP)

“These beatitudes do not connote absolute and perfect bliss; they are rather effective means of reaching eternal happiness; for if one joyfully embraces poverty, meekness, purity, humiliation; if one has attained such mastery of self as to pray for one’s enemies and to love the Cross, one is faithfully following the example of the Master and making great strides in the ways of perfection.” (*The Spiritual Life: A Treatise on Ascetical and Mystical Theology*, #1361, by Adolphe Tanquerey SS)



“[The Beatitudes] challenged those who made up ‘Israel’ in Matthew’s time by delineating the kinds of persons and actions that will receive their full reward when God’s kingdom comes.” (*Sacra Pagina, The Gospel of Matthew*, p. 84, by Daniel J. Harrington SJ)

## RESOURCE

One of the finest discussions on the Beatitudes comes from *The Gospel of Matthew*, vol. 1, by William Barclay [*Barkley* is an incorrect spelling], a renowned Scripture scholar and writer. This 21 page exposition is well worth studying and taking to heart. Ask: what is your favorite Beatitude, your least? Try to practice them over the next three months as an introduction to a life-time project. It is on the internet: <http://www.catholic-church.org/stfrancis-cfn/beatitudes.html>



# CENTRAL PROVINCE



## CANDIDACY II

### UNIT 2: THE CHURCH

# [JESUS CHRIST] IS THE HEAD OF THE BODY, THE CHURCH. (Col. 1: 18)

## NOW YOU ARE THE BODY OF CHRIST AND INDIVIDUALLY MEMBERS OF IT. (1 Cor. 12: 27)

Our purpose in this unit of study is to grow in steadfastness and love of the Church by reading, studying and praying over *Lumen Gentium (The Dogmatic Constitution of the Church)*. We are engaged in “*fides quarens intellectum*” (“faith seeking understanding”), the motto of St. Anselm of Canterbury (Proslogion). *Lumen Gentium (Light of Humanity)* was promulgated by Pope Paul VI on Nov. 21, 1964. Four drafts were prepared before the final version was accepted by a vote of 2151-5. There is much more to ‘*the Church*’ than is commonly understood and so we will discover.



During Candidacy II we will study some of the documents of Vatican II in order to have a firm grounding in our Faith, following the prescription of our holy founder, St. Dominic. As Blessed John Paul II wrote in *Dominicae Cena* (*The Mystery and Worship of the Eucharist*), “...by means of this Council the Holy Spirit ‘has spoken to the Church’ the truths and given the indications for carrying out her mission among the people of today and tomorrow.” (#13) Also as Pope Benedict XVI (then Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger) wrote in *Der Weltdienst der Kirche*, “We cannot return to the past, nor have we any desire to do so. But we must be ready to reflect anew on that which, in the lapse of





time, has remained the one constant. To seek it without distraction and to dare to accept, with joyful hearts and without diminution, the foolishness of truth – this, I think, is the task for today and for tomorrow.” These documents can be a rich source for transformation and growth, not only intellectually, but, more importantly, spiritually.

## “THE CHURCH”

The word ‘Church’ is an English translation of the Greek ‘*ekklesia*’. It “comes from the verb *kaleo*, which means *to call* or *convoke*. In classical usage *ekklesia* is the assembly of the people...” (*The New World Dictionary Concordance to the NAB*, p. 88).

“The Church’ is the People that God gathers in the whole world. She exists in local communities and is made real as a liturgical, above all a Eucharistic, assembly. She draws her life from the word and the Body of Christ and so herself becomes Christ’s body.” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* #752) For this reason the picture chosen for this unit is an assembly of people rather than a building.



## LUMEN GENTIUM – KEY TO THE COUNCIL



Blessed John Paul II, in a Sunday Angelus address, said:

“In my reflection today I intend to call your attention to the Dogmatic Constitution *Lumen Gentium*, ‘the keystone ‘ of the Council’s whole Magisterium. With it, the Second Vatican Council

wished to shed light on the Church’s reality: a wonderful but complex reality consisting of human and divine elements, visible and invisible. (cf. # 8)...The Church described in *Lumen Gentium* is a Church rich in life; a Church which, far from withdrawing into

herself, is opening up with greater energy to the world. A Church which feels she 'owes the Gospel' to all men..."

Many have difficulty with the Church because they concentrate only on negative human elements. Of course we know that there are many great saints and wonderful works throughout the history of the Church. There are many good examples whom we have met and admire.

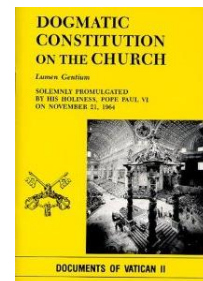
## LUMEN GENTIUM and the LAITY

New emphases on the role of the Laity were advanced. You cannot have an 'assembly' without people. To paraphrase Abraham Lincoln: God must have loved the Laity because He made so many of them. Donald J. Goergen OP wrote in *Letters to my Brothers and Sisters*,



"[Yves Congar] once said that the most important decision of the Second Vatican Council was the decision to reverse the order of the second and third chapters of the Constitution on the Church...giving first place and prominence to the image of the Church as God's people. [The Church as hierarchical followed.] The decision put the laity at the center of post-conciliar awareness... In a laity-centered Church there is an increasing emphasis on the theology of baptism, on the awareness that every baptized Christian has a vocation, on the common vocation to discipleship, on discipleship as manifest in a variety of ministries in the life of the Church, and on the interconnectedness of vocation, mission, ministry and spirituality." (12, THE LAITY)

These emphases impel us to read and study *Lumen Gentium*. It is necessary in order to understand our vocation in the Church. It is also necessary if we are to preach the truth to the world.



## LUMEN GENTIUM and DOMINICANS

The Dominican Family have been faithful members of the Church from the beginning when St. Dominic travelled Europe with Bishop Diego for the Church and, also, journeyed to Rome to see the Pope and promote his Order. Bro. Liam Walsh OP wrote in *Light for the Church*, Prouilhe, 2006:



“But we can only be Dominicans because first we are Church...It was in being ‘light of the Church’ that he became and is light, torch, flame, fire for us for whom he is elder brother and founding father. His passion was to bring light to the Church.”

St. Dominic’s mission also demonstrates his union and desire to advance the Church:

“[St. Dominic’s] teaching was on fire, because he was a lamp that had been lit. ‘His words burned like a torch’ because he ‘came in the spirit and power of Elijah.’...So he was a lamp, a lamp that was lit, and a lamp that had been placed on a lampstand,” preached Thomas Agni of Lentini (+1277). (*Early Dominicans*, p. 64)



*Lumen Gentium* emphasized the emergence of the Laity as necessary for the establishment of the Kingdom. This is reflected in the statement of the General Chapter of the Dominican Order of Quezon City, 1977:

“The branches of the Dominican Family are bound together by a common name and by the common apostolic and spiritual traditions which have their source in St. Dominic...[who] created his family, not for itself, but to be at the service of the Church and its mission to the world.”

“Our Order was founded, from the beginning, especially for preaching and the salvation of souls.” (*The Primitive Constitutions*, Prologue, 1228) So remember that first we are Church.

As members of the Church we are also called by the Holy Spirit to be members of the Dominican Order, a true vocation. Our Lay Dominican Rule states:

1. Among the disciples of Christ, men and women living in the world, in virtue of their Baptism and Confirmation, have been made participants in the prophetic, priestly and royal office of Our Lord Jesus Christ. They are called to bring Christ’s living presence to people so that “the divine message of salvation be made known and accepted by all people throughout the world.” (Apostolicam Actuositatem 4: #3)
2. Some of these disciples of Christ, moved by the Holy Spirit to live a life according to the spirit and charism of St. Dominic, are incorporated into the Order through a special promise according to their appropriate statutes.



## LUMEN GENTIUM – TWO QUESTIONS

- The question has been raised by some of our Separated Brethren, “If Christ is the Head of the Church, then how can the Pope be the Head of the Church?” St. Thomas Aquinas answers this objection in the third part of the *Summa Theologica* when he states that other men are called “head of the Church” in a limited sense whereas Christ is called “Head” in the proper and fullest sense.

“First, inasmuch as Christ is the Head of all who pertain to the Church in every place and time and state; but all other men are called heads with



reference to certain special places...or with reference to a determined time as the Pope is the head of the whole Church, viz. during the time of his Pontificate..." (Summa 3.8.6)

Secondly, Thomas also writes that Christ is called the Head of the Church by His own power and authority but other men because they act in Christ's place.

- Certain Traditionalist Catholic groups (particularly *Sedevacantists*) object to section 8 where it states, "This Church, constituted and organized as a society in the present world, subsists in the Catholic Church, which is governed by the successor of Peter and by the bishops in communion with him. Nevertheless, many elements of sanctification and truth are found outside its visible confines." (Ponder this.) This is a question of "*subsistit in*" used instead of "*est*". In an interview with *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, then-Cardinal Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI, responded:

"The concept expressed by 'is' (to be) is far broader than that expressed by 'to subsist'. 'To subsist' is a very precise way of being, that is, to be as a subject, which exists in itself. Thus the Council Fathers meant to say that the being of the Church as such is a broader entity than the Roman Catholic Church, but within the latter it acquires, in an incomparable way, the character of a true and proper subject."



## STUDY AND LUMEN GENTIUM

There is so much rich information in *Lumen Gentium* to be studied and incorporated that it should be consulted again and again. Belonging to 'The Church' is a privilege and a gift given us by the Holy Spirit. The Church is the Kingdom of Christ, already present in the world. Knowing this, who would ever decide to leave it? Those who do leave often do so because they judge it based on the foibles and sins of *some* of its too human members, not having the bigger

picture presented by *Lumen Gentium*. To describe it, St. Paul uses the term, the 'Mystical Body of Christ' and a temple, and St. John, the 'Vine and the Branches'.

"You are fellow citizens of the saints and members of the household of God. You form a building which rises on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ as the capstone. Through Him the whole structure is fitted together and takes shape as a holy temple in the Lord; in Him you are being built into this temple, to become a dwelling place for God in the Spirit."  
(Eph. 2: 19-22)



"...one and the same Christ is present, not only in the firstborn of all creation, but in all His saints as well. The head cannot be separated from the members, nor the members from the head...even now He dwells, whole and undivided, in His temple, the Church."  
(Sermon by Pope Leo the Great, Office of Readings, Wednesday, second week of Easter)

There are many '*lights*' set off by *Lumen Gentium*, (a few):

- The significance of 'The People of God' coming before 'The Hierarchy'
- The relationship of Protestants, Jews, Muslims, Hindus, and non-believers in God to the Church
- The roles of Pope, Bishop, Priest, Deacon, Laity, Religious
- The significance of the call of *all* Christians to holiness, not just Priests and Religious. This is *very* important to us, Lay Dominicans.
- Mary, the Mother of God, as a type of the Church



## LUMEN GENTIUM – ORGANIZATION

1. The Mystery of the Church (1-8)
2. The People of God (9-17)
3. The Church is Hierarchical (18-29)
4. The Laity (30-38)
5. The Call to Holiness (39-42)
6. Religious (43-47)
7. The Pilgrim Church (48-51)
8. Our Lady (52-69)

Obviously, much could be written about these different chapters in explanation and development but that would defeat the original purpose of this unit. That purpose was to read, to study and to pray over *Lumen Gentium* over three months. A fourth can be added: to discuss. By these four acts *Lumen Gentium* will live in your heart, deepening your love and understanding of **THE CHURCH**.

## INTERNET TEXT OF LUMEN GENTIUM

<http://www.ewtn.com/library/councils/v2church.htm>



# CENTRAL PROVINCE



## CANDIDACY II

## UNIT 3: CONTEMPLATION



**“BUT WHEN YOU PRAY, GO TO YOUR INNER ROOM,  
CLOSE THE DOOR, AND PRAY TO YOUR FATHER IN  
SECRET. AND YOUR FATHER WHO SEES IN SECRET  
WILL REPAY YOU.” (MATT. 6: 6)**

**Contemplation** is a very important component of the ‘Dominican Way of Life’. This is the reason for this unit in our Candidacy II formation which we will study and pray over for three months and, then, continue for the rest of our lives. We have answered the **call** (vocation – *vocare* – *to call*) of the Holy Spirit and become Dominicans. “The fulfillment of St. Dominic’s vision of a community of contemplative preachers requires a careful balancing so that both the active-preaching dimension and the contemplative-prayer-study dimension are held in creative tension,” writes Thomas McGonigle OP (*The Dominican Tradition* p.xx). St. Thomas Aquinas was the author of our Dominican motto: ***Contemplari et Contermplata Aliis Tradere*** (to contemplate and to pass on to others what is contemplated). Thus as Dominicans the Holy Spirit is also calling each of us to be ‘*contemplatives*’. We will examine various sources, especially that of the Mystics.

## **EXPRESSIONS OF PRAYER**

By way of introduction Unit 3 of Initiate Formation on *Prayer* could be reviewed. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (#2700-2724) presents an excellent summary of the types of prayer:

- I. **VOCAL PRAYER** – “Vocal prayer is an essential element of the Christian life.” (#2701) We use this form when we pray with words in the morning and evening, the Rosary, Liturgy (Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours) etc.
- II. **MEDITATION** – “There are as many and varied methods of meditation as there are spiritual masters.” (#2707) “Meditation engages thought, imagination, emotion and desire.” (#2708) Meditation is usually used when saying the Rosary. *Lectio Divina* also employs meditation. (for the

latter cf: *Accepting the Embrace of God: The Ancient Art of Lectio Divina* by Fr. Luke Dysinger OSB – see Unit 3 of Initiate Formation).

- III. CONTEMPLATIVE PRAYER – “Contemplative prayer is the simple expression of the mystery of prayer. It is a gaze of faith fixed on Jesus, an attentiveness to the Word of God, a silent love. It achieves real union with the prayer of Christ to the extent that it makes us share in His mystery.” (#2724)

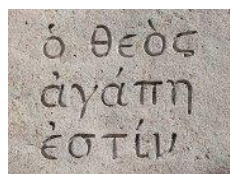
## CONTEMPLATION/LOVE

You cannot study Contemplation without seeing the interchangeability of the word ‘love’. “God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him’ (1 Jn 4: 16). These words from the *First Letter of John* expresses with remarkable clarity the heart of the Christian faith: the Christian image of God and the resulting image of mankind and its destiny.” (Benedict XVI - *Deus Caritas Est*)

- ❖ O inestimable Love!
- ❖ With the fire of your love, set our hearts alight with desire to love you and to follow you in the truth.
- ❖ You alone are Love, alone worthy of being loved! (St. Catherine of Siena)

St. Therese, the Little Flower, a Doctor of the Church because of love wrote:

“I know of no other means to reach perfection than by love. To love: how perfectly our hearts are made for this! Sometimes I look for another word to use, but, in this land of exile, no other word expresses the vibrations of our soul. Hence we must keep to that one word: love.”



## WHAT IS CONTEMPLATION?

Much could be written in answer to this question. However, the answer must be arrived at by each individual through his or her own pursuit as it pertains to him or her. “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.” (Mt. 7: 7) The contemplative journey must be undertaken by each serious Dominican. But, oh what a wonderful journey because the spiritual goal to be reached is union with God. We can say with the Apostle, “Yet I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me.” (Gal. 2:20) In the words of St. Thomas Aquinas: “I have Christ alone in my affection and Christ Himself is my life: ‘To me, to live is Christ; and to die is gain’” (Phil. 1: 21)(Commentary on Galatians, cap. 2, lect.6) No one should fear undertaking this journey because the roadmap is different yet suited to each pilgrim. The important thing is to be in the race regardless of other racers.

“Contemplation is a type of knowledge that begins and ends in love; it is more experiential and intuitive than theoretical and discursive...Union with God is the goal of the spiritual life, and the bond of that union is the love that is charity...St. Thomas Aquinas had approved and praised the ‘mixed life’; that is, an active apostolic life that proceeds from some sort of contemplation. Indeed, St. Thomas Aquinas went so far as to say that the mixed life surpasses the purely contemplative life in excellence.” (Jordan Aumann OP – *The Contemplative Dimension of Dominican Spirituality*)

James Arraj in *Essays in Existential Thomism* commented on the great Dominican theologian, Reginald Garrigou-Lagrance, and his idea of the universal call to the contemplative life: “Contemplation, that culmination of the life of prayer in which the presence of God manifests itself in a very real and experiential, yet mysterious way, is, he asserted, the normal outcome of the development of the life of grace...If contemplation is thus the normal development of the life of the virtues and gifts, then we are all called to it.” This is treated by Garrigou-Lagrance briefly but deeply in *The Three Conversions in the Spiritual Life*.

The Church teaches in *Lumen Gentium* that all, ordained and lay, are called to holiness: “For this is the will of God, your sanctification.” (1 Th. 4: 3) “It is

therefore quite clear that all Christians in any state or walk of life are called to the fullness of Christian life and to the perfection of love..." (L.G. #39) We who have answered the call of the Holy Spirit to follow St. Dominic who so closely followed Jesus Christ must embark on this contemplative journey to union with God. As you journey, ever so slowly, you will constantly move into ever deeper waters but you will never be over your head.

## DOMINICANS AND CONTEMPLATION

There have been many great Dominican mystics and mystical writers through the centuries down to the present day. Of course our founder, **St. Dominic** never failed to pass on to others what he contemplated during long hours of prayer. In his Canonization Process (1233) Brother Rudolph of Faenza gave testimony about the prayer life of St. Dominic: "The Blessed father Dominic nearly always spent the night in church, praying and weeping there, as I saw by the light of the lamp which is in the church...Because of the intimacy I had with him I sometimes went and prayed beside him, and I saw in him a fervor in prayer such as I have never seen the like of." (*Early Dominicans*, p. 76) *The Dominican Tradition* (McGonigle and Zagano) treats in *The Nine Ways of Prayer of St. Dominic* contemplation as practiced by St. Dominic: "Enraptured, the holy father then appeared to have entered into the Holy of Holies and the Third Heaven." (7<sup>th</sup> way) "Our father quickly withdrew to some solitary place, to his cell or elsewhere, and recollected himself in the presence of God. He would sit quietly, and after the sign of the cross, begin to read from a book opened before him...This holy custom of our father seems, as it were, to resemble the prophetic mountain of the Lord inasmuch as he quickly passed upwards from reading to prayer, from prayer to meditation, and from meditation to contemplation." (8<sup>th</sup> way) This is *Lectio Divina*, a method of arriving at contemplation, as we have previously discussed. (p. 2), and available to all.



**St. Thomas Aquinas**, Mystic and Theologian, had much to say on contemplation. *Contemplari et contemplata aliis tradere*. The active life must flow from the contemplative life. We are 'contemplative preachers'. "In the

end for Thomas (and, he would argue, for everyone) God is not so much an object to be thought or even thought about, much less discussed endlessly, as a Presence to be sought. The art of such seeking is contemplative action, and its end is mystical union, both in this life and hereafter.” (*Mysticism and Prophecy* by Richard Woods OP, p. 76) “When we speak of Thomas as a mystic we do not mean that he had frequent ecstasies or visions or that he was a little introverted or overly concerned about his own experiences. Yet Thomas was a mystic. He knew about the ‘hidden Godhead,’ *Adore te devote, latens deitas* (Devoutly I adore Thee, hidden Deity). He knew the hidden God. He spoke of the God who pervades and determines everything in silence. He spoke of a God beyond everything holy theology could say about Him. He spoke of the God he loved as inconceivable. And he knew about these things not only from theology but from the experience of his heart. He knew and experienced so much that in the end he substituted silence for theological words. He no longer wrote and considered all that he had written to be ‘straw’. (*Thomas Aquinas: Friar, Theologian, and Mystic*. By Karl Rahner SJ)

‘**Rhineland Mysticism**’ in the Fourteenth Century is also known as ‘Dominican Mysticism’ because of the influence of Meister Eckhart, Johannes Tauler and Henry Suso, all Dominicans.

**Meister Eckhart** (Eckhart von Hochheim OP +1327) was a leading preacher and theologian who influenced many and is experiencing a resurgence today. “In his explanation of the precise nature of the union between God and the soul, Eckhart states that the mystical experience flows from grace as a supernatural principle and involves immediately an intellectual or contemplative activity on the part of man, though not excluding the activity of the will under the imperation of charity. Thus, through vision and love, the soul that attains the heights of mystical union with God is, as it were, identified with the divine essence; it experiences complete beatitude in and through God.

“This does not mean as Eckhart explained in his response to the judges at Cologne, that we are transformed and changed into God, but just as numerous hosts on various altars are transformed into the one and the same body of Christ, so also. ‘by the grace of adoption we are united to the true Son of God



and made members of the one Head of the Church, who is Christ.” (op.cit, chapter seven, *Dionysian Spirituality and Devotio Moderna* by Jordan Aumann OP)

“What we plant in the soil of contemplation, we shall reap in the harvest of action...What a man takes in by contemplation, that he pours out in love.”  
(Meister Eckhart)

**Bl. Henry Suso OP** (+1366) was a student of Meister Eckhart and has been called a lyric poet and troubadour of mystic wisdom. His writings were very popular in the later Middle Ages. Thomas a Kempis was an admirer. Among his writings is *The Little Book of Divine Wisdom*:

“But essential reward consists in the contemplative union of the soul with the pure Divinity, for she can never rest till she be borne above all her powers and capacities, and introduced to the natural entity of the Persons, and to the vision of their real essence.

“And in the emanation of the splendor of their essence she will find full and perfect satisfaction and everlasting happiness.

“Just as a drop of water loses itself, drawing the taste and colour of the wine to and into itself, so it happens that those who are in full possession of blessedness lose all human desires in an inexpressible manner, and they ebb away from themselves and are immersed completely in the divine will.”

**Johannes Tauler OP** (+1361) was also greatly influenced by Meister Eckhart. He worked with the ‘Friends of God’, especially corresponding with Margaret Ebner OP. He is especially known for his sermons, emphasizing the moral and spiritual life:

“In the most intimate, hidden and innermost ground of the soul, God is always essentially, actively and substantially present. Ere the soul possesses everything by grace which God possesses by nature.”



Of course, one of the glories of the Dominican Order is the celebrated and loved mystic and Doctor of the Church, **St. Catherine of Siena**, a Lay Dominican. She exemplified the 'mixed life' praised by St. Thomas Aquinas. "The balance of contemplation and action in the last twelve years of Catherine's life was not merely a relationship of complementarity...It was precisely what she experienced in contemplation that impelled her into action. And all that she touched or was touched by in her activity was present in her prayer." (*The Dialogue, Introduction* by Susan Noffke OP, p.8) Catherine often spoke of *fire*, both the fire of God and of the soul:

"When the soul considers and sees the great excellence and strength of the fire of the Holy Spirit within herself, she is inebriated, and knowing her creator's love she completely surrenders herself...Then her love towards God has become perfect; since she has nothing within herself, she cannot hold to the rapid race of desire, but runs without any weight or chain.  
(Letter 189)

Only time and space limits us in discussing the many other Dominicans, especially modern spiritual writers (some additional will be considered in the **RESOURCES** at the end of the unit) who have developed thoughts on contemplation (Several are included as resources for this unit). "...all Christian ministry is somehow grounded in contemplation...The Dominican Laity, the Sisters of Apostolic Life and the Friars all share the contemplative grounding of preaching...at various times in their history they have experienced the need to bring the contemplative side of their life more clearly to light. Calls to do so are being heard among Dominicans in recent years. A General Chapter of the Friars, at Providence (RI) in the United States in 2001, made such a call." (*Living in an Ashram* by **Liam G. Walsh OP**, p. 5) (cf. *Recovering the Contemplative Dimension*, by fr. Paul Murray OP, Providence 2001)

Lastly, **fr. Timothy Radcliffe OP**, a former Master of the Order, has also written on this topic. “It is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God.’ (Heb. 10: 31) It can be hard to live with God. We find ourselves in the desert, awake at Gethsemane and watching at Golgotha. Sometimes the contemplative must live in the dark but, as the *Cloud of Unknowing* says, ‘Learn to be at home in the darkness.’ The temptation is to run away from God and to find refuge in small consolations, and tiny desires. We must leave that emptiness there for God to fill...Dare to abide in darkness and to be at home in the night without fear. As the English poet D H Lawrence wrote, ‘It is terrible to fall into the hands of the living God, but it is even more terrible to fall out of them.’” (“A city set on a hilltop cannot be hidden” *A Contemplative Life* 2001, p. 6)



## CARMELITES ON CONTEMPLATION

We must include some very important Carmelites who have written from their hearts and experience on contemplation. The writings of St. Teresa of Avila (+1582) and St. John of the Cross (+1591) are roadmaps to the goal of the spiritual life, union with God. Their works are still popular today, even available on Kindle.

**St. Teresa**, Doctor of the Church, described the journey of the soul through four stages to the highest union. Her definition, taken from *The Book of Her Life*, is used by the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*: “Contemplative prayer [*oracion mental*] in my opinion is nothing else than a close sharing between friends; it means taking time frequently to be alone with him who we know loves us.” (#2709) She knew that the contemplative act of loving God must be manifested in the active act of loving our neighbor:

“We cannot know whether we love God, although there may be strong reason for thinking so; but there can be no doubt about whether we love our neighbor or not. Be sure that, in proportion as you advance in fraternal charity, you are increasing your love of God, for His





Majesty bears so tender an affection for us that I cannot doubt He will repay our love for others by augmenting, and in a thousand different ways, that which we bear for Him.”

(*Fifth Mansion*, ch. 3)

**St. John of the Cross**, Doctor of the Church, is considered by many to be the



foremost mystical writer and one of Spain’s greatest poets. His work has influenced numerous well-known spiritual writers, theologians, philosophers, pacifists and artists. John Paul II wrote his theological dissertation on the mystical theology of John of the Cross; Allen Ginsberg mentioned him in his poem *Howl*.

Here are some examples of the poetry of St. John of the Cross. First is Stanza 4 with a commentary by John of the Cross from *The Living Flame of Love*. Then we conclude with Stanzas 5 and 8 from *The Dark Night*. These, meditated upon, will bring us deeper into union with our *Bridegroom*:

4. How gently and lovingly  
You wake in my heart,  
Where in secret you dwell  
alone;  
And in your sweet  
breathing,  
Filled with good and  
glory,  
How tenderly you swell  
my heart with love.

#### COMMENTARY

*How gentle and loving (that is, extremely loving and gentle) is your awakening, O Bridegroom Word, in the center and depth of my soul, which is its pure and intimate substance, in which secretly and silently, as its only lord, you dwell alone, not only as in your house, not only as in your bed, but also in my own heart, intimately and closely united to it.*

5. O guiding night!  
O night more lovely than the dawn!

O night that has united  
the lover with his beloved.

8. I abandoned and forgot myself,  
laying my face on my Beloved;  
all things ceased; I went out from myself,  
leaving my cares  
forgotten among the lilies.  
transforming the beloved in her Lover.

**“LET HIM SIT ALONE AND IN SILENCE.” (Lam. 3: 28)**

“One of the Fathers said: Just as it is impossible for a man to see his face in troubled water, so too the soul, unless it be cleansed of alien thoughts, cannot pray to God in contemplation.” (*The Wisdom of the Desert*, tr. By Thomas Merton, LXXIV) We, as Dominicans, are very familiar with vocal prayer and liturgical prayer. These are things, urged by the Spirit, we can do and do do. These represent active prayer but contemplative prayer is more passive. It is opening ourselves passively to receive God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. **We have the intention to consent to His presence and action.** We listen silently to the Word Who speaks without words. We being human are limited in what we can do; He being divine is without limits. In contemplation we leave it up to God to transform us in a wonderful union with Him.

Where this will take us, what it will cost us, is unknown but in faith we know that He loves us and wants us united to Himself. Contemplation is an act of faith just as Abraham packed up his family and set off for parts unknown. But it was the *Promised Land*, heaven on earth. “Whoever has a true desire to be in heaven, then in that moment he is in heaven spiritually...’Though our bodies are now on the earth nevertheless our living is in heaven.’ (Phil. 3: 20)...And, indeed, a soul is wherever it loves.” (*The Cloud of Unknowing*, ch. 60) “We are the People of God, already seated ‘with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus’ and ‘hidden with Christ in God’.” (CCC #2796)

“God created man in his image; in the divine image he created him.” (Gen 1: 27) We began: “God is love, and whoever remains in love remains in God

and God in him.” (1 John 4: 16) As Ken Wilber observed, it is not a matter of growing into union with God, but of recognizing the union which already exists. We begin this by going into our inner room, closing the door and praying to our Father in secret; He will answer us secretly. By this we mean that we will not hear words nor see visions but He will answer us, if we are persistent in our practice, by slowly transforming us into Him, by losing our will and doing His will. Evidence of this will become apparent as time goes by. Trust Him. “Not my will but yours be done.” (Luke 22: 42) Contemplation places our lives in His hands to do as He will, like clay in the hands of the potter, so that “Then it will be his will to send out a ray of spiritual light piercing this cloud of unknowing between you and him.” (*Cloud of Unknowing*, ch. 26)

“Contemplative prayer is the world in which God can do anything. To move into that realm is the greatest adventure. It is to be open to the Infinite and hence to infinite possibilities...All true prayer is based on the conviction of the presence of the Spirit in us and of his unfailing and continual inspiration...the Spirit prays in us and we consent. The traditional term for this kind of prayer is *contemplation*...The root of prayer is interior silence...’Prayer,’ according to Evagius, ‘is the laying aside of thoughts.’...Contemplative prayer is not so much the absence of thoughts as detachment from them. It is the opening of mind and heart, body and emotions – our whole being – to God, the ultimate Mystery, beyond words, thoughts and emotions – beyond, in other words, the psychological content of the present moment...The Spirit speaks to our conscience through scripture and through the events of daily life...The Spirit then begins to address our conscience from that deep source within us which is our true Self. This is contemplation properly so-called.” (*Open Mind, Open Heart* by Thomas Keating, ch. 2)

“Contemplative prayer is, in a way, simply the preference for the desert, for emptiness, for poverty. One has begun to know the meaning of contemplation when he intuitively and spontaneously seeks the dark and unknown path of aridity in preference to every other way...He accepts the love of God on faith...Only when we are able to ‘let go’ of everything within us, all desire to see, to know, to taste and to experience the presence of God, do we truly become



able to experience that presence with the overwhelming conviction and reality that revolutionize our entire life.” (*Contemplative Prayer* by Thomas Merton, ch.XV, p. 89)

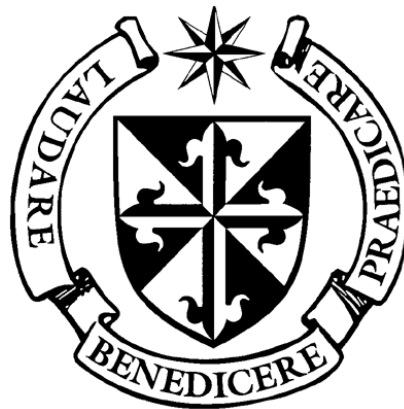
## DOMINICAN HOPE

It is the hope of the Dominican Order that a renewed interest in and practice of contemplation will begin. As we mentioned, the **2001 General Chapter** of the Friars in Providence, RI issued a renewed call to contemplation:

**202)** Contemplation, situated in time and place, in relationship to God and to others, has always marked our Dominican life. The challenges of the present time only increase our taste for it and our need to return to it. The new generation wishes to put it at the heart of our common life. In fact, only an enriched contemplative life can ensure authentic witness.

**206)** We Dominicans are experiencing the same hunger for God but many of us are largely unaware of the depths of the great Dominican contemplative tradition beginning with St. Dominic himself.

**207)** In our Dominican tradition contemplation is not an isolated activity or a special spiritual exercise. It is a dynamic attitude of openness to the creative and saving presence of God in the present moment. Like the leaven in the dough it permeates our study, preaching, silence and common life.





# *MY NATURE IS FIRE*

Prayer 12 (XXII) St. Catherine of Siena

In your nature,  
Eternal Godhead,  
I shall come to know my nature.  
And what is my nature, boundless love?  
It is fire,  
because you are nothing but a fire of love.  
And you have given humankind  
a share in this nature,  
for by the fire of love  
you created us.  
Today, eternal God,  
let our cloud be dissipated  
so that we may perfectly know and follow your Truth  
in truth,  
with a free and simple heart.

## CONCERNS AND FAQ

*Isn't contemplation just for the great saints and not for little ol' me?*

Absolutely not. It is for everyone. In *Lumen Gentium* the Church declared that we, clergy and lay, are all called by the Holy Spirit to aim for the heights of holiness.

*Isn't contemplation infused by the Holy Spirit?*

Yes, it is. But all prayer and good works are inspired by the Holy Spirit. "Ask and you shall receive." Be faithful to the practice of contemplation and the Spirit will lead you to unknown and glorious places. Have faith "for behold, the Kingdom of God is within you."

*Is contemplation normal for my spiritual life?*

Yes, so write all spiritual mentors from St. Teresa to Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange OP. "Contemplative prayer, rightly understood, is the normal development of the grace of Baptism and the regular practice of *lectio divina*. It is the opening of mind and heart – our whole being to God beyond thoughts, words and emotions. Moved by God's prevenient grace, we open our awareness to God whom we know by faith is within us...Contemplative prayer is a process of interior transformation, a relationship initiated by God and leading, if we consent, to divine union." (*The Christian Contemplative Tradition* by Thomas Keating OCSO)



*This seems complicated.*

Remember always the words of an early Dominican, "Prayer is such an easy job." Contemplation is a very simple, quiet prayer between two friends. The Cure of Ars asked an old farmer what he was doing sitting in church. He replied that he was looking at the good Lord Who was looking at him. The same question was asked of Mother Teresa on how she prayed. She said that she listened to God and, asked what He said, she said that He listened to her.

*How often should I do this?*

Begin, if you will, slowly, by building up to twenty minutes. Then add another session. Two periods of twenty to thirty minutes is a very possible goal. Remember God is working in you, so give Him time. You will be surprised at the great work He can accomplish.

*I am easily filled with distracting thoughts.*

Don't fight them; dismiss them by returning to a mantra, word or thought. We empty our minds of these thoughts so God can fill them with Himself.

*Sometimes I fall asleep.*

It could mean that you are not getting enough sleep but worry not; the Spirit can work whether you are conscious or unconscious.

*I feel dryness and lack of affective emotions.*

Now you are advancing, if you do not falter. We are not doing this to get something out of it but to recognize God's presence and accept His actions in and on our lives. We consent to God's work.

*What style of contemplation should I follow?*

This is a good question because, since there are different formats, you might



try them to find your fit. Fr, Donald Goergen OP speaks of: Lectio Divina; Centering Prayer (Thomas Keating); Christian Meditation (John Main); Practice of Presence of God (Br. Lawrence); Jesus Prayer (several versions); the Rosary. Don't be confused or overwhelmed; simply try one.

*What's the most important thing about contemplation?*

In the words of Fr. Goergen – “disciplined perseverance”. If you are faithful to it you will soon discern in your life the maturing of the fruits of the *Spirit*: love, joy, peace patience, gentleness and kindness.” (*Finding Grace at the Center*, p. 108)



So **never judge** your prayer, never think you have failed, never give up!

***DISCIPLINED PERSEVERENCE!***

# RESOURCES

There are many resources available to the student of contemplation. Many have been mentioned in this unit. As you progress in the land of 'Contemplation', you will read and learn from these and many others. It is a wonderful journey, Pilgrim!

Since this unit is so important, take three months to delve into contemplation, making it a life-project. The rewards are infinite and eternal. Be mindful that the most important thing is not your study (which is important) but the practice of contemplation. Incorporate into your daily life time for contemplation. After thirty days you will have established the habit of contemplation and will not ask "if" but "when". Study the following two items:

***Recovering Our Dominican Contemplative Tradition*** by Richard Woods OP. Fr. Woods has written many books on a variety of topics including several on Meister Eckhart and teaches at the Dominican University. [richardwoodsop.net/](http://richardwoodsop.net/)  
<http://tinyurl.com/3zpn4sp>

***Recovering the Contemplative Dimension*** by Paul Murray OP This was presented to the General Chapter in 2001. Fr. Murray has written much on contemplation, available on the internet. He addressed the House of Lords, a first, on the topic of contemplation in 2011. He also wrote a delightful book on Mother Teresa, his friend. <http://tinyurl.com/3sg4vhr>

Also for those Chapters who are able, Fr. Goergen has a CD series: *The Christian Contemplative Tradition* <http://tinyurl.com/cm7ovno>

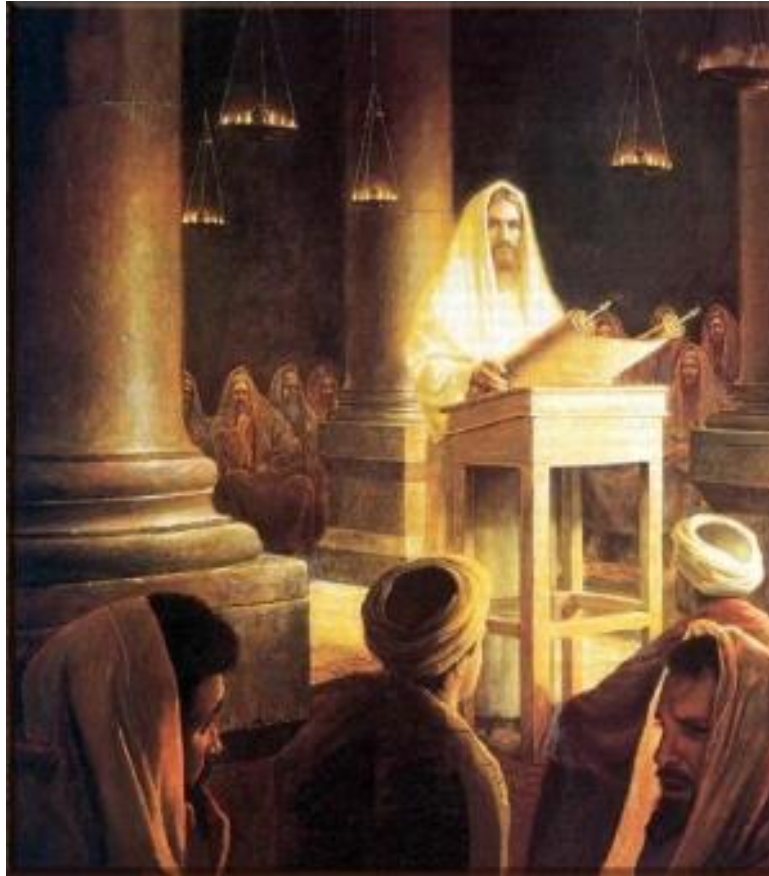
## YOUTUBE

Numerous short videos are available on YouTube by searching the different types of contemplation alluded to on page 15, e.g. <http://tinyurl.com/c8bn85>

*CONTEMPLARI ET CONTEMPLATA ALIIS TRADERE*



# CENTRAL PROVINCE



## CANDIDACY II

### UNIT 4: REVELATION

**“HE STOOD UP TO READ AND WAS HANDED A SCROLL  
OF THE PROPHET ISAIAH...TODAY THIS SCRIPTURAL  
PASSAGE IS FULFILLED IN YOUR HEARING.”  
(Luke 4: 16-17)**

The purpose of this unit is to read and study one of the most important documents from Vatican II, *Dei Verbum*, *Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation*. It was promulgated by Pope Paul VI on Nov. 18, 1965, after approval by the Bishops, 2,344 to 6. Most Catholics, when they think of Vatican II, think of its effects on the liturgy. On the other hand, most scholars believe that *Lumen Gentium* and *Dei Verbum* are the most important documents. The one because it defines the very Church Christ established and the other because it defines the bases from which our Faith springs: Scripture and Tradition. This is a beautiful document which will expand and enrich our understanding of this foundational idea for our vocation of Preaching.



Revelation is simply God, not content with creation itself, desiring to reveal, to make Himself known to humankind in a number of ways. “The essence of the Christian message, for salvation history, is the proclamation and witness given to definite interventions of God in human history through which he has accomplished his saving design in man’s favor.” *The New World Dictionary Concordance to the New American Bible*, p. 594. God loves us so much that He communicates Himself to us so that we might love Him.

*Dei Verbum* is organized as follows:

Prologue (1)

1. Divine Revelation Itself (2-6)
2. The Transmission of Divine Revelation (7-10)
3. Sacred Scripture: Its Divine Inspiration and Its Interpretation (11-13)

4. The Old Testament (14-16)
5. The New Testament (17-20)
6. Sacred Scripture in the Life of the Church (21-26)

## NATURAL REVELATION

The sacred synod teaches that God does communicate Himself to the light of human reason. “Ever since the creation of the world, his invisible attributes of eternal power and divinity have been able to be understood and perceived in



what he has made.” (Rom. 1: 20) “...those things, which in themselves are not beyond the grasp of human reason, can, in the present condition of the human race, be known by all with ease, with firm certainty, and without the contamination of error.” (Vatican Council I, *Denz. 1785 and 1786*) It is amazing how much the world’s religions and philosophies have gotten right. Think of the Greeks, especially Socrates, Plato and Aristotle (cf. St. Thomas Aquinas) and Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam, etc.

“The Catholic Church rejects nothing of what is true and holy in these religions. She has a high regard for the manner of life and conduct, the precepts and doctrines which, although differing in many ways from her own teaching, nevertheless often reflect a ray of that truth which enlightens all men.” (*Nostra Aetate*, #2)

“The desire for God is written in the human heart, because man is created by God and for God; and God never ceases to draw man to himself. Only in God will he find the truth and happiness he never stops searching for.” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #27)



## REVELATION

Through reading and studying *Dei Verbum* our appreciation and interest in the manifestation of God's love will increase. The document encapsulates itself in the very first chapter, #2:

"2. In His goodness and wisdom God chose to reveal Himself and to make known to us the hidden purpose of His will (see Eph. 1:9) by which through Christ, the Word made flesh, man might in the Holy Spirit have access to the Father and come to share in the divine nature (see Eph. 2:18; 2 Peter 1:4). Through this revelation, therefore, the invisible God (see Col. 1:15, 1 Tim. 1:17) out of the abundance of His love speaks to men as friends (see Ex. 33:11; John 15:14-15) and lives among them (see Bar. 3:38), so that He may invite and take them into fellowship with Himself. This plan of revelation is realized by deeds and words having in inner unity: the deeds wrought by God in the history of salvation manifest and confirm the teaching and realities signified by the words, while the words proclaim the deeds and clarify the mystery contained in them. By this revelation then, the deepest truth about God and the salvation of man shines out for our sake in Christ, who is both the mediator and the fullness of all revelation."

The transmission of Divine Revelation is composed of sacred Scripture and sacred Tradition. "Sacred Tradition and sacred Scripture make up a single sacred deposit of the Word of God, which is entrusted to the Church." (*D.V.*, #10) It gives us the certainty of Faith, a surer knowledge and deeper relationship with God, one of love. As Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange OP writes in *The Three Conversions in the Spiritual Life*, pp. 22-23:

"It would not have been a love of friendship, but rather a sentiment compounded of admiration, respect and gratitude, yet lacking that happy and simple familiarity which rejoices the hearts of the children of God. We should have been God's servants, but not His children...Revelation tells us that our last end is essentially supernatural, and that it consists *in seeing God immediately, face to face, as He is: sicuti est.*"



## SACRED SCRIPTURE

Imagine, we have writings that have God as their author speaking through men in human fashion. How can we not read, devour these writings? How can we not fashion our lives after them?

Here are a few texts on Scripture:

- Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Write all the words I have spoken to you in a book. (Jer. 30: 22)
- All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for refutation, for correction and for training in righteousness. (2 Tim. 3: 16)
- Then beginning with Moses and all the prophets, He interpreted to them what referred to Him in all the scriptures. (Luke 24: 27)
- He said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses and in the prophets and psalms must be fulfilled.” Then He opened their minds to understand the scriptures. (Luke 24: 44-45)

You can see the inter-relationship of the Old with the New Testaments. Jesus, of course, only read the Old Testament which prepared for His coming. The books of the Old Testament, “even though they contain matters imperfect and provisional, nevertheless show us authentic divine teaching.” (D.V. #15)

“So may it come that, by the reading and study of the sacred books ‘the Word of God may speed on and triumph’ (2 Th. 3: 1) and the treasure of Revelation entrusted to the Church may more and more fill the hearts of men.” (*ibid.* #26)

**“IGNORANCE OF THE SCRIPTURES IS IGNORANCE OF CHRIST”-**

**(St. Jerome)**

## SACRED TRADITION

“The Tradition that comes from the Apostles makes progress in the Church with the help of the Holy Spirit. (*ibid.* #8) We are not ‘*sola scriptura*’ and “Thus it comes about that the Church does not draw her certainty about all revealed truths from the holy Scriptures alone. Hence, both Scripture and Tradition must be accepted and honored with equal feelings of devotion and reverence.” (*ibid.* #9 “For Christian Revelation is not a body of doctrine that is timeless; it is rather the solemn witness given to the salvific impact of the life, death and resurrection of a historic figure, Jesus of Nazareth...[the Church] received the [Gospel] tradition from Jesus, and living it out in her own life, she handed it on faithfully.” (*Dictionary-Concordance, op. cit., pp. 704-5*)

Tradition makes Revelation alive, even today, e.g. the doctrine of the Assumption comes through Tradition. God speaks to each period of history through the interpretation of the Church and its teachers and preachers. “But the task of giving an authentic interpretation of the Word of God, whether in its written form or in the form of Tradition, has been entrusted to the living teaching office of the Church alone...Yet this Magisterium is not superior to the Word of God.” (*D.V., #10*)

Here are a few texts on Tradition:

- I praise you because you remember me in everything and hold fast to the traditions, just as I handed them on to you. (1 Cor. 11: 2)
- Therefore, brothers, stand firm and hold fast to the traditions that you were taught, either by an oral statement or by a letter of ours. (2 Thes. 2: 15)
- We instruct you, brothers, in the name of (our) Lord Jesus Christ, to shun any brother who conducts himself in a disorderly way and not according to the tradition they received from us. (2 Thes 3: 6)

“Tradition” derives itself from the Latin *tradere* meaning to pass on. Hence:

**CONTEMPLARI ET CONTEMPLATA ALIIS TRADERE**

## ***DIVINO AFFLANTE SPIRITU***

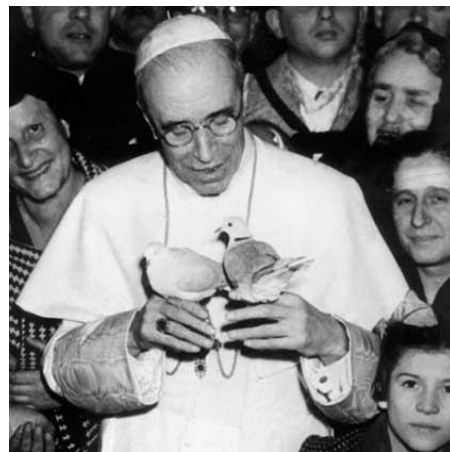
As a matter of historical note it should be remembered that *Dei Verbum* was preceded by *Divino Afflante Spiritu*, an encyclical promulgated on Sept. 30, 1943 by Pope Pius XII. This revolutionized officially and advanced Catholic biblical studies from the doldrums. It was a breath of fresh air for Catholic biblical exegesis.

*“Divino Afflante Spiritu”* provided the stimulus for a development of genuine biblical scholarship within Catholicism, especially in the United States, which witnessed a changing of the guard during the 1950’s as younger scholars were trained not only at Catholic institutions such as The Catholic University of America and the Pontifical Biblical Institute, but also at secular institutions such as Johns Hopkins, under the direction of William Foxwell Albright.” (*Biblical Scholarship 50 years after Divino Afflante Spiritu, America, 9/18/93, John R. Donahue SJ*)

Modern methods of scholarship were encouraged by Pope Pius XII:

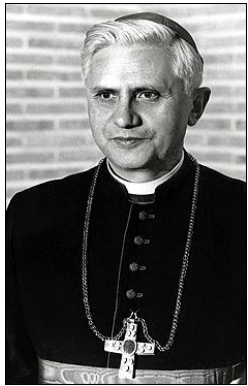
“For all human knowledge, even the nonsacred, has indeed its own proper dignity and excellence, being a finite participation of the infinite knowledge of God, but it acquires a new and higher dignity and, as it were, a consecration, when it is employed to cast a brighter light upon the things of God.” (*D.A.S., #41*)

“...ardently desiring for all sons of the Church, and especially for the professors in biblical science, for the young clergy and for preachers, that, continually meditating on the divine word, they may taste and see how good and sweet is the spirit of the Lord.” (*ibid., #62*)



## ***THE INTERPRETATION OF THE BIBLE IN THE CHURCH***

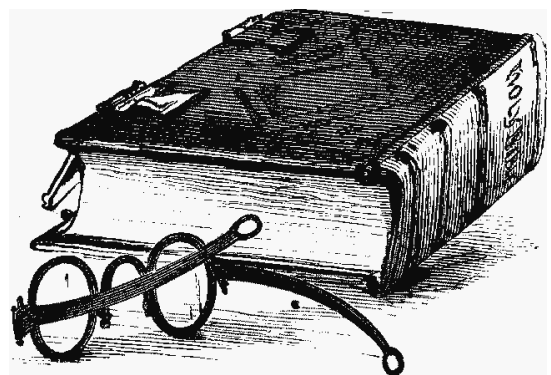
The above named document was published by the Pontifical Biblical Commission in 1993 and is well-worth studying and including in any Dominican's library. As then Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger wrote in the preface:



“The study of the Bible is, as it were, the soul of theology, as the Second Vatican Council says, borrowing a phrase from Pope Leo XIII [author of the encyclical *Providentissimus Deus*, Nov. 18, 1893] (*D.V.*, #24). This study is never finished; each age must in its own way newly seek to understand the sacred books...I believe that this document is very helpful for the important questions about the right way of understanding Holy Scripture...”

“Thus all the members of the Church have a role in the interpretation of Scripture...The Spirit is, assuredly, also given to ‘individual Christians,’ so that their hearts can ‘burn within them’ (see Lk 22: 25) as they pray and prayerfully study the Scripture within the context of their own personal lives...the believer always reads and interprets Scripture within the faith of the Church and then brings back to the community the fruit of that reading for the enrichment of the common faith.” (*The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church*, p. 29)

As we mentioned this is an excellent supplemental document for the student of the Bible, as all Dominicans are encouraged to be. It treats the Historical- Critical Method, new methods of Literary Analysis, Contextual Approaches, Hermeneutical Questions, characteristics of Catholic Interpretation, and much more in 42 concise pages. Read it; you will like and learn much.





## DOMINICANS AND REVELATION

From the beginning of the Order Dominicans have faithfully loved sacred Scripture and sacred Tradition. They have taken important roles in Church Councils, including important contributions in Vatican II.

St. Dominic was devoted to Scripture and could quote from it verbatim. In the canonization process of our founder (1233), John of Spain testified:

“In letters and in his spoken words he encouraged the brethren to apply themselves to the study of the New and Old Testaments more than to any other reading. He always carried around with him the gospel of Matthew and the letters of Paul, and he read them so often that he knew them by heart.” (*Early Dominicans*, p. 75)

Humbert of Romans in writing on Preaching, *Things that Make for Good Performance*, advises “the preacher should be able to confirm everything he says from scripture.” (*ibid.* p. 251) *The Primitive Constitutions of the Order of Friars Preachers* (1228) orders the following:

“We further ordain that each province is obliged to provide brethren destined for study with at least three books of theology. Those so assigned shall mainly study and concentrate on Church History, the Sentences, the Sacred Text, and glosses.” (XXVIII)

St. Thomas Aquinas wrote much on Revelation, including the division between what can be known by the light of human reason and what requires Divine Revelation:



“In those things that we profess about God there are two types of truths. For there are some truths about God that exceed every capacity of human reason, such as that God is three and one. But there are other truths that natural reason is also capable of arriving at, such as that God exists, that there is one God, and others of this sort.” (*Summa Contra Gentiles*, Chapter 3)

In a General Audience at the Vatican (2/3/2010) Pope Benedict XVI spoke at length on St. Dominic and the Dominicans. He emphasized their devotion to Scripture:

“...with a courageous gesture, Dominic wanted his followers to acquire a sound theological training and did not hesitate to send them to the universities of the time, even though a fair number of clerics viewed these cultural institutions with diffidence. The Constitutions of the Order of Preachers give great importance to study as a preparation for the apostolate. Dominic wanted his Friars to devote themselves to it without reserve, with diligence and with piety; a study based on the soul of all theological knowledge, that is, on Sacred Scripture, and respectful of the questions asked by reason. The development of culture requires those who carry out the ministry of the Word at various levels to be well trained. I therefore urge all those, pastors and lay people alike, to cultivate this ‘cultural dimension’ of faith, so that the beauty of the Christian truth may be better understood and faith may be truly nourished, reinforced and also defended.”

## **L'ECOLE BIBLIQUE**



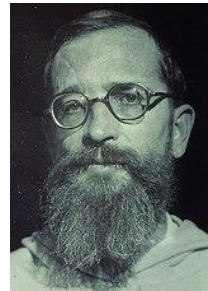
One of the glories of the Dominican Order is l'Ecole Biblique, specializing in archeology and Biblical exegesis in Jerusalem. Pere Marie-Joseph Lagrange OP (1855-1938) (uncle of Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange OP) founded the school in 1890. He was involved in the struggle (particularly with the Jesuits) within the Church for responsible academic freedom (cf. St. Thomas Aquinas in his time) and utilized the latest historical-critical methods. L'Ecole



La Bible  
de Jérusalem



publishes the *Revue Biblique* comprised of diverse Biblical studies. It also published *La Bible de Jerusalem* in 1956; the English translation, the *Jerusalem Bible*, came in 1966. To mention a couple of other well-known scholars there is the French Dominican, Roland de Vaux OP (1903-1971), who was a director of l'Ecole Biblique and led the Catholic team



that originally worked on the *Dead Sea Scrolls*.



He also worked with his team to excavate several caves at Qumran. Another very accomplished Dominican Biblical scholar is Jerome Murphy-O'Connor OP (born 1935-Cork, Ireland) who is a leading authority on St. Paul and Professor of New Testament at l'Ecole Biblique. He has written numerous books, appearing often on television and spoken around the world, including the United States.



Pere Lagrange and Dominican Friars at l'Ecole Biblique

## LAY DOMINICANS AND REVELATION

Because each Lay Dominican has promised to live according to the Lay Dominican Rule, it is incumbent upon each of us to study and follow Revelation, both Scripture and Tradition. This is a necessary foundation for our 'Preaching Vocation'. Our Rule states:

10. To advance in their proper vocation, which inseparably joins the apostolic and the contemplative, Lay Dominicans draw their strength from these principle sources:
  - a. Listening to the Word of God and reading Sacred Scripture, especially the New Testament
  - f. assiduous study of revealed truth
13. The principle sources for perfecting Dominican formation are:
  - a. the Word of God and theological reflection
  - d. more recent documents of the Church and the Order

## CONCLUSION

As we stated at the very beginning of this unit, our task is to read and study *Dei Verbum*. Many questions and answers will arise. What is Revelation? Where is it found? How does 'inspiration' work? What is Tradition? How are Scripture and Tradition related? What is the role of the Church? After reading *Dei Verbum* how would you explain Revelation to a Catholic, to a Non-Catholic?

Internet:

<http://www.ewtn.com/library/councils/v2revel.htm>

Now take three months to study *Dei Verbum* in depth. It's very Dominican!



# CENTRAL PROVINCE



**CANDIDACY II**

**UNIT 5:**

**GOSPEL OF ST. MATTHEW**

**“JESUS SAW A MAN NAMED MATTHEW...HE SAID TO HIM, ‘FOLLOW ME.’ AND HE GOT UP AND FOLLOWED HIM.” (MATT. 9: 9)**

The purpose of Candidacy II is more than *study*; it is *transformation* as a result of *study*. We take three months for each unit to afford us time to grow into a greater union with God. The painting on our titlepage is *The Calling of St. Matthew* by Caravaggio (1599) from the Contarelli Chapel in Rome. Jesus, accompanied by St. Peter, points to St. Matthew and says, “Follow me.” Matthew points to himself, as if to say, “Who, me?” Jesus, His feet already turning to leave, adds nothing after His invitation. Matthew immediately rises and commits himself to follow this Jesus. This is a real act of faith because Matthew, like Abraham, knows not where this will take him or what will be involved. He has taken the first step to transform his life from one of money and comfort to an unknown future of what – God only knows.

**ST. DOMINIC**

Although we do not follow Jesus physically, we do have the Gospel of Matthew, St. Dominic’s favorite Gospel. This has been chosen for this unit because St. Dominic carried it with him, read it over and over, even memorizing it. He carried this along with St. Paul’s Epistles and John Cassian’s *Conferences*. Sr. Diana Culbertson OP wrote on this for *St. Dominic’s Day 2010*:

“Matthew’s Gospel was St. Dominic’s favorite. He took it with him everywhere and how many times must he have prayed over that last chapter. When shortly after the foundation of the Order, he decided to disperse the brethren over all of Europe, he was cautioned not to take



such a risk. He made the announcement at a chapter meeting with the whole order present – all 16 of them. According to the record, when everyone protested, he replied, ‘I know what I am doing.’ This was not self-confidence. This was trust— trust in the promise of Jesus: ‘I am with you always...’ And so they left southern France, two by two. And not willingly.”

Thus, we can see that St. Dominic applied and followed the Gospel of Matthew in his life. It transformed him. A man or a woman is not born a saint but becomes one.

## PRAYER

“...the apostles handed on to their hearers what he had said and done, but with that fuller understanding which they, instructed by the glorious events of Christ and enlightened by the Spirit of truth, now enjoyed.” (Dei Verbum, #19) In our quest to understand the Scriptures we should seek the guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit before we read the Gospel of Matthew. A suggested traditional prayer is:



Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Thy faithful and enkindle in them the fire of Thy love.

V. Send forth Thy Spirit and they shall be created.

R. And Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.

Let us pray. O God, Who didst instruct the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit, grant us in the same Spirit to be truly wise, and ever to rejoice in His consolation. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

**“WHEN I FOUND YOUR WORDS, I DEVoured THEM; THEY BECAME MY JOY AND THE HAPPINESS OF MY HEART.” (JER. 15: 16)**

To get up and follow someone, to leave one’s life behind, as one knows and enjoys it, to turn our future over to another is a supreme act of faith, or even “foolishness to Gentiles” (1 Cor. 1: 23). But we are assured that “the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom.” (1 Cor. 1: 25) There are people, not just canonized saints, who have read the Gospels and changed their lives. It can be done; witness Bobby Jindal: Bobby Jindal, Governor of Louisiana, grew up a devout Hindu. He completely reversed his life, leaving his religion, his culture and straining his family relationship after he began to read the Gospels:

“I began reading the Bible to disprove the Christian faith I was learning both to admire and despise. I cannot begin to describe my feelings when I first read the New Testament texts. I saw myself in many of the parables and felt as if the Bible had been written especially for me.” (*America Magazine*, 7/31/93)

In the spirit of *Nostra Aetate* (#1) we can reference Bobby Jindal’s former religion of Hinduism. A *Guru* is a spiritual teacher who has attained the spirituality he teaches. ‘He practices what he preaches.’ Hinduism teaches that we need a *Guru* to guide us on the path of perfection and union with God. In *Guru: The Spiritual Teacher* Dr. C. S. Shah writes:

“If we are fortunate enough to find such a Teacher, then a lofty kind of love can begin to bosom in our heart. Everything that happens between the Guru and the disciple happens through love and compassion. It is said in Indian religious lore, ‘If the disciple is ready, the Guru will appear; he will come to us.’ Intense yearning and effort to realize God is sure to help the aspirant find his or her Guru. Let us prepare ourselves to receive such a noble soul.”

Of course, we have found our *Divine Guru*, Jesus Christ. When you follow Jesus Christ, you know you are following God. He has appeared; are we ready?



## LECTIO DIVINA

The important thing about reading the Bible is, simply, *to read it*. Begin by reading a small portion each day and after thirty days it will have become a habit. Then you will not ask, “Will I read it today but when?” Read something, a page, a paragraph, a sentence. You will honestly be surprised over time how much you will have read.

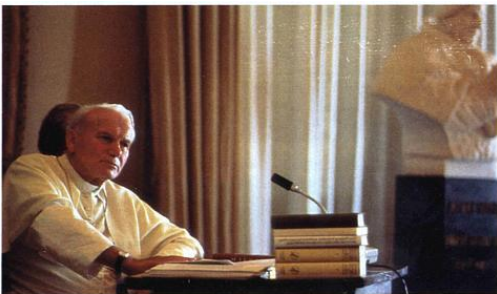
One of the ancient methods of reading the Bible is *Lectio Divina*. This practice goes back many centuries in the Church. It was cited in Unit 3: *Prayer, Initiate Formation, “Accepting the Embrace of God: The Ancient Art of Lectio Divina”* by Fr. Luke Dysinger OSB (<http://www.valyermo.com/ld-art.html>) The format is composed of four parts:

1. Lectio – Reading
2. Meditatio – Meditation
3. Oratio – Prayer
4. Contemplatio – Contemplation



*Lectio Divina* has been recommended by our last two Popes. Pope John Paul II counsels:

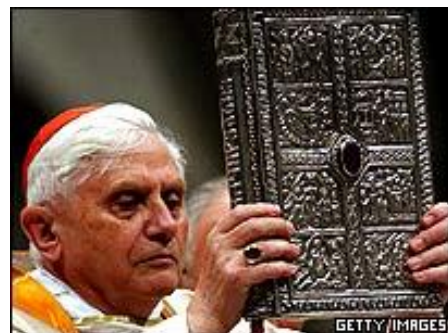
“It is especially necessary that the listening to the Word becomes an essential meeting, following the ancient and present-day tradition of Lectio Divina, enabling us to discover in the biblical text the living word that challenges us, directs us, that gives shape to our existence” (*Novo Millennio* # 39).



Source: Weltbild, 24, 18 November 1988, p. 27.

On Sept. 16, 2005 Pope Benedict XVI spoke the following words to 400 participants in the international congress on “*Sacred Scripture in the Life of the Church*” at Castel Gandolfo:

“In this context, I would like in particular to recall and recommend the ancient tradition of ‘Lectio divina’:



‘the diligent reading of Sacred Scripture accompanied by prayer brings about that intimate dialogue in which the person reading hears God who is speaking, and in praying, responds to him with trusting openness of heart’ ( *Dei Verbum*, #25). If it is effectively promoted, this practice will bring to the Church -- I am convinced of it -- a new spiritual springtime.”

## TO KNOW TRULY

You can see that there is much more to reading the Bible than simply reading it as one would a novel. We are trying to do more than reading words on a page as we



are trying to imprint the *Word* on our hearts. Action must be the end result and our actions must be transformed from what they have been. Truly to know the Gospel of Matthew, our task with this unit, will transform us and bring us into closer union with Jesus Christ.

“For one *knows truly* when one *understands* what one knows, when one *feels* what one has understood, and when one has *put into practice* what one has understood and felt.” (*Meditations on the Tarot*, p.343 [The two volume edition of this book appears on Pope John Paul II’s desk in the picture above, a gift of Cardinal Hans Urs von Balthasar])

As an example of this: “*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*” (Matt. 5: 3) After giving this verse much study and thinking, how do you *understand* it? Now *feel* what you understand. This joins the heart to the mind and you move to a higher integrated plane with this verse. Now after closing the book how will you put this into *practice*? Each of us will answer differently but our being “poor in spirit” will affect our lives as our actions *must* be different. We will be different; we will be transformed and closer to Jesus, the author of these words. We will be challenged out of our comfortable existence into what? We do not know but God knows and wants us to be there – with Him.

## OUTLINE

Although the purpose of Unit 5 is not ‘Scripture Study’, but rather an affective treatment resulting in transformation, a few words on the outline of St. Matthew’s Gospel are in order for greater understanding. The following is adapted from *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary, The Gospel According to Matthew*, by Benedict T. Viviano OP, p. 633:

- 1-4 a Narrative: Birth and Beginnings
- 5-7 b Sermon: Blessings, Entering the Kingdom
- 8-9 c Narrative: Authority and Invitation
- 10 d Sermon: Mission Discourse
- 11-12 e Narrative: Rejection by this Generation
- 13 f Sermon: Parables of the Kingdom
- 14-17 e<sup>1</sup> Narrative: Acknowledgement by Disciples
- 18 d<sup>1</sup> Sermon: Community Discourse
- 19-22 c<sup>1</sup> Narrative: Authority and Invitation
- 23-25 b<sup>1</sup> Sermon: Woes, Coming of the Kingdom
- 26-28 a<sup>1</sup> Narrative: Death and Rebirth

This outline is provided to the author by C. H. Lohr (*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, 23, 1961, p. 427). “It is based on the symmetry of ancient compositions and employs the concepts of *inclusion* or bracketing, chiasmus or criss-crossing of literary elements, and ring composition technique.” (*NJBC*, p. 632) It illustrates the centrality of the theme of the ‘Kingdom’ in Jesus’ message. His first public words were: “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (Matt. 4: 17)

## PARABLES

The use of parables by Jesus was an essential means He employed to get His message across to His audience. Sometimes they were employed so that only the few would understand and, then, only with explanation.

“Jesus used realistic images from daily life that caught his hearers’ attention by their vividness and narrative color. Yet his parables have a surprising twist; the realism is shattered and the hearers know that something more is at stake than a homey illustration to drive home a point. The parables raise questions, unsettle the complacent, and challenge the hearers to reflection and inquiry.” (NJBC, p. 1366)



The parable is contained within the text and the meaning can be lost as we continue to read. A good technique to counteract this is to read a number of parables together on a particular theme. Thus the message is reinforced. Since Jesus came to preach the ‘Kingdom’, let us examine some parables on this topic together. Draw your own conclusions after meditating upon some of these parables from Matthew’s Gospel regarding the ‘Kingdom’:

- The Sower 13: 1-9; 36-43
- The Weeds among the Wheat 13: 24-30
- The Mustard Seed 13: 31-32
- The Yeast 13:33
- The Buried Treasure 13: 44
- The Fine Pearl 13: 45-46
- The Thrown Net 13: 47-48
- The Unforgiving Servant 18: 23-35
- The Little Children 19: 13-15
- The Laborers in the Vineyard 20: 1-16
- The Two Sons 21: 28-30
- The Wedding Banquet 22: 2-14
- The Ten Bridesmaids 25: 1-13
- The Talents 25: 14-30
- The Judgement of the Nations 25: 31-46



**“WHERE DID THIS MAN GET ALL THIS?’ AND THEY TOOK OFFENSE AT HIM.”  
(MATT. 13: 56-57)**

When we read the Gospel, we must not make the mistake many churches do: proclaiming only half the Gospel – the attractive half. We know and love the fact that Jesus rose from the dead; that He offered peace, joy and the promise of heaven to those who believe. But there is another side to the Gospel – one we often gloss over. These are the ‘Hard Sayings’ of Jesus which we must understand and take to heart. Sometimes we ‘spin’ these sayings away. These are difficult



but each of us must incorporate them meaningfully into our lives.

We are all familiar with the incident in John’s Gospel when Jesus said: “...unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you.” (Jo. 6: 53) “Then many of his disciples who were listening said, ‘This saying is hard; who can accept it?’” (Jo. 6:60) “As a result of this, many (of) his disciples returned to their former way of life and no longer accompanied him.” (Jo. 6: 66) Remember, these are His disciples John is writing about. We say, “But we do believe, so you are not writing about us.” True on this incident but what about other ‘hard sayings’? Do we no longer accompany Him?

St. Augustine commented on this passage from John in *Tractate 27, New Advent*:

“2. Many therefore, not of His enemies, but of His disciples, when they had heard this, said, ‘This is a hard saying; who can hear it?’ If His disciples accounted this saying hard, what must His enemies have thought? And yet so it behooved that to be said which should not be understood by all. The secret of God ought to make men eagerly attentive, not hostile. But these men quickly departed from Him, while the Lord said such things: they did not believe Him to be saying something great, and covering some grace by these words; they understood just according to their wishes, and in the manner of men,

that Jesus was able, or was determined upon this, namely, to distribute the flesh with which the Word was clothed, piecemeal, as it were, to those that believe in Him. *'This,' say they, 'is a hard saying; who can hear it?'*"

## 'HARD SAYINGS'

Let us examine a few of these 'Hard Sayings' of Jesus:

- But I say to you whoever is angry with his brother will be liable to judgement. (5:22)
- Therefore, if you bring your gift to the altar, and there recall that *your brother has anything against you*, (italics mine) leave your gift at the altar, go first and be reconciled with your brother, and then offer your gift. (5:23-24)
- Everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart. (5: 28)
- If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. (5: 29)
- When someone strikes you on (your) right cheek, turn the other to him as well. (5:39)
- So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect. (5: 48)
- Follow me and let the dead bury their dead. (8:22)
- Do not think that I have come to bring peace upon the earth. I have come to bring not peace but the sword. (10: 34)
- Jesus answered, " I say to you seven times seventy-seven times." (18; 22) [re: forgiving brother]
- Then in anger his master handed him over to the torturers until he should pay back the whole debt. So will my heavenly Father do to you, unless each of you forgives his brother from his heart. (18: 34-35)



- Jesus said to him, “If you wish to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to (the) poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.” (19:21)
- Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Amen, I say to you, it will be hard for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven. Amen, I say to you it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.” (19: 23-24)
- Then Jesus said to him, “Put your sword back into its sheath, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword.” (26: 52)
- And about three o’clock Jesus cried out with a loud voice, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani? Which means, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (27: 46)

As you can see there are many ‘Hard Sayings’ of Jesus for us to wrap our minds around. How do we interpret them in our lives? We, as His disciples must accept this half of the Gospel along with the half we like. Of course the ‘Beatitudes’ in the fifth chapter are also ‘Hard Sayings’ that are at the heart of our Christian Faith. This is why we devoted Unit 1 of Candidacy II to them. If we can integrate the attractive with the difficult, we will have the complete Christian message. “I am the way and the truth and the life.” (Jo. 14: 6) The early Christians were known as belonging “to the way”. (cf. Acts 9: 2)

## **CONCLUSION**

As Dominicans we should have a daily acquaintance with the Scriptures. They should be read, meditated upon and prayed over until “I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me.” (Gal. 2: 20) We as Lay Dominicans are on this path with our Rule:

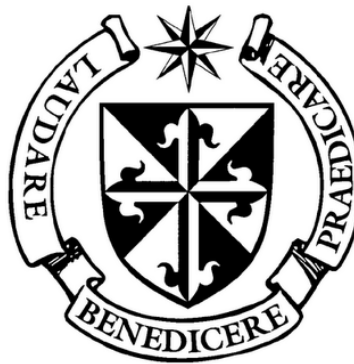
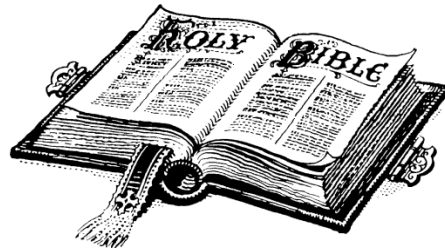
10. To advance in their proper vocation, which inseparably joins the apostolic and the contemplative, Lay Dominicans draw their strength from these principle sources:

a. listening to the Word of God and reading Sacred Scripture, especially the New Testament

e. conversion of heart, according to the spirit and practice of evangelical asceticism

As mentioned our task for this unit is to **read and love the Gospel of St. Matthew**, so we can say with Jeremiah:

*“When I found your words, I devoured them; they became my joy and the happiness of my heart.” (15: 16)*



Christ Lives in Me



# CENTRAL PROVINCE



## CANDIDACY II

### UNIT 6:

### THE CHURCH

### IN THE MODERN WORLD

# **“I DID NOT COME TO CONDEMN THE WORLD BUT TO SAVE IT.” (JOHN 12: 47)**

*“Gaudium et Spes”* (*“The Church in the Modern World”*), a Pastoral Constitution, was approved by a vote of 2,307 to 75 of the Bishops at Vatican II and promulgated by Pope Paul VI on December 7, 1965, the day the Council ended. As in all documents the title is taken from the first sentence. This is the longest document of the Council (nearly 100 pages) and considered one of the most important. Our task is to read, study and discuss this document during these three months. Then apply it to ourselves and our Chapter.



In this introduction we will provide useful information on the background and foreground of *Gaudium et Spes*. “The Church...receives the mission of proclaiming and establishing among all peoples the kingdom of Christ and of God, and she is, on earth, the seed and the beginning of that kingdom.” (*Lumen Gentium*, #5) If the Church is to accomplish her mission, it is necessary that, since she is in the world, she understands and is able to relate to the world. Revelation has a ‘love/hate’ relationship with the ‘world’. The world is a wondrous creation of God and “God saw how good it was.” (Gen. 1: 25)

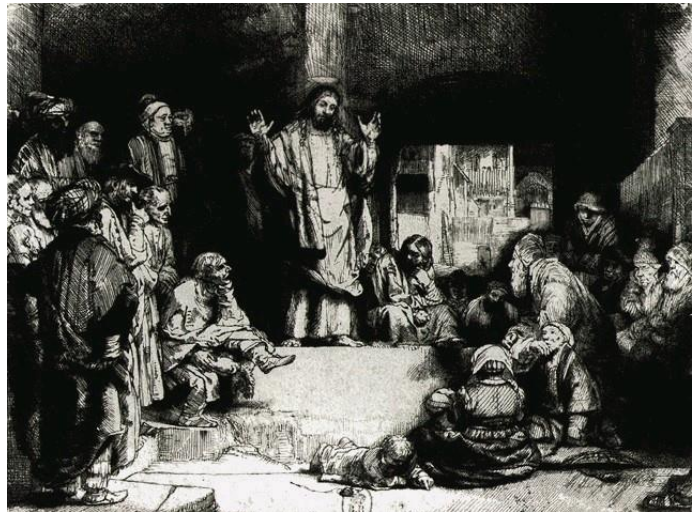


Yet the ‘world’ has not lived up to its potential “and friendship with the world is enmity with God”. (James 4: 4) On the other hand “God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life.” (John 3: 16) So the ‘world’ is not ‘either/or’ but ‘both/and’. It is, like us: sometimes good, sometimes bad, but always remember that “God created man in his image” (Gen. 1: 27) and we have been redeemed. “For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world,

but that the world might be saved through him.” (John 3: 17) Since the world and its creatures are a wonderful creation of God, the Church is “interested in one thing only – to carry on the work of Christ under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, for he came into the world to bear witness to the truth, to save and not to judge, to serve and not to be served.” (*Gaudium et Spes*, #3) So we are in the world as Jesus was and His Church is, but we are not “of the world” (cf.:John 17: 14-16) We are counseled: “Do not love the world or the things of the world.” (1 John 2:15) and “Do not conform yourselves to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect.” (Rom. 12: 2) The world is a magnificent place as long as we are not coopted by its imperfect values but remain true to the ‘Beatitudes’. We can live in the world and be joyful Dominicans.

## THE WORLD IS WORTH SAVING

The world is worth saving. We, the Church, are to “go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature.” (Mark 16: 15) “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached throughout the world as a witness to all nations.” (Matt.: 24: 14)



Jesus Himself has given us this mission: “As you sent me into the world, so I send them into the world.” (John 17: 18) While we, the Church, are in the world, how are we to relate to it? *Gaudium et Spes* states : “At all times the Church carries the responsibility of reading the signs of the time and of interpreting them in the light of the Gospel...Ours is a new age of history with critical and swift upheavals spreading gradually to all corners of the earth.” ( #4) We, living in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, must use the tools available to us in the 21<sup>st</sup> century to preach the Gospel to this world, not the world of the 19<sup>th</sup> or the 13<sup>th</sup> centuries. A challenging but exciting task.

## THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD

Throughout history the Church has always been involved with the world, often effectively, sometimes grudgingly and occasionally late. Vatican II attempted to remedy the shortcomings and bring 'a breath of fresh air' to the Church.

“The world which the Council has in mind is the whole human family seen in the context of everything which envelopes it: it is the world as the theater of human history, bearing the marks of its travail, its triumphs and failures, the world, which in the Christian vision has been created and is sustained by the love of its maker, which has been freed from the slavery of sin by Christ, who was crucified and rose again in order to break the stranglehold of the evil one, so that it might be fashioned anew according to God’s design and brought to its fulfillment.” (GS #2)

St. Paul traversed the known world, bringing the Gospel to the Greeks and Romans, establishing many converts and churches. He broke out of narrow confines into the wider civilization. Although visited with torture and death the Church began to flourish until it achieved official recognition. Though plunged into the Dark Ages, the Church, under many great Popes, began to convert and civilize the Barbarians. Pope St. Leo the Great (+461) met this challenge head-on, including a meeting with Attila the Hun, averting the sacking of Rome. Pope St. Gregory the Great (+604) laid the foundations of Medieval Christendom. He sent a Roman monk named Augustine to Britain to convert the Angles and Saxons.



During the Middle Ages the Church was in danger of losing the masses who had moved from the feudal and rural districts into the cities. The monastic orders, from the Benedictines to the Carthusians, with their complete withdrawal

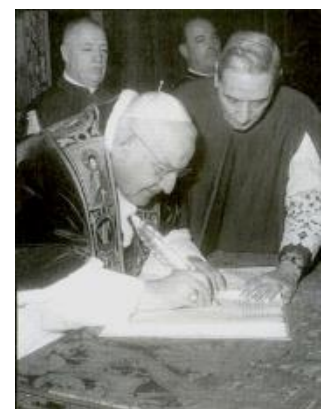
from the world had been able to provide for the rural Catholics. New orders arose to serve the new populations swelling the towns and cities. Adhering to the monastic vows of poverty, chastity and obedience and known as Mendicants because they begged for their needs, they moved from a strict monastic life to be with the people and meet their new needs in new ways. Many did not accept these gyrovagues, who were comprised mainly of Franciscans, Dominicans, Carmelites and Augustinians.

Unfortunately there have been times when the Church did not move fast enough in interpreting the signs of the times. Although there were attempts to reform itself in the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance, the Church failed to act in time. The papal legate who became Pope Pius II wrote presciently in 1454: "I cannot persuade myself that there is anything good in prospect...Christianity has no head whom all will obey...There is no reverence and no obedience; we look on the pope and emperor as figureheads and empty titles." The Papacy, the Curia and the clergy were disorganized and decaying. The reform of the Church began



in earnest outside the Church, in a manner of speaking, with disastrous results. Luther split Christendom. The Church began to recover with the Council of Trent (1545-63). It issued seventeen dogmatic decrees which defined Church teachings and answered the Protestants. The Church was back and the Counter-Reformation had begun. A new order, the Jesuits, founded by St. Ignatius of Loyola (+1556), arising opportunely, helped lead the Church in its reform.

Vatican I (1869-70) was convened by Pope Pius IX and issued two Constitutions, on the *Catholic Faith* and on the *Church of Christ*. Also the dogma of *papal infallibility* was defined. Vatican II (1962-65) opened under Pope John XXIII and closed under Pope Paul VI. Our 'Apostolic Mission' as Lay Dominicans should arise from "*knowledge of the conciliar and post-conciliar documents of the Second Vatican Council.*" (vide: *Rule, Guidelines*, 6)



## GAUDIUM ET SPES AND THE POPES



We would be remiss if we did not cite *Rerum Novarum*, an encyclical issued by Pope Leo XIII in 1891. It is subtitled “*On Capital and Labor*”. Living in the 21<sup>st</sup> century it is difficult to imagine the working conditions suffered by the laboring classes in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This encyclical began the ‘*Social Teachings of the Popes*’. It brought Christian principles to the ethical and charitable and just treatment of the worker with his right to organize and gain a living wage. It rejected both communism and unrestricted capitalism, while holding the right to private property. Pius XI, Pius XII, John XXIII and Paul VI also issued social encyclicals.

To commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*, Pope John Paul II issued the encyclical *Centesimus Annus* in 1991.

“Today more than ever, the Church is aware that her social message will gain credibility more immediately from the witness of actions than as a result of its internal logic and consistency. This awareness is also a source of her preferential option for the poor, which is never exclusive or discriminatory towards other groups. This option is not limited to material poverty, since it is well known that there are many other forms of poverty, especially in modern society—not only economic but cultural and spiritual poverty as well.” (#57)



In an interview, *Zenit*, 4/10/2003, George Weigel spoke on the relationship of *Gaudium et Spes* and *Centesimus Annus*:

“*Gaudium et Spes*” opened new conversations between the Church and democracy, the Church and science, and the Church and nonbelievers. Its description of the free society as having three parts -- democratic political community, free economy and vibrant public

moral culture, the last being the most important -- was picked up and developed brilliantly by Pope John Paul II in "Centesimus Annus."

Pope Benedict XVI has also written and spoken about the concerns of *Gaudium et Spes*. He spoke on the solemnity of Christ the King, 2005 as printed in *Fides Service*, Nov. 21, 2005:

"Christ alpha e omega" is the title of a paragraph of the "Gaudium et Spes" pastoral constitution issued by Vatican II, the Pope recalled, quoting Pope Paul VI: "In the light of the centrality of Christ, *Gaudium et Spes* interprets the conditions of humanity today, human calling and dignity, and ambits of human life: family, culture, economy, politics, international community. This is the mission of the Church, yesterday, today and always: announce and bear witness to Christ so that every man and woman may live their vocation to the full."

In his encyclical, *Caritas in Veritate*, signed on June 29, 2009 Pope Benedict XVI wrote on the necessity of providing for the poor and poor nations by the wealthy individual and nations. He also spoke to the modern world on the energy problems it has:

"Questions linked to the care and preservation of the environment today need to give due consideration to *the energy problem*. The fact that some States, power groups and companies hoard non-

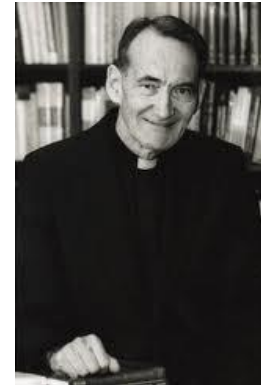


renewable energy resources represents a grave obstacle to development in poor countries. Those countries lack the economic means either to gain access to existing sources of non-renewable energy or to finance research into new alternatives. The stockpiling of natural resources, which in many cases are found in the poor countries themselves, gives rise to exploitation and frequent conflicts between and within nations. These conflicts are often fought on the soil of those same countries, with a heavy toll of death, destruction and further decay.

The international community has an urgent duty to find institutional means of regulating the exploitation of non-renewable resources, involving poor countries in the process, in order to plan together for the future.’ (#49)

So both of the last two Popes have promoted *Gaudium et Spes* and its reaching out to the world as it is today. Yet their emphases are different:

“The contrast between Pope Benedict and his predecessor is striking. John Paul II was a social ethicist, anxious to involve the Church in shaping a world order of peace, justice, and fraternal love. Among the documents of Vatican II, John Paul's favorite was surely the pastoral constitution *Gaudium et Spes*. Benedict XVI, who looks upon *Gaudium et Spes* as the weakest of the four constitutions, shows a clear preference for the other three.” (*First Things, From Ratzinger to Benedict*, Avery Cardinal Dulles)



Much progress has been made by the Church in many ways in its desire to talk and work with the modern world. Much work still needs to be done. As Dominicans and members of the Church the burden does not just fall on the shoulders of the Popes but it is also our burden. But remember the words of the Master, “For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.” (Matt. 11: 30) Each member, each Chapter must find their ways to influence by words, deeds and example the world in which we find ourselves placed by God.





## DOMINICANS IN THE WORLD

*“The Church in the Modern World (Gaudium et Spes), undoubtedly the most ambitious project of the Council both in its length and scope as well as its objective, which was to begin a realistic dialogue with the modern world.” (A Concise History of the Catholic Church, Thomas Bokenkotter, p. 418)*

This has always been the *modus operandi* of the Dominican Order from the days of St. Dominic. He followed Jesus who said, “While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.” (John 9:5) and said to us, “You are the light of the world.” (Matt. 5:14) As we read, Dominic sent his members where the people were: the cities and sent them prepared through education “to begin a realistic dialogue” with them. An old proverb, translated from the Latin, follows:

*Bernard loved the valleys, Benedict the mountains,  
Francis the towns, Dominic the populous cities.*

*The Primitive Constitutions of the Order of Friars Preachers* which St. Dominic influenced states in the *Prologue* that the “Order was founded, from the beginning, especially for preaching and the salvation of souls.” Thus a dialogue with the world is in our ‘DNA’. This must be accomplished in a manner that is understandable to be effective:

“On one occasion a public debate was organized against the heretics. The local bishop proposed to go to it with an imposing entourage, but St. Dominic said to him, “No, my lord and father, that is not the way to go to meet such people. The heretics are to be convinced by an example of humility and other virtues far more readily than by any external display or verbal battles...everything came to a satisfactory conclusion.” (*Early Dominicans*, p. 87)



On June 5, 1222, Pope Honorius gave the church of Santa Sabina to St. Dominic and it is the headquarters of the Order. It is fitting that it is on the Aventine next to the Tiber, in the heart of that great city to which all roads lead, Rome, Italy. Here St. Thomas Aquinas began writing the *Summa Theologica*.



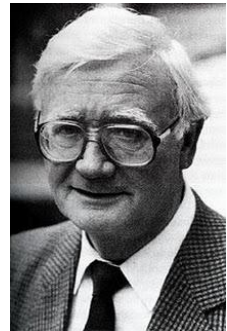
### ***GAUDIUM ET SPES* AND THE ORDER OF PREACHERS**

The Order of Preachers had a profound impact and influence on the documents of Vatican II. This is especially true of *Gaudium et Spes*. Here is a brief mention of three of the Dominican '*Periti*' (experts) who guided Vatican II:

1. **Yves Marie-Joseph Congar OP** (1904-95) was a principle architect of many of the documents, including *Gaudium et Spes*. He brought his exhaustive research into the Christian tradition, especially the riches of the patristic era and of Thomas Aquinas. John Paul II named him a Cardinal a year before he died.



2. **Marie-Dominique Chenu OP** (1895-1990) was very influential in the writing of *Gaudium et Spes*. Schillebeeckx said that Chenu influenced him to “open all his ears” to human life and culture, knowing that “nothing genuinely human is foreign to the followers of Christ.” (GS, #1)
3. **Edward Cornelis Florentius Alfonsus Schillebeeckx OP** (1914-2009) was one of the busiest *Periti* at the Council. He contributed to the chapter on marriage and the family in *Gaudium et Spes*. He gave many conferences to Bishops assembled in Rome and did assist Cardinal Bernard Jan Alfrink at the Council. He was awarded the prestigious *Erasmus Prize* (1982) for contributions to European Culture.



## THE GAUDIUM ET SPES GENERATION

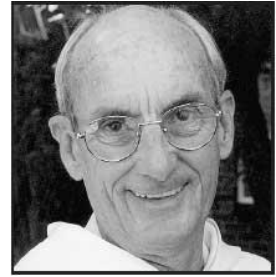
It is difficult today to imagine the excitement and exhilaration that Vatican II and, especially, *Gaudium et Spes*, created among the clergy and laity of the 1960's and 1970's. The Church was not breaking from the past but, in Dominican style, it was building upon its rich tradition, keeping the good and adding, after study and discussion, the ability to communicate this to today's generation. *Tradition* evolves and enriches itself, as we learned from *Dei Verbum*; otherwise we would be '*sola scriptura*'.

“The people of God believes that it is led by the Spirit of the Lord who fills the whole world...For Faith throws a new light on all things and makes known the full ideal which God has set for man, thus guiding the mind towards solutions that are fully human.” (GS, #11)

As John Paul II wrote in his encyclical, *Dominicae Cenaes, The Mystery and Worship of the Eucharist*, 1980, #13:

“Convinced as we are that by means of the Council the Holy Spirit ‘has spoken to the Church’ the truths and given the indications for carrying out her mission among the people of today and tomorrow.”

On the *Ordo Praedicatorum* website, 7/2011, it was noted that two Dominican Friars in South Africa celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of priestly ordination, Albert Nolan and Gregory Brooke. Fr. Nolan preached the homily which appears in part below:



“Some Australian priests who are celebrating their jubilees round this time have taken to calling themselves the Gaudium et Spes generation. Gaudium et Spes, of course, was the name of the famous Vatican Council document on the Church in the Modern World. It is the Latin for joy and hope.

“The Gaudium et Spes generation of priests are those who were ordained in the 1960’s, immediately before or shortly after the II Vatican Council. Gregory and I belong to this generation of priests. For us the Council was a source of great joy and hope. We were wildly excited by it and bubbling over with hope for the future. At last the church was changing, catching up with the modern world - beyond our wildest expectations. As priests we were able to hold our heads high. We were proud to be known as Catholic priests. We started to move away from the clericalism and narrow-mindedness of the past. We embraced ecumenism. We tried to work more with the people rather than for them.

“In a small way, over the last 50 years, Gregory and I have had the privilege of sowing some of these seeds of spiritual and intellectual renewal. For that we are extremely grateful to God and to all who sowed the seeds in us, even before the II Vatican Council. This is the privilege we would like to celebrate today with 50 years of priestly ministry: the privilege of sowing a few seeds. And it is for this reason that we remain the generation of joy and hope - of Gaudium et Spes.

“Our lives were filled with joy and hope.” **[Thank you, Father!]**

1. **Preface (1-3)**
2. **Introduction: The Situation of Men in the Modern World (4-10)**
3. **Part 1: The Church and Man's Calling (11-45)**
  1. The Dignity of the Human Person (12-22)
  2. The Community of Mankind (23-32)
  3. Man's Activity Throughout the World (33-39)
  4. The Role of the Church in the Modern World (40-45)
4. **Part 2: Some Problems of Special Urgency (46-93)**
  1. Fostering the Nobility of Marriage and the Family (47-52)
  2. The Proper Development of Culture (53-62)
    1. The Circumstances of Culture in the World Today (54-56)
    2. Some Principles for the Proper Development of Culture (57-59)
    3. Some More Urgent Duties of Christians in Regard to Culture (60-62)
  3. Economic and Social Life (63-72)
    1. Economic Development (64 - 66)
    2. Certain Principles Governing Socio-Economic Life as a Whole (67-72)
  4. The Life of the Political Community (73-76)
  5. The Fostering of Peace and the Promotion of a Community of Nations (77-93)
    1. The Avoidance of War (79-82)
    2. Setting Up an International Community (83-93)

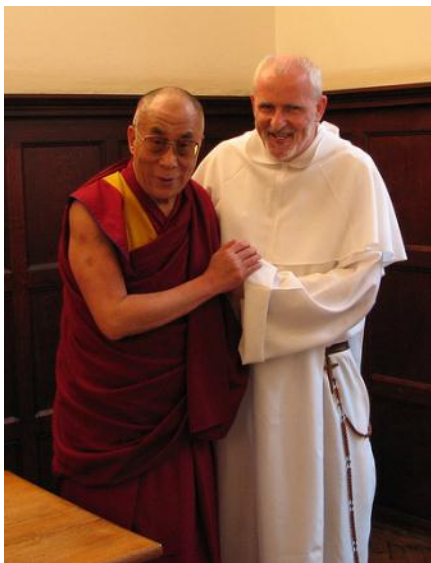
## CONCLUSION OF UNIT 6

Hopefully this background and foreground information will serve to round out your understanding of *Gaudium et Spes*. The key thing is to read the document, discuss it and apply it to your life and, hopefully, your Chapter. After all, if we do not relate to the modern world, what good can we do?

St. Dominic used the media available to him to relate to the people, viz. *preaching*. We have a wider variety of media to utilize in our preaching: Internet; YouTube; Blogs; Facebook; Twitter; Email; TV; Next?

“Within modern society the communications media play a major role in information, cultural promotion, and formation. This role is increasing, as a result of technological progress, the extent and diversity of the news transmitted, and the influence exercised on public opinion.” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #2493)

Are you ‘open’ to the world, its wonders, its marvelous people? As a Dominican, we should be. Witness the stories about our joyful founder:

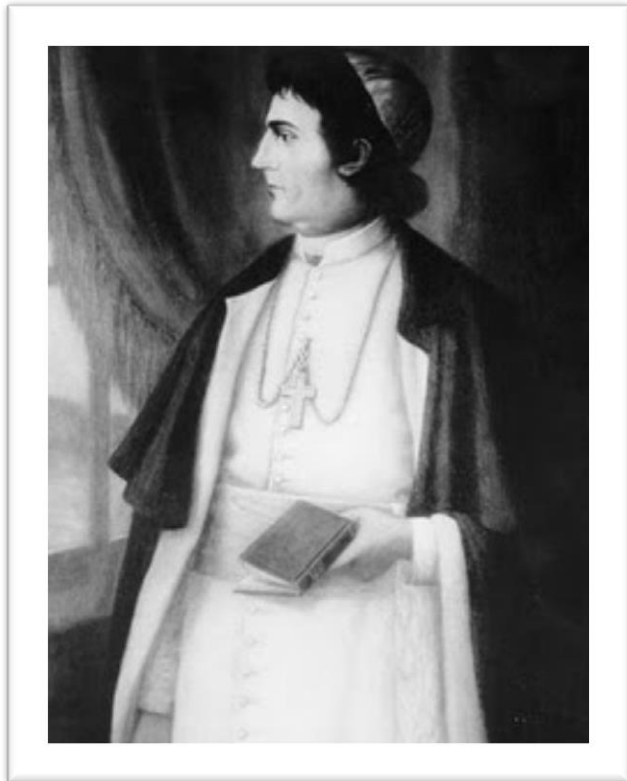


“The sense of openness to the world is a marked characteristic of many of the great Dominican preachers. ‘When I became a Christian,’ noted Lacordaire, ‘I did not lose sight of the world. And in the twentieth century, Vincent McNabb remarked once to some of his brethren: ‘The world is waiting for those who love it...If you don’t love men, don’t preach to them – preach to yourself.’” (*The New Wine of Dominican Spirituality*, Paul Murray OP, pp. 148-9)

FOR AN INTERNET COPY OF ‘GAUDIUM ET SPES’ -

<http://www.ewtn.com/library/councils/v2modwor.htm>

# CENTRAL PROVINCE



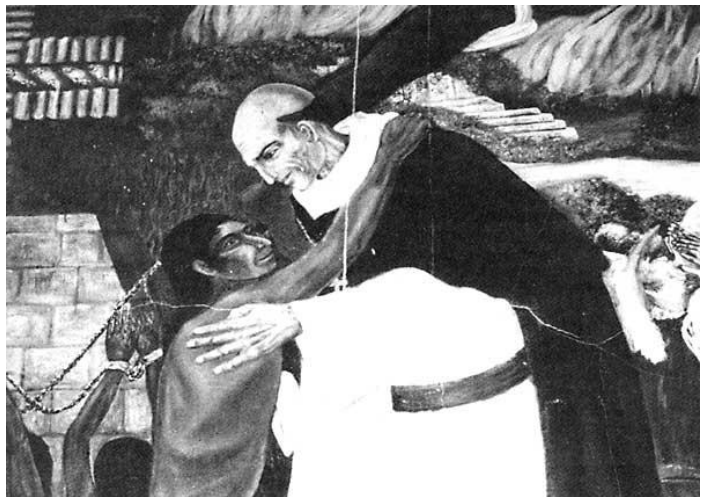
## CANDIDACY II

## UNIT 7: DOMINICANS

# “GO INTO THE WHOLE WORLD AND PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL TO EVERY CREATURE.” (MARK 16: 15)

Proclaiming the Gospel has been the task of every Dominican from the beginning of our foundation. *The Primitive Constitutions of the Order of Friars Preachers* states in the *Prologue* that “our Order was founded, from the beginning, especially for preaching and the salvation of souls”. St.

Dominic dispersed his small band throughout Europe to the cities and universities to spread the ‘Good News’. “During the last years of his life Saint Dominic frequently said: ‘When the Order is properly established, I am going off to the Cumans’”. (*Who are my*



“Cumans”)? by Vincent Couesnongle OP) St. Dominic, thus, was devoted to the university life and the missionary life as fields for preaching. We, too, are missionaries, i.e., sent forth. *Ite, missa est.*

With this in mind, this unit will touch on two topics on *Dominicans*, not yet explored, but topics with which every Lay Dominican should have some acquaintance:

- A. The first month will be devoted to the history of the Dominican Order in the United States.
- B. The next two months, to the *Summa Theologica* of St. Thomas Aquinas, specifically, *The Treatise on Happiness*.



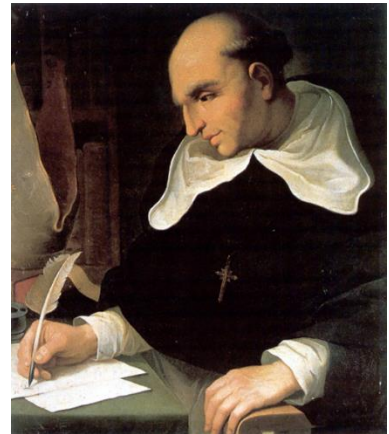
## A. THE HISTORY OF THE DOMINICAN ORDER IN THE UNITED STATES

*“Stories of the Dominican Order keep us together as Dominicans.”*  
(Edward Schillebeckx OP)



For the first month of this unit we will study *A Short History of the Dominican Order in the U.S.*, by Sister Nona McGreal OP.

The Dominican Order’s association with our country is earlier than most people know. Thirty-four years after Columbus discovered America, 1526, the Spanish explorers, accompanied by Dominicans, established an outpost at what is now Georgetown, SC. One of the Dominicans was Montesinos, noted fighter for Indian rights: “Have they no souls?” Soon the post was abandoned. This was thirty-nine years before St. Augustine, FL. was founded, 1565.



Sister McGreal’s *Short History* has a wealth of information with links to further information. All can find some history relevant to their locale. Read it and find historical references to your Chapter area.



Among all the great men and women noted, we call attention to two. The first is Bishop Edward Dominic Fenwick OP (1768-1832). The Dominican Order was established in the United States early in the nineteenth century. Fenwick founded the *St. Joseph Province* in 1805 at St. Rose, KY which covered the entire country. Edward Fenwick was consecrated Bishop of Cincinnati in

1821. His diocese covered Ohio, Michigan and Wisconsin. His importance and memory is noted by the schools dedicated to him.

Another is Fr. Samuel Charles Mazzuchelli OP (1806-1864) who was an Italian- born pioneering missionary. He brought the Church to the Iowa-Illinois-Wisconsin area and founded over thirty parishes. He was loved by many differing immigrants; Fr. Mazzuchelli was known to the Irish as “Fr. Matthew Kelly”. His holiness has been introduced to Rome for canonization and, at this time, he is Venerable Samuel Mazzuchelli. A stained glass image of Fr. Mazzuchelli at St. Raphael's Cathedral, Dubuque, IA. Is pictured at the right.



## LAY DOMINICANS

The *Short History* does cite the beginnings of the Lay Dominicans, then the ‘Third Order’, but records were sparse and usually limited to the reception or profession of members. Betsy Wells was received by the Dominican Friars at St. Rose in 1826. The Lay Dominicans have continued to grow over the years and now we have four Provinces.



PROVINCE	NAME	FOUNDED	PROVINCIAL	WEBSITE
Eastern	St. Joseph	1805	Brian Mulcahy OP	<a href="http://www.op-stjoseph.org/">http://www.op-stjoseph.org/</a>
Western	Holy Name of Jesus	(1850) 1912	Mark Padrez OP	<a href="http://www.opwest.org/">http://www.opwest.org/</a>
Central	St. Albert the Great	1939	Charles Bouchard OP	<a href="http://www.domcentral.org/">http://www.domcentral.org/</a>
Southern	St. Martin de Porres	1980	Christopher Eggleton OP	<a href="http://www.opsouth.org/">http://www.opsouth.org/</a>

## THE MCGREAL CENTER FOR DOMINICAN HISTORICAL STUDIES

Mention must be made of the McGreal Center located at Dominican University, River Forest, IL. Sr. Janet Welsh OP is the Director. Researchers of US Dominican history enjoy the generous work space and accessible archival collections. They are especially interested in your personal history of the Lay Dominicans. Feel free to contact them. <http://dom.edu/mcgreal> Also watch on YouTube: <http://tinyurl.com/3wl9x9b>

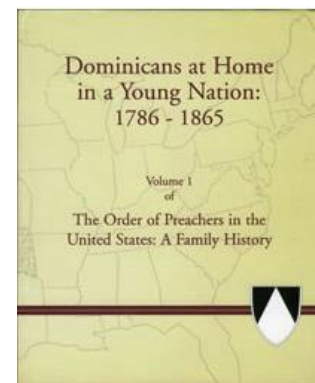


Their mission statement:

“The McGreal Center for Dominican Historical Studies promotes the research and writing of the history of the Dominican Family in the United States. The McGreal Center facilitates opportunities for scholarly research through the collection and preservation of historical documents relative to the significance of the U.S. Dominican Family’s in the Order of Preachers, the Church and the nation.”

Every Chapter should have in their library a copy of volume 1 of the longer history: *Dominicans at Home in a Young Nation: 1786-1865*

<http://www.dom.edu/mcgreal/volumeone/>



## B. THE TREATISE ON HAPPINESS

A Dominican would be remiss in their formation if they did not read and study the words of St. Thomas Aquinas. But the question is – which words? St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) was a voluminous writer, theologian, philosopher, mystic, poet. The *Summa Theologica* is the most significant of his writings.

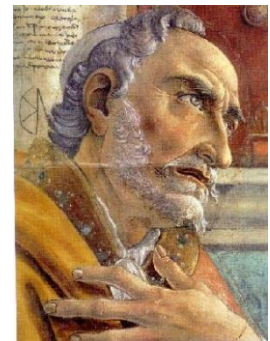


St. Thomas writes that we as humans are directed toward a goal (*telos*) which is *happiness*. It is true, isn't it? We all want to be happy and hope our loved ones are happy. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* under the title *THE DESIRE FOR HAPPINESS*, #1718, beautifully expands on this:

“The beatitudes respond to the natural desire for happiness. This desire is of divine origin: God has placed it in the human heart in order to draw man to the One who alone can fulfill it:

“We all want to live happily; in the whole human race there is no one who does not assent to this proposition, even before it is fully articulated. [St. Augustine]

“How is it, then, that I seek you, Lord? Since in seeking you, my God, I seek a happy life, let me seek you so that my soul may live, for my body draws life from my soul and my soul draws life from you.” [St. Augustine]

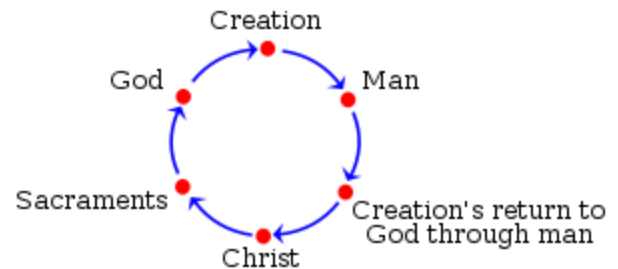


“God alone satisfies.” [St. Thomas Aquinas]

## STRUCTURE OF THE *SUMMA*

It is important that we understand the basic structure of the *Summa Theologica*. It is divided into three parts (like Gaul):

- I. God; Creation
- II. Man and Morality
- III. Incarnate Word; Sacraments



Part II is divided into two parts:

- I. Happiness (5 Questions); Virtues and Vices
- II. Specific Virtues and Vices; Moral Matters

We will look at I<sup>a</sup>-II<sup>ae</sup> (the 1<sup>st</sup> Part of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Part - *Prima Secundae*) which is concerned with *Happiness* and consists of 5 Questions (about 33 pages). Don't be confused; St. Thomas is highly organized. Each of these Questions is composed of 8 Articles. So 5 Questions; 8 Articles each. The Questions are:

1. Of Man's Last End
2. Of Those Things in Which Man's Happiness Consists
3. What is Happiness
4. Of Those Things That Are Required for Happiness
5. Of the Attainment of Happiness

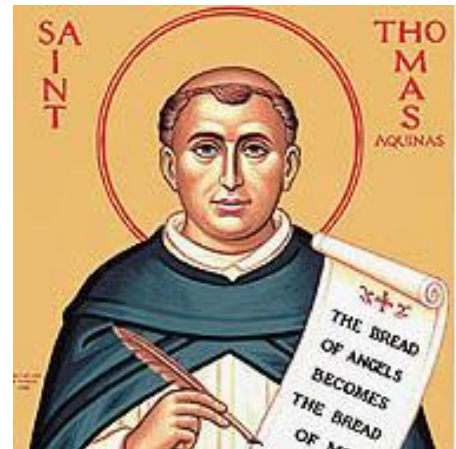
Each Article is organized as follows:

- a) The Question
- b) Objections
- c) Short Counter-statement (On the Contrary)
- d) Actual Argument
- e) Replies to Objections

Why this procedure? He was following the example of *Averroes* (+1198; Muslim *Aristotle* translator) as it became the model used in the Medieval schools. A reference will be given to our source for our material at the end of the unit.

## ST. THOMAS – THE MAN – THE SAINT

The *Summa Theologica* ( written 1265-1274) is the most significant of Thomas' writing but only one of many. He has influenced men and women, from great to unknown, from the 13<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. He influenced Dante whose *Divine Comedy* has been called the *Summa* in verse. He also wrote *Adoro Te Devote, Panis Angelicus, O Salutaris Hostia, Pange Lingua and Tantum Ergo*. These alone would put him in the top ranks of Poets. He was canonized in 1323, fifty years after his death. He is called: *Doctor Angelicus; Doctor Communis; Doctor Universalis*.



Although many worthy advances have been made in Theology, Aquinas and Scholasticism have persisted in relevance in the Church today. *Aeterni Patris*, an encyclical by Pope Leo XIII in 1879 reaffirmed its position at the time:



“We exhort you, venerable brethren, in all earnestness to restore the golden wisdom of St. Thomas, and to spread it far and wide for the defense and beauty of the Catholic faith, for the good of society, and for the advantage of all the sciences.(31)...Therefore in this also let us follow the example of the Angelic Doctor, who never gave himself to reading or writing without first begging the blessing of God, who modestly confessed that whatever he knew he had acquired not so much by his own study and labor as by the divine gift. (33)”

## ADDITIONAL VIEWPOINTS

As can be imagined, volumes upon volumes have been written on Aquinas and his writings. For a deeper understanding of the man and his work, let us examine briefly a few opinions by some recognized authors. First, we will partake of some of the wisdom of **Etienne Gilson**, (+1978), noted philosopher and historian, “Immortal” of the French Academy. It should be noted that his book, *The Spirit of Mediaeval Philosophy*, began Thomas Merton’s conversion to Catholicism. He wrote on the Dominicans and Aquinas in *The Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas*, (tr. 1924):



“Men [Dominicans/Monks] whom previously one had been accustomed to find within massive walls of fortress-like Abbeys, were here mixing freely in the crowd of teachers and students...The Dominican vocation, born in the midst of a medieval University, is therefore, above all the resolve to serve God by teaching and in absolute poverty. To be a religious and a Doctor, such remains until the last months of his life, the ideal of St. Thomas of Aquino. (p. 4)

“Doubtless, the powerfully marked character of his teaching...constitutes a world-system, an all-around explanation of the universe, offered from the point of view of reason. (p. 346)

“For by virtue of that very reason which he served with so ardent a love, St. Thomas has become a poet, and, if we may believe an unbiased judge, the greatest poet of the Latin tongue of the whole Middle Ages.” (p. 357)



***“Pange lingua gloriosi      corporis mysterium  
Sanguinisque pretiosi      quem in mundi pretium  
Fructus ventris generosi      Rex effudit gentium”***

**Jacques Maritain**, (+1973), a French Catholic philosopher, friend and mentor to Pope Paul VI, helped to revive St. Thomas for modern times. He and his wife, Raissa, were introduced to St. Thomas by their spiritual advisor, a Dominican Friar. In *St. Thomas Aquinas* (1930), Ch. III: *The Apostle of Modern Times* he writes:



“Apostle of the intelligence, doctor of truth, restorer of the intellectual order, Saint Thomas wrote not for the thirteenth century but for our time. His own time is the time of the spirit, which dominates the ages. I say that he is a contemporary writer, the most ‘present’ of all thinkers...he holds the key to the problems which oppress our hearts; he teaches us how to triumph over both anti-intellectualism and rationalism, over the evil which degrades reason below, and the evil which exalts it above the real; he gives us the secret of true humanism, of the supreme development of the human person and intellectual virtues, but in sanctity, not in concupiscence, through the spirit and the cross, not through the grandeurs of the flesh...Such is the law of gravitation that the Angelic Doctor teaches to a world all the more haunted by the idea of progress, the more it is ignorant generally of the meaning of progress.” (pp. 49-50)



**Rev. M. C. D’Arcy SJ**, (+1976), confessor and close friend of Fr. Ronald Knox, Master at Campion Hall, University of Oxford, and a Provincial of the Jesuits, also wrote a book entitled *St. Thomas Aquinas* (1930) in which he touched on St. Thomas’ humility:

“What remains true is that he had little or no interest in worldly matters. He refused the offers of high ecclesiastical offices. Shortly before his death, when journeying to Lyons, Reginald said to him: ‘You and Fra Bonaventure are going to be made Cardinals, and that will redound to the credit of your Orders.’ The answer of St. Thomas is of a piece with his life: ‘Never shall I be anything in the Order nor



in the Church. I could not serve our Order better in any other state than the one I am in.” (p. 51)

**G. K. Chesterton**, (+1936), a diverse and prolific writer, the “Prince of Paradox”, a true “Renaissance Man”, who, with Hilaire Belloc, (They were known as Chesterbelloc – per George Bernard Shaw) produced a ‘golden age’ of writing by Catholics. “G. K. Chesterton once said that he had been ‘indefensibly’ happy most of his life.” (*The Sunday Times*, by Bernard Manzo, June 8, 2011) Indulge us to cite something he wrote in the *Illustrated London News* of April 19, 1924 which, true then, is true today: “The whole modern world has divided itself into Conservatives and Progressives [read Liberals today]. The business of Progressives is to go on making mistakes. The business of Conservatives is to prevent the mistakes from being corrected.” He wrote *Saint Thomas Aquinas: The Dumb Ox*, (1930), of which Etienne Gilson said: “I consider it as being without comparison the best book ever written on St. Thomas.”



“Thomas of Aquino wanted to be a Friar...Something in this heavy, quiet, cultivated, rather academic gentleman would not be satisfied till he was, by fixed authoritative proclamation and official



pronouncement, established and appointed to be a Beggar. It is all the more interesting because, while he did more than his duty a thousand times over, he was not at all like a Beggar; nor at all likely to be a good Beggar. He had nothing of the native vagabond about him, as had his great precursors; he was not born with something of the wandering minstrel, like St. Francis; or something of the tramping missionary, like St. Dominic. But he insisted upon putting himself under military orders, to do these things at the will of another, if required.” (Chapter II: *The Runaway Abbot*)

## DOMINICAN VIEWPOINTS

There have, obviously, been many Dominicans who have written on St. Thomas (Philosopher, Theologian, Poet, Contemplative). They have written volumes upon volumes. Here is a sampling:

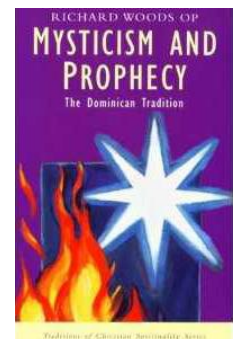


**Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange OP** (+1964), thought by many to be the greatest Catholic Thomist of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, taught the future Pope John Paul II and influenced Yves Congar OP. He wrote in *The Three Conversions in the Spiritual Life* (1938):

“God’s uncreated love for us, as St. Thomas shows, is a love which, far from presupposing in us any *lovableness*, actually produces that lovableness within us. His creative love gives and preserves in us our nature and our existence; but his life-giving love gives and preserves in us the life of grace which makes us *lovable* in His eyes, and lovable not merely as His servants but as His Sons. (I, Q. xx, art. 2) (p. 9)...St. Thomas says that ‘the preaching of the word of God must proceed from the fullness of contemplation.’ ...‘Thy word is exceedingly refined and thy servant hath loved it.’ (Ps, cxviii, 140)” (p. 52)



**Richard Woods OP**, Professor of Theology at Dominican University, sojourner in Ireland, is an author of many books and CDs, from spirituality and mysticism to fiction and recently: *Meister Eckhart, Master of Mysticism*. He has also written an excellent book, *Mysticism and Prophecy: The Dominican Tradition* (1998) which treats the thoughts of Thomas Aquinas, Meister Eckhart and Catherine of Siena and their approaches to Christian life. He explores the ways of knowing and ‘unknowing’.



Here is a taste of his writing from the latter book:

“With the exception of St. Augustine, no single individual has had the prominent influence on Christian theology as the quiet Italian friar once dubbed ‘the Dumb Ox’ by his fellow students and known to the world as Thomas Aquinas. Thomas of Aquino is remembered less as a spiritual writer than a philosopher and theologian. Yet, as Fr. Jean-Pierre Torel has shown, following the example of the epoch-making study of Fr. M.-D Chenu, Thomas’ scholarly work was inseparable from and indeed rooted in his personal spirituality, itself grounded in his Dominican identity. (p. 59)



“In the end, for Thomas (and, he would argue, for everyone) God is not so much an object to be thought or even thought about, much less discussed endlessly, as a Presence to be sought. The art of such seeking is contemplative action, and its end is mystical union, both in this life and hereafter.” (p. 76)

*The Dominican Tradition* by Phyllis Zagano and **Thomas McGonigle OP** is an excellent book (Chapters should consider it for ongoing study) which covers many of the outstanding Dominicans through the centuries including their writings. Ms. Zagano is the coeditor with Fr. McGonigle of the Central Province. Fr. McGonigle wrote the following on St. Thomas:



“The *Summa theologiae* is the most significant of the many writings of Thomas Aquinas. In this work he utilizes the framework of the Neoplatonic Augustinian tradition of the coming forth of creation from God (*exitus*) and the return of all things to God in Christ (*reditus*)...The human person is a composite of body and soul that is directed toward a goal (*telos*), which is happiness. Human happiness is twofold. One is proportionate to our human nature, a happiness

we can attain through habitual virtuous behavior, as Aristotle taught. The other is a happiness that surpasses human nature. We can attain this happiness only by the gift of God's grace, which is a participation in God's own divine life. It is through Christ that we come to share in God's life through grace." (p. 20)



**Paul Murray OP**, an Irish Dominican who teaches at the Angelicum, is a prolific writer, preacher and poet. Among his books is a beautiful little book on Mother Teresa, his friend: *I Loved Jesus in the Night*. He, also, a first and only, as a Catholic priest has addressed the English House of Lords on 'Contemplation'. This can be heard at: <http://tinyurl.com/3uy5h4p> Fr. Paul Murray has written a book which is highly recommended to every Chapter for ongoing study: *The New Wine of Dominican Spirituality*, (2006). The question has arisen, "Did Jesus ever laugh? Did He like a good joke?" Let us read what Fr. Murray has written on the subject:

"In his *Summa*, Thomas defends what he calls 'affability' and 'cheerfulness' – quite openly disagreeing with the view that austerity must always exclude 'cheerfulness' or must forbid 'the giving and receiving of the pleasures of conversation'. What is more, Thomas takes to task those people who are so serious about themselves that they never say anything laughable or funny (*nec ipsi dicunt aliquid ridiculum*), but instead are always trying to obstruct the fun or amusement of others. Such people are not only unpleasant company, according to Thomas, they are also morally unsound. He writes: 'Those who are lacking in fun, and who never say anything funny or humorous, but instead give grief to those who make jokes, not accepting even the modest fun of others, are morally unsound (*vitiosi*) and in the view of the philosopher [Aristotle] are rough and boorish.'" (ST, II II, q. 168, a. 4) (p. 68)

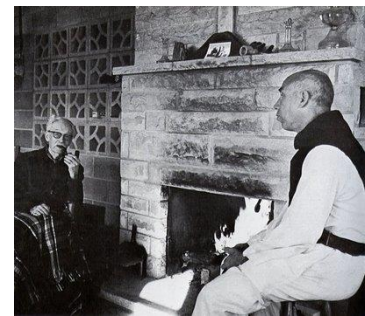


## “STRAW”

St. Thomas seems to have had a mystical experience during a Mass he said on Dec. 6, 1273 and wrote no more, never finishing the *Summa Theologica*. He never spoke or wrote of the experience but did say to Reginald: “All that I have written seems to me like so much straw compared to what I have seen and what has been revealed to me.” Of course, what he has written is not ‘straw’ to us. He died the next year.

This incident mirrors a request for prayers to Etienne Gilson seven centuries later by Thomas Merton, pictured here at his Hermitage with Jacques Maritain in 1966. This is the prayer:

“Please pray for me to Our Lord that, instead of merely writing something, I may be something, and indeed that I may so fully be what I ought to be that there may be no further necessity for me to write, since the mere fact of being what I ought to be would be more eloquent than many books.”



### PRAYER OF ST. THOMAS



***Thou Who makest eloquent the tongues of little children, fashion my words and pour upon my lips the grace of Thy benediction. Grant me penetration to understand, capacity to retain, method and facility in study, subtlety in interpretation and abundant grace of expression.***

***Order the beginning, direct the progress and perfect the achievement of my work, Thou Who art true God and true Man and livest and reignest for ever and ever. Amen.***

# RESOURCES

## A. THE HISTORY OF THE DOMINICAN ORDER IN THE UNITED STATES

The first of our three months of this unit will be devoted to the study of Sr. Nona McGreal's work entitled: *A Short History of the Dominican Order in the U. S.*

<http://www.domlife.org/beingdominican/History/HistorySummary.htm>

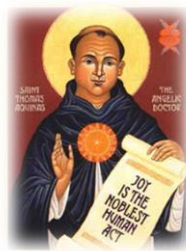
## B. THE TREATISE ON HAPPINESS

The other two months of this unit are devoted to a study of *The Treatise on Happiness*. This is composed of the first five Questions (each Question consisting of eight Articles) of the First Part of the Second Part (I<sup>a</sup>-II<sup>ae</sup>) of the *Summa Theologica*: <http://tinyurl.com/c9utth>

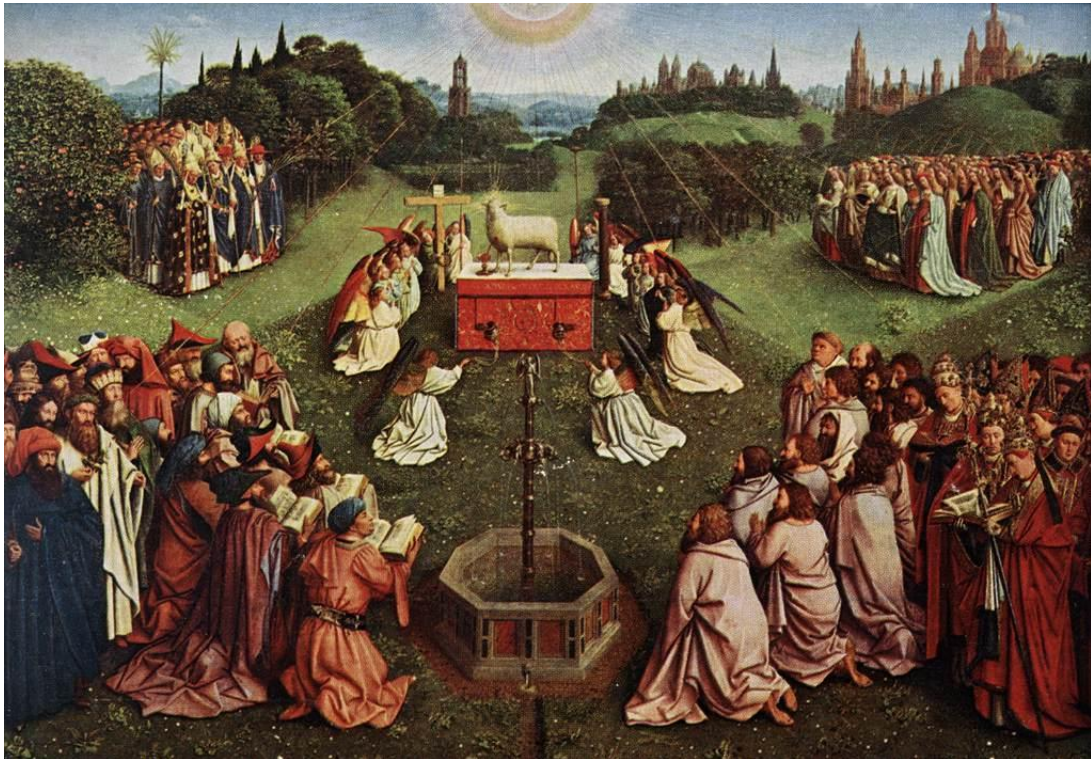
There is a detailed Study Guide and Glossary available for those who so choose to use it: <http://www.wku.edu/~jan.garrett/350/aqsgghapp.htm>

For those who are a bit esoteric and speculative (good Dominican approaches) you might enjoy *The Buddha Meets St. Thomas Aquinas: An Imaginary Dialogue* by Fr. Bernhard Blankenhorn OP, July 2007, 36 pp. (The ultimate question seems to be – *Purgatory* or *Rebirth*?)

<http://www.blessed-sacrament.org/tomandbud.doc>



# CENTRAL PROVINCE

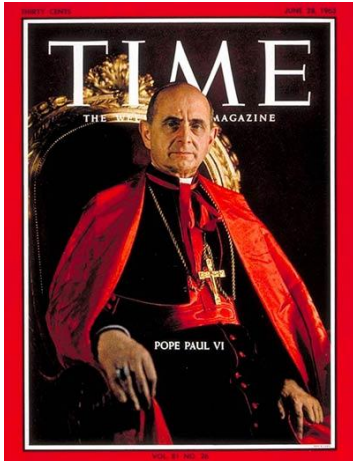


## CANDIDACY II

### UNIT 8: LITURGY

# “ALL ON EARTH FALL IN WORSHIP BEFORE YOU; THEY SING OF YOU, SING YOUR NAME.” (Psalm 66: 4)

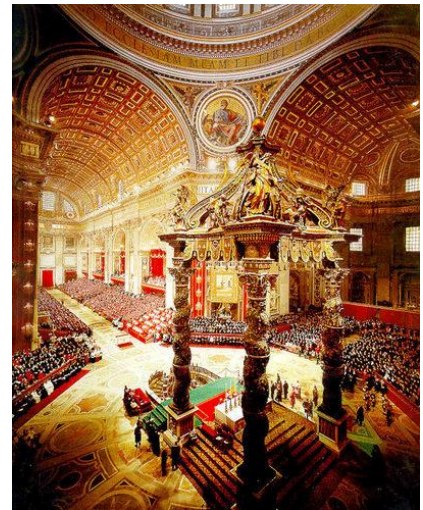
This unit is concerned with *Liturgy*, specifically, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, *The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*. This was promulgated by Pope Paul VI on



Dec. 4, 1963 by a vote of 2147 to 4. Please read and discuss this document over a three month period. Your understanding and love of Liturgy will deepen and be enriched. *Constitutions* concern the Universal Church. Vatican II issued only four Constitutions; with this we will have studied all four. When many think of Vatican II, they often are concerned only with liturgical changes, although they, invariably, have not read *Sacrosanctum Concilium* with its rich development of the theology of liturgy. In order to alleviate this problem we, as Dominicans, must become knowledgeable regarding Liturgy.

The **aims** of the Council in producing SC were fourfold:

“This sacred Council has several aims in view: **[1]** it desires to impart an ever increasing vigor to the Christian life of the faithful; **[2]** to adapt more suitably to the needs of our own times those institutions which are subject to change; **[3]** to foster whatever can promote union among all who believe in Christ; **[4]** to strengthen whatever can help to call the whole of mankind into the household of the Church. The Council therefore sees particularly cogent reasons for undertaking the reform and promotion of the liturgy.” (SC, #1)





## WHAT IS LITURGY?

There are short and long and detailed definitions of *Liturgy*. Here is a short definition from *Dictionary of the Liturgy* (1989):

“Liturgy: The public worship carried out by the People of God, the Mystical Body of Christ, the Church.” (p. 349)

A second one, a classic definition, is from the ground-breaking *Mediator Dei*, (*Encyclical On the Sacred Liturgy*), promulgated by Pope Pius XII on Nov. 20, 1947:

“The sacred liturgy is, consequently, the public worship which our Redeemer as Head of the Church renders to the Father, as well as the worship which the community of the faithful renders to its Founder, and through Him to the heavenly Father. It is, in short, the worship rendered by the Mystical Body of Christ in the entirety of its Head and members.” (20)



A third from Vatican II offers a more descriptive and practical definition:

“Rightly, then, the liturgy is considered as an exercise of the priestly office of Jesus Christ. In the liturgy the sanctification of man is signified by signs perceptible to the senses, and is effected in a way which corresponds with each of these signs; in the liturgy the whole public worship is performed by the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, that is, by the Head and His members.” (SC, #7)



Lastly, here is a further descriptive definition from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*:

“The liturgy is also a participation in Christ's own prayer addressed to the Father in the Holy Spirit. In the liturgy, all Christian prayer finds its source and goal. Through the liturgy the inner man is rooted and grounded in ‘the great love with which [the Father] loved us’ in his beloved Son. It is the same ‘marvelous work of God’ that is lived and internalized by all prayer, ‘at all times in the Spirit.’” (# 1073)

## BEGINNINGS

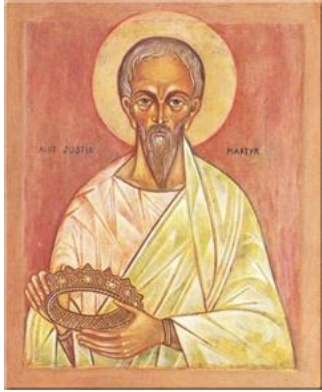
Liturgy is composed primarily, in the narrow sense, of the Eucharist, mentioned separately because of its importance and centrality, the Sacraments and the Liturgy of the Hours.

“The word ‘liturgy’ is etymologically derived from the Greek words *laos* (people [also lay/laity]) and *ergon* (work). Thus the immediate meaning of the compound word *leitourgia* is public works or state projects...The Septuagint employs the word *leitourgia* as many as 170 times to designate the levitic cult...[It also refers to] Christ’s sacrificial or priestly offering whereby he became the *leitourgos* of the sanctuary (Heb. 8: 22), the spiritual sacrifice of Christians (Rom. 15: 16), and the cultic celebration of the Christians who ‘made liturgy to the Lord’ at Antioch (Act. 13: 2).” (*Handbook for Liturgical Studies, 1. A Definition of Liturgy*, by Anscar J. Chupungco OSB, p. 3.)



A very early account of the Eucharist comes from the apologist, St. Justin, martyred in Rome in 165 CE:

“And on the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the apostles or the

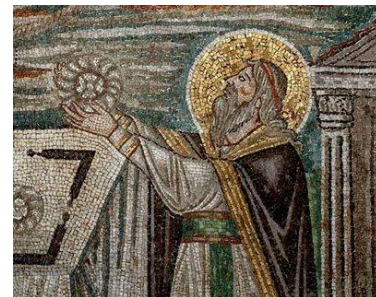


writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has ceased, the president verbally instructs, and exhorts to the imitation of these good things. Then we all rise together and pray, and, as we before said, when our prayer is ended, bread and wine and water are brought, and the president in like The Bread of Life - the people

assent, saying Amen; and there is a distribution to each, and a participation of that over which thanks have been given, and to those who are absent a portion is sent by the deacons.” (*First Apology*, 67)

*The Scripture Source Book for Catholics* (2007), p.221, provides much Scripture background on the Sacraments and many other aspects of Scripture. It is an excellent choice for catechesis. Here are their references for **Eucharist**:

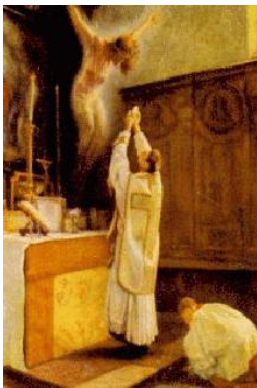
- Roots in Jewish Passover – *Exodus 12: 1-28*
- Melchizedek’s offering – *Genesis 14: 18*
- The priesthood of David – *Psalms 110*
- The priesthood of Jesus – *Hebrews 8-10*
- Multiplication of loaves – *John 6: 1-15*
- The Bread of Life – *John 6: 25-71*
- The Last Supper – *Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14: 22-25; Luke 22: 7-20*
- The Emmaus event – *Luke 24: 13-53*
- Apostolic Church – *Acts 2: 42-47, 20: 7*
- The meaning and effect of the Eucharist – *1 Corinthians 10: 16-17*



## LITURGICAL FAMILIES AND RITES IN THE WEST

At one time there were many varieties of rites, sometimes called 'liturgies', in the West, just as there are still a number of rites in the East. Most of these rites have disappeared in the West.

"The liturgies that were formed in the West are the Roman, the Ambrosian, the Hispanic, the Gallican, and the Celtic. Of these liturgies, the only ones that have survived until our times are the Roman and the Ambrosian. [ The Hispanic or Mozarabic is still celebrated in a few places in the Toledo, Spain diocese.) The Roman is celebrated in all of the West and in Africa, Latin America, and the Far East; the Ambrosian is limited to the Archdiocese of Milan." (HLS, 2. *Liturgical Families in the West* by Gabriel Ramis, p. 25)



The **Dominican Rite** is available to those wishing to celebrate it after sufficient training and study.

Information about it is available on the blog site of the Province of St. Joseph (from which the following is taken):

"The ancient Dominican liturgy, largely unchanged since 1256, beautifully expresses the distinctive charism of the primitive Dominican Order...It was

Blessed Humbert of Romans, the fifth master of the Order, who gave the Dominican Rite its final form... By command of the General Chapter of Paris in 1256, an exemplar of Humbert's revision of the Dominican liturgy (containing fourteen liturgical books, including a missal, breviary, antiphonal, and gradual) was kept in Paris, and every province of the Order was obliged to send money to procure copies of them.

"For most of its existence, the Dominican Order has had its own proper liturgy, its own chant tradition, and its own liturgical calendar. This liturgy was not developed for the sake of being exceptional or exclusive, but rather to express the spirit and respond to the needs of

an Order of Preachers. At its core, it represents a rather ancient branch of the Roman Rite. In other important respects, however, it captures and expresses the spirit of the early generations of the Order.” Watch on YouTube: <http://tinyurl.com/3vont7w>

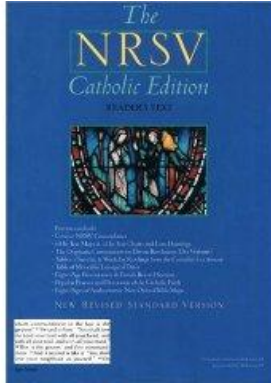
## ECUMENISM and PRAYER SERVICES



In a discussion of Liturgy, mention should be made on the topic of *Ecumenism*, since a breath of fresh and welcome air was ushered in by Vatican II in our relationship with our separated brethren, both in Christianity and outside it. We do emphasize that this fresh air does not dilute our beliefs in opening new lanes of dialogue (note aims 3 and 4 of this Constitution on p. 1). The above picture was taken at Assisi where Pope John Paul II gathered for a prayer service with Christians and Non-Christians:

“In 1986, at Assisi, during the *World Day of Prayer for Peace*, Christians of the various Churches and Ecclesial Communities prayed with one voice to the Lord of history for peace in the world. That same day, in a different but parallel way, Jews and representatives of non-Christian religions also prayed for peace in a harmonious expression of feelings which struck a resonant chord deep in the human spirit.” (*Ut Unum Sint, That They May Be One*, encyclical promulgated by Pope John Paul II, May 25, 1995, #76)

*Ecumenism* is concerned with Christian communities, Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox. We are not yet at the point where we participate in full Eucharistic Communion at an Ecumenical worship of the Eucharist. But we can cooperate in settings with prayers and Bible selections we have in common,



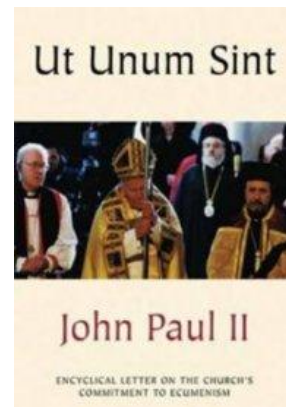
hymns, translations of the Bible (e.g. *New Revised Standard Version*). The Catholic Lectionary has influenced a number of Protestant churches. At many places of worship we all gather together for services for Prayers for Peace, Unity, Thanksgiving, etc. We are even closer with our Orthodox brethren in cooperation.

“It can be said that nowhere is the ecumenical aspect of the liturgy so evident today as in the chief

expression of liturgical worship, the Eucharistic prayer.” [This is because the Eucharistic prayers are based on the earliest models and now widely acceptable.] (*HLC, 6, Liturgy and Ecumenism*, by Basil Studer OSB)

As the Sacraments are part of the Liturgy the following might come as a surprise to some:

” In this context, it is a source of joy to note that Catholic ministers are able, in certain particular cases, to administer the Sacraments of the Eucharist, Penance and Anointing of the Sick to Christians who are not in full communion with the Catholic Church but who greatly desire to receive these sacraments, freely request them and manifest the faith which the Catholic Church professes with regard to these sacraments. Conversely, in specific cases and in particular circumstances, Catholics too can request these same sacraments from ministers of Churches in which these sacraments are valid. The conditions for such reciprocal reception have been laid down in



specific norms; for the sake of furthering ecumenism these norms must be respected.” (*UUS*, #46)

“It remains true that all who have been justified by faith in baptism are incorporated into Christ; they therefore have a right to be called Christians, and with good reason are accepted as brothers by the children of the Catholic Church.” (*Unitatis Redintegratio, Decree on Ecumenism, Nov. 21, 1964*)

Not only do we reach out to our sister Christians but also to Non-Christian religions, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam and Judaism. *Nostra Aetate, (Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions, Vatican II, Oct. 28, 1965)* states:



“The Catholic Church rejects nothing of what is true and holy in these religions. She has a high regard for the manner of life and conduct, the precepts and doctrines which, although differing in many ways from her own teaching, nevertheless often reflect a ray of that truth which enlightens all men.” (#1)

The Ecumenical Movement, of Protestant origin, begun in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, gathered steam early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and has been joined by the Catholic Church in the 1950’s, especially after Vatican II. We, as Dominicans, must do our part and join this movement. “The Sacred Council exhorts, therefore, all the Catholic faithful to recognize the signs of the times and to take an active and intelligent part in the work of ecumenism. (*UR*, #4)... The concern for restoring unity involves the whole Church, faithful and clergy alike.” (*UR*, #5) Our language and attitude must be proper and respectful. Completely avoid name-calling which closes dialogue (witness cable TV).

“[We should make] every effort to avoid expressions, judgments and actions which do not represent the condition of our separated

brethren with truth and fairness and so make mutual relations with them more difficult.” (UR, #4)

## **DIRECTION OF LITURGY**

We learned from *Lumen Gentium* that the Bishops are the shepherds in that they are teachers of doctrine, ministers of sacred worship and holders of office in government.” (#20) How does this work? Who governs Liturgy? The Church answers are contained in the *Code of Canon Law*:

Can. 838 §1. The direction of the sacred liturgy depends solely on the authority of the Church which resides in the Apostolic See and, according to the norm of law, the diocesan bishop.

§2. It is for the Apostolic See to order the sacred liturgy of the universal Church, publish liturgical books and review their translations in vernacular languages, and exercise vigilance that liturgical regulations are observed faithfully everywhere.

§3. It pertains to the conferences of bishops to prepare and publish, after the prior review of the Holy See, translations of liturgical books in vernacular languages, adapted appropriately within the limits defined in the liturgical books themselves.

§4. Within the limits of his competence, it pertains to the diocesan bishop in the Church entrusted to him to issue liturgical norms which bind everyone.



## **SPIRITUAL BUT NOT RELIGIOUS?**

The above sentiments are becoming more and more popular in society today. We do not judge the individual who espouses this because it just might be where they are with the grace they have been given. Of course, there is nothing



wrong, only good, with being spiritual. However, this position is not our position as Dominicans. We have learned from *Lumen Gentium* that we are the 'People of God' not the 'Person of God'. We are the Body of Christ, the Mystical Body, the Branches. The Jewish people epitomized this as they travelled, settled and worshipped together. "You will be my people and I will be you God." (Lev. 26: 12). They rejoiced and suffered together, and always have.

The root of *religion* is *religare* (Latin): to bind together. There is strength, encouragement and perseverance in numbers. Moses was told at Mount Sinai: "It is the passover sacrifice for the Lord. (Ex. 12: 27) You shall be to me a kingdom of priests, a holy nation. (19: 6)...Go to the people and have



them sanctify themselves. (:10)." As we know the Jewish people were *religious* in worshipping together in the Temple and Synagogues. Jesus and the Apostles, being good Jews, did the same. "Do this in memory of me." (Luke 22: 19) After running away the Disciples came together and found strength and received the Holy Spirit. The early Christians came together at great peril to worship in the Catacombs.

So for us, it is not a question of 'either/or' but 'both/and'. The better answer is to be both spiritual and religious. The Liturgy is the best means to achieve this. We, as members of the Kingdom join together on earth, as we will be together in the heavenly Kingdom:

"In the earthly liturgy we take part in a foretaste of the heavenly liturgy which is celebrated in the Holy City of Jerusalem toward which we journey as pilgrims where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God, Minister of the holies and of the true tabernacle."

(*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, #7)

## LITURGY AND THE ORDER OF PREACHERS

Dominicans are known as ‘Preachers’ but they are devoted to Liturgy. St. Dominic, in addition to saying Mass, often attended another Mass. At his canonization process, Brother Stephen of Spain stated: “When he was celebrating Mass, particularly during the words of the Canon, he used to weep and show all the signs of a most intensely fervent love.” (*Early Dominicans*, p. 80) During the process, Brother Ventura added: “He was constant in his attendance at the Divine Office.” (p. 67) The Liturgies of Eucharist and Office – two of our most important means of sanctification as Dominicans, two encounters with Christ. *Sacrosanctum Concilium* drives us to reflect on and live Liturgy. The love for Liturgy must combine mind and heart:



“Every liturgical celebration, because it is an action of Christ the Priest and his Body, which is the Church, is a sacred action surpassing all others. (#7)

“The liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; it is also the fount from which all her power flows. (10)

“[The divine office] is the very prayer which Christ himself together with his Body addresses to the Father.” (84)



A prayerful reading, study and discussion of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* will hopefully deepen our love for Liturgy, especially, the Eucharist and the Liturgy of the Hours. Perhaps we will not be moved to tears as St. Dominic but. At least, to love and union with Christ. Sometimes when we do something every day, it becomes humdrum and matter-of-fact. So when we begin, let us pause, recollect ourselves and say a little prayer to the Holy Spirit. We are not only united with Dominicans the world over but we are praying with our friend, Jesus, to our Father with the guidance of the Holy Spirit. It is *heavenly*.

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9. **Appendix: A Declaration of the Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican on Revision of the Calendar**

## QUESTIONS



## LAY DOMINICAN RULE

We have promised to live by our Rule according to the spirit and charism of St. Dominic as members of the Order of Preachers. With Rule 10 we seek to draw our strength from the Liturgy:

- b. daily participation, as much as possible, in the celebration of the liturgy and the Eucharistic sacrifice
- c. frequent celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation
- d. celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours, in union with the entire Dominican family

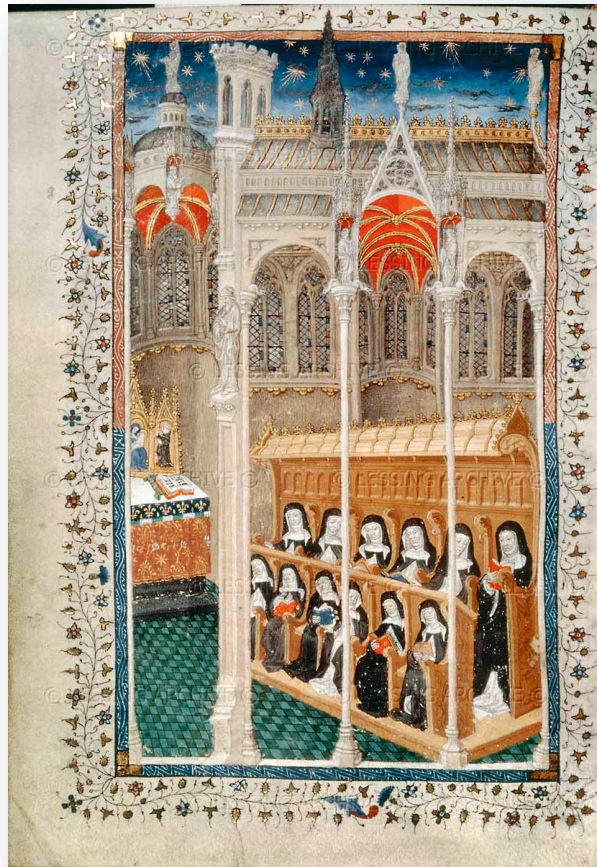
### SUGGESTED QUESTIONS:

1. What are the four aims of the Council?
2. What is Liturgy?
3. What are some forms of Liturgy?
4. In what ways is Christ present in the Sacrifice of the Mass?
5. In the restoration of sacred liturgy what aim is above all?
6. How important is Eucharist in my spiritual life?
7. How could I deepen its effect?
8. How has Vatican II increased the use of Scripture in the Eucharist?
9. How has Vatican II changed Baptism and Penance for the better?
10. What are the “Last Rites” now known as and when can we receive it?
11. With whom do we pray the Liturgy of the Hours?
12. It is the voice of whom?



***Sacrosanctum Concilium*** is on the internet: <http://tinyurl.com/428hfvX>

# CENTRAL PROVINCE



## CANDIDACY II

### UNIT 9:

## LITURGY OF THE HOURS

**“AT DUSK, DAWN, AND NOON I WILL GRIEVE AND  
COMPLAIN, AND MY PRAYER WILL BE HEARD.”  
(PSALM 55: 18)**

We have just finished a study of *Sacrosanctum Concilium* on the Liturgy. You might ask why are we now studying the *Liturgy of the Hours*, since it is part of the Liturgy? The reason is that the *Liturgy of the Hours* is, after the Eucharist, a most important part of a Dominican’s spiritual life; in fact, the only liturgical act which we are able to perform ordinarily. We are joined to the Universal Church, especially, to all Dominicans, and to Christ Himself in praying this Office. This opportunity is available to all, ordained and lay. For these reasons it warrants its own study, and for us a period of three months. Hopefully, after this study, we will seriously consider taking on the joyous duty of saying the entire Office when we commit in a few months to our lifetime commitment to the Dominican Order.

On their blog the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecelia, Nashville, TN., wrote the following:

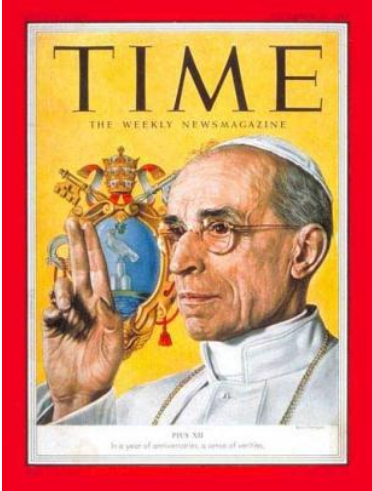
“The Divine Office is not itself a sacrament, but as the official daily prayer of the Church, it extends the prayer of the Mass throughout the day. Also known as the Liturgy of the Hours, the Divine Office it is a ‘sacrifice of praise’ in hymns, psalms, and canticles which sanctifies the hours of the day.”



By saying the Office we can have a *Eucharistic* day. We are able to lift our minds and hearts to God during our day by praying the *Hours* throughout the day. The inspiration behind the words makes all the difference in the world:

“To this lofty dignity of the Church's prayer, there should correspond earnest devotion in our souls. For when in prayer the voice repeats those hymns written under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost and

extols God's infinite perfections, it is necessary that the interior sentiment of our souls should accompany the voice so as to make those sentiments our own in which we are elevated to heaven, adoring and giving due praise and thanks to the Blessed Trinity; 'so



let us chant in choir that mind and voice may accord together.' It is not merely a question of recitation or of singing which, however perfect according to norms of music and the sacred rites, only reaches the ear, but it is especially a question of the ascent of the mind and heart to God so that, united with Christ, we may completely dedicate ourselves and all our actions to Him." (*Mediator Dei*, #145, an encyclical by Pope Pius XII, Nov. 20, 1947)

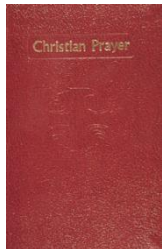
The difficult thing is to keep this recollection going from day to day. As the Jewish People found in their history (read the Jewish Scriptures), it is so easy for us to backslide, to lose a habit, to omit the Divine Office. We can overcome this difficulty of inconstancy by prayerfully understanding the graces available through this praying with the Church and Christ. Secondly, we can simply begin to pray the Office daily for thirty days and establish thereby the habit of saying it. We will then not say "if" but "when" will I read my Office.



"Inconstant souls who are one day recollected and the following day given to outward things, thus losing great graces, do not arrive at the goal. They never seem to grasp the meaning of the Psalmist: 'Taste and see how sweet is the Lord' (Ps. 33). This is the recollection which our Lord speaks of when He says: "We ought always to pray and not to faint" (Luke 18: 1)." (*The Priesthood and Perfection*, ch. 9, *Interior Life of the Priest*, by Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange OP)

## DOCUMENTS FOR STUDY

There are many documents written through the centuries on The Liturgy of the Hours. We will look at two of them, readily available to the student. Internet references will be given at the end of the unit. They are *Laudis Canticum* and the



*General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours*. Both of these are available in *The Liturgy of the Hours*, vol. I of IV, Catholic Book Publishing Co. The latter is available in *Christian Prayer*, Catholic Book Publishing Co., abridged.



### ***LAUDIS CANTICUM***

*Laudis Canticum, The Divine Office*, an Apostolic Constitution (written to the entire Church), promulgated the revised book of the Liturgy of the Hours, by Pope Paul VI on Nov. 1, 1970.

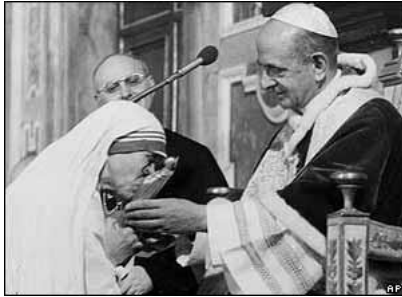
“Apostolic Constitution of Pope Paul VI by which the Divine Office, revised according to the decree of the Second Vatican Council, is officially promulgated. This document gives a historical synthesis of the Divine Office from early Christian times, recalls the norms set down by the Second Vatican Council, and then declares that the new Liturgy of the Hours (Liturgia Horarum) is the only officially approved form of the Divine Office, confirmed by the Holy See for the universal Church in the Latin Rite (November 1, 1970).” (*Modern Catholic Dictionary*, John A. Hardon SJ)



This document is well-worth reading both because it gives the background on liturgical renewal of the Liturgy of the Hours and the development and meaning of Christian prayer.



“The hymn of praise that is sung through all the ages in the heavenly places and was brought by the High Priest, Christ Jesus, into this land



of exile has been continued by the Church with constant fidelity over many centuries, in a rich variety of forms.

“The Office has been drawn up and arranged in such a way that not only clergy but also religious and indeed laity

may participate in it, since it is the prayer of the whole people of God.” (LC)

### ***GENERAL INSTRUCTION OF THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS***

Our objective in this unit is to deepen both our understanding and our appreciation of the centrality of the Liturgy of the Hours in the life of a Dominican. The *GILH*, prayerfully studied, will cover the topic as the prayer of Christ, the prayer of the Church and the prayer which will sanctify our day.

“Christ taught us: ‘You must pray at all times and not lose heart’ (Lk 18: 1). The Church has been faithful in obeying this instruction; it never ceases to offer prayer and makes this exhortation its own: ‘Through him (Jesus) let us offer to God an unceasing sacrifice of praise’ (Heb 15: 15). The Church fulfills this precept not only by celebrating the eucharist but in other ways also, especially through the liturgy of the hours. By ancient Christian tradition what distinguishes the liturgy of the hours from other liturgical services is that it consecrates to God the whole cycle of the day and the night. (#10)

“The Church's voice is not just its own; it is also Christ's voice, since its prayers are offered in Christ's name, that is, ‘through our Lord Jesus Christ,’ and so the Church continues to offer the prayer and

petition that Christ poured out in the days of his earthly life and that have therefore a unique effectiveness.” (#17)

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### **PSALMS**



The 150 Psalms are sacred hymns read chanted or sung during liturgical functions, e.g. the Eucharist, the Liturgy of the Hours and the Sacraments. *Psalmody* is the art of chanting Psalms during worship. This is the practice in monasteries and convents around the world. In certain Orders you cannot become a Priest unless you can sing on key. Chanting the Divine Office was done by St. Dominic when he was a Canon regular in Bishop Diego's church.





“One of the greatest means of union with God for the religious soul is the psalmody, which in religious orders is the daily accompaniment of the Mass. The Mass is the great prayer of Christ; it will continue until the end of the world, as long as He does not cease to offer Himself by the ministry of His priests; as long as from His sacerdotal and Eucharistic heart there rises always the theandric act of love and oblation, which has infinite value as adoration, reparation, petition, and thanksgiving. The psalmody of the Divine Office is the great prayer of the Church, the spouse of Christ; a day and night prayer, which ought never to cease on the surface of the earth, as the Mass does not.” (*The Three Ages of the Interior Life*, ch. 34 *Liturgical Prayer*, by Reginald Garrigou- Lagrange)

## JESUS AND THE PSALMS

The Psalms had been written, memorized and sung by the Jewish people over the centuries. They applied them to their life situations and in the temple they accompanied them with music and often danced to them (Liturgical Dance). Jesus, “this marvelous singer of the Psalms” in the words of St. Augustine, prayed them often.

“When Jesus approached the temple at the age of twelve...he would have sung the Songs of Ascents (Psalms 120-134). And each year at Passover, he would have joined in the Great Hallel (Psalm 136)...At the Last Supper...Jesus said, ‘Even my...Friend..who ate of my bread, has lifted the heel against me’ (Psalm 41: 9)...After supper, the gospels say that Jesus and his companions sang a hymn; this was most likely the Egyptian Hallel (Psalms 113-118)...When leaving the upper room, Jesus and his disciples were probably singing psalms...and in the



agony of dying, Jesus turns to the psalms again: ‘My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?’ (Psalm 22)..Jesus’ final words from the cross, again came from a psalm (31: 5): ‘Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.’” (*The Scripture Source Book for Catholics*, p. 249)

## THE EARLY CHURCH AND PRAYER

The use of the Psalms was a direct carry-over from their Jewish roots in the early Church. They also, it is recorded, met to pray at certain times of the day. Around the year 112 Pliny the Younger wrote of this to the Emperor Trajan:

“...they met on a stated day before it was light, and addressed a form of prayer to Christ, as to a divinity, binding themselves by a solemn oath, not for the purposes of any wicked design, but never to commit any fraud, theft, or adultery, never to falsify their word, nor deny a trust when they should be called upon to deliver it up; after which it was their custom to separate, and then reassemble, to eat in common a harmless meal.”

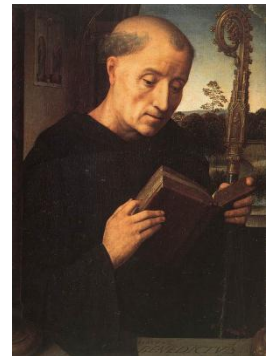
And from Clement of Alexandria [+215]:



“In Book 7 of his *Stromata*, a work on worship and prayer, Clement of Alexandria mentions for the first time the third, sixth, and ninth daily hours, together with the morning Office.” (*Handbook for Liturgical Studies*, vol. 5, *Liturgical Time and Space*, p. 13)

And, lastly from the Rule of St. Benedict [+ 547]:

“Each of the day hours begins with the verse, *God, come to my assistance; Lord, make haste to help me* (Ps. 69[70]: 2), followed by ‘Glory be to the Father’ and the appropriate hymn (ch. 18)...We believe that the divine presence is everywhere and *that in every place the eyes of the Lord are watching the good and the wicked* (Prov. 15: 3). But beyond the least doubt we should believe this to be especially true when we celebrate the divine office.” (ch. 19)



## DOMINICANS AND THE LITURGY OF THE OFFICE

As we have studied, the Dominicans, beginning with our Founder, have been devoted to the Liturgy of the Hours:

“Love for the liturgy is a precious heritage Dominicans owe to their Founder. He himself was completely committed to the liturgy -- a commitment we find expressed in his life, in the Constitutions, and in the way he taught his children. By profession he was a canon regular. He was a priest whose chief duty was to carry out the sacred liturgy in the cathedral of Osma. His life centered around the Divine Office, for he was obliged as a duty of his state to participate daily in chanting the canonical hours. His spirituality, therefore, was basically



a priestly spirituality. Dominic's love for the liturgy included not only the Mass but the Divine Office. He taught the early friars to chant the canonical hours at the prescribed time, if possible, even when they were en route.” (*Dominican Spirituality: Principles and Practice*, ch. V, *Dominican Life is Liturgical*, by William A. Hinnebusch OP)

The book, *Early Dominicans*, mentions in the canonization process of St. Dominic his devotion to the Office:

“He was constant in his attendance at the Divine Office, and used to spend the night in prayer, weeping a lot.” (Br. Ventura, p. 67)

“He followed the Order's observance fully in choir.” (Br. Amizo, p. 71)

“During the celebration of Mass and during the psalmody, tears used to flow in great abundance from his eyes.” (Br. Buonviso, p. 72)

“At Matins he would go round both sides of choir, urging and encouraging the brethren to sing loudly and with devotion.” (Br. Stephen, p. 80)



“When he spent the night in church, he was always there with the rest to celebrate Matins.” (Br. Paul p. 83)

The *Primitive Constitutions* gave instructions on the proper manner of celebrating the Office:

“Matins and Mass and all the canonical hours should be attended by our brethren together...All the hours are to be said in church briefly and succinctly lest the brethren lose devotion and their study be in any way impeded.” (Part I, III)

As is obvious, the devotion of the early Dominicans has been a holy example to be followed by us today. Sometimes we use the truth that our Rule does not bind by sin as an escape-hatch to neglect the daily recitation of the Office. But should we not be bound by love and Dominican devotion to remain faithful to the daily recitation as asked by our Rule? This is our higher calling. Dominican spirituality can never be divorced from the Office, especially for *Finally Professed Lay Dominicans*.



### **“PRAY WITHOUT CEASING.” (1 Thes. 5: 17)**

Pope Paul VI, in *Laudis Canticum*, echoed the sentiments of St. Paul when he introduced the revised Office:

“We have, therefore, every confidence that an appreciation of the prayer "without ceasing" that our Lord Jesus Christ commanded will take on new life. The book for the liturgy of the hours, distributed as it is according to seasons, continually strengthens and supports that prayer.” (# 8)

So, too, the *GILH*:

“In the liturgy of the hours the Church exercises the priestly office of its Head and offers to God ‘without ceasing’ a sacrifice of praise, that is, a tribute of lips acknowledging his name. This prayer is ‘the voice of a bride addressing her bridegroom; it is the very prayer that



Christ himself, together with his Body, addresses to the Father.' 'All who render this service are not only fulfilling a duty of the Church, but also are sharing in the greatest honor of Christ's Bride for by offering these praises to God they are standing before God's throne in the name of the Church, their Mother.'" (III, 15)

Finally, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* sums it up succinctly:

“ ‘Pray constantly . . . always and for everything giving thanks in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God the Father.’ St. Paul adds, ‘Pray at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance making supplication for all the saints.’ For ‘we have not been commanded to work, to keep watch and to fast constantly, but it has been laid down that we are to pray without ceasing.’ [Evagrius Ponticus, *Pract.* 40] This tireless fervor can come only from love. Against our dullness and laziness, the battle of prayer is that of humble, trusting, and persevering love.” (# 2742)

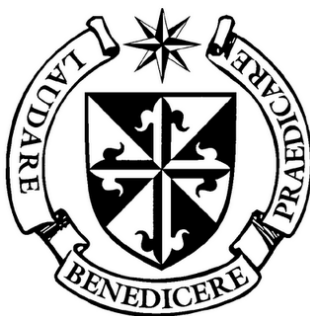
## **RESOURCES**

**LAUDIS CANTICUM** is available on the internet in several places; one of which is:

<http://tinyurl.com/44w366m>

The **GENERAL INSTRUCTION OF THE LITURGY OF THE HOURS**, available here:

<http://tinyurl.com/3d8ytnx>



O

God, come to my as-sistance. R. O Lord, make haste to

help me. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Ho-ly

Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forev-er. Amen.

Al-le-lu-ia.



# CENTRAL PROVINCE



## CANDIDACY II

### UNIT 10: THE RULE

# “PEACE AND MERCY BE TO ALL WHO FOLLOW THIS RULE.” (Gal. 6: 16)



Is a 'Rule of Life' (*regula vitae*) a good thing and, if so, how should it be followed? Is it a necessity for advancing in your spiritual life? During this unit we will answer these questions with some background. Then all should study in detail for three months our Lay Dominican Rule which, with final promises, we will commit to following for the rest of our lives (a good thing). Another translation of *regula* is *guide*. There is a Hindu expression that when the student is ready, the teacher will appear. You are ready; your teacher, your guide, your rule has appeared. It is the '**Lay Dominican Rule**'.

## THE NEED

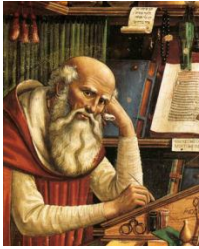
Throughout religious history, from earliest times, spiritual masters have devised rules for their followers. It is so easy to backslide and leave our good intentions behind (pavement of Hell). We are like the Jews of the Hebrew Scriptures, who without the guidance of the Judges, e.g. Othniel, Ehud and Deborah, would lapse and return to their old ways:

“Whenever the Lord raised up judges for them, he would be with the judge and save them from the power of their enemies as long as the judge lived; it was thus the Lord took pity on their distressful cries of affliction under their oppressors. But when the judge died, they would relapse and do worse than their fathers, following other gods in service and worship, relinquishing none of their evil practices or stubborn conduct.” (Judg. 2: 18-19)



## THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES

From the early Middle Ages rules, guides, have been recommended for the serious follower of Jesus. Why reinvent the wheel, when it is already offered to you?



“St. Jerome writes to Rusticus: ‘Do not be your own master and do not set out upon a way that is entirely new for you without a guide; otherwise you will soon go astray.’ St. Augustine also says: ‘As a blind man cannot follow the good road without a leader, no one can walk without a guide.’ No one is a good judge in his own cause by reason of secret pride which may make him deviate from the right path.

“In his conferences, Cassian says that anyone who relies on his own judgment will never reach perfection and will not be able to avoid the snares of the devil. He concludes that the best means to triumph over the most dangerous temptations is to make them known to a wise counselor who has the grace of state to enlighten us. In reality, to manifest them to one who has a right to hear them often suffices to make them disappear.” (*The Three Ages of the Interior Life*, ch. 17, *Spiritual Direction*, by Reginald Garrigou-Lagrangé OP)



## ST. AUGUSTINE

One of the earliest Rules was put together by St. Augustine (+430), the Bishop of Hippo. This is the rule chosen by St. Dominic and others to govern their Orders:

“The letter written by St. Augustine to the nuns at Hippo (423), for the purpose of restoring harmony in their community, deals with the reform of certain phases of monasticism as it is understood by him. This document, to be sure, contains no such clear, minute prescriptions as are found in the Benedictine Rule, because no complete rule was ever written prior to the time of St. Benedict;

nevertheless, the Bishop of Hippo is a law-giver and his letter is to be read weekly, that the nuns may guard against or repent any infringement of it.” (*New Advent Catholic Encyclopedia, Rule of St. Augustine*)

St. Augustine’s Rule was to be read every week; the regular reading of the Dominican Rule in common is encouraged today. Here is the ending of St. Augustine’s Rule:



“May the Lord grant that as lovers of the beauty of the spiritual life and breathing forth the sweet odor of Christ in the holiness of your ways you may faithfully observe these things, not like slaves under the law, but like freemen established under grace. Let this rule be read to you once every week so that in it you can see yourselves reflected as in a mirror lest anything be forgotten and, therefore, neglected. And when you find that you are doing what is here written, thank the Lord, the giver of all good things. But if, on the contrary, anyone perceives that he has fallen into defects, let him mourn over the past, take heed for the future, pray that his faults may be forgiven, and that he may not be led into temptation.”

## ST. BENEDICT

St. Benedict of Nursia (+547), the Father of Western Monasticism, authored the Benedictine Rule nearly 1500 years ago and it is still followed today. It is interesting to note that this rule was written for laymen who wished to lead a life as close as possible to the Gospels and not for clerics. Here is an excerpt from *ch. 73, This Rule only a Beginning of Perfection*:



“Now we have written this Rule in order that by its observance in monasteries

we may show that we have attained some degree of virtue and the rudiments of the religious life.

“But whoever you are, therefore,  
who are hastening to the heavenly homeland,  
fulfill with the help of Christ  
this minimum Rule which we have written for beginners;  
and then at length under God's protection  
you will attain to the loftier heights of doctrine and virtue  
which we have mentioned above.”

The Benedictine Order has followed the motto: *Ora et Labora* (*Pray and Work*). This they and their brothers, Cistercians and Trappists, have followed through the years. All include a vow



of stability, a commitment to live in a particular monastery. This led to the building up of the great monasteries all over Europe in the Middle Ages. Benedict was very opposed to the *gyrovagues* (Think gyroscope and vagrant.); monks “who spend their entire lives drifting from region to region...Always on the move, they never settle down, and are slaves to their own wills, and gross appetites.” (*RB*, ch. 1) Benedict considered them to be the worse type of monk.

## DOMINICANS AND THE RULE

With this in mind you can see why there was such a backlash to the rise of the mendicant orders 700 Years later. What saved these new Orders was that they adopted a Rule and assiduously observed it. The reason that these new *gyrovagues* remained faithful to the ideals of St. Dominic was that he had devised a rule that was democratic and reasonable. In his *Defense of the Mendicants* Thomas of Cantimpre OP



wrote:

“Well, my brethren, you need not be ashamed to be called or to be gyrovagues. You are in the company of Paul, the teacher of the nations, who completed the preaching of the gospel all the way from Spain to Illyria.” (*Early Dominicans*, p. 134)

From the very beginning *The Primitive Constitutions of the Order of Friars Preachers* (Chapter of 1228), which were a reflection of Dominic’s direct influence, established the beneficial need for a rule:

“Because a precept of our Rule commands us to have one heart and one mind in the Lord, it is fitting that we, who live under one rule and one profession, be found uniform in the observance of canonical religious life, in order that the uniformity maintained in our external conduct may foster and indicate the unity which should be present interiorly in our hearts.” (*Prologue*)



Witnesses at St. Dominic’s canonization process (1233) attest to his observance of the Rule:

“He was enthusiastic for regular life and was a great observer of the Rule of the Order.” (*Early Dominicans*, Brother Stephen, p. 80)

“He wanted the Rule to be observed strictly by himself and by the others. He reprimanded offenders justly and so affectionately that no one was ever upset by his correction and punishment.” (*ibid.*, Brother Paul, p. 83)

In modern times Fr. William Hinnebusch OP captures the significance of observing the Rule in his *Dominican Spirituality: Principles and Practices*, especially in *Chapter VII: Dominican Life is Sacrificial*. A meditation could be made simply on the value and need spiritually of *sacrifice* in our lives:

“Our holy Order of Preachers prescribes the laws by which the Dominican must live the religious life in the Rule of St. Augustine, in the Constitutions, in our customs. These regulations are the rubrics by which the religious sacrifices himself to God. The victim offered is self, sacrificed by daily living according to the laws of the Order. This is what the Dominican promised to do when he knelt before his prior at profession and pronounced his vows. He promised to obey ‘according to the Rule of St. Augustine and the Institutions of the Friars Preachers.’



“...amazement is expressed when people hear that Pope John XXII is said to have remarked when he was canonizing St. Thomas Aquinas: ‘Prove to me that a Friar Preacher has kept his rule perfectly, and I will canonize him forthwith without any further proof of sanctity.’ This remark may be legendary, but, if so, it contains a kernel of truth. Sound theology lies behind John's words. It is axiomatic that when



the Church stamps a religious Order or Congregation with her approval, its members have a guarantee that its Rule and Constitutions, its way of living the religious life, is a safe spiritual way, a road that leads to sanctity. During seven centuries, eighteen canonized saints and at least

285 *beati* have lived ‘according to the Rule of St. Augustine, and the Constitutions of the Friars Preachers.’ They belonged to all three branches of the Order, to the First, to the Second, to the Third. Some of the members of the Third Order lived as sisters in community; others as secular tertiaries. Each branch of the Order leads its members to sanctity.”

What greater proof of the sanctifying nature of the Rule is there than the *sancti et beati* of our Order. They serve as an example of the possibilities for ourselves. Let us take them to heart.

## THE PURPOSE OF A RULE

The proximate purpose of a rule is to enable different men and women to live in harmony. With all observing the same rules there should be less friction which is bound to arise.

“Without a stable rule of life regulating procedures, order and obligations, it would be impossible for men (or women) to live in religious peace.” (*The Place of Study in the Ideal of St. Dominic*, by James A. Weisheipel OP)



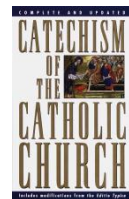
There is also an ultimate purpose of a rule of life which goes to the heart of Christianity. It is the desire of our spiritual life to be united to God while a pilgrim in the Kingdom. Sometimes the difficulty is that we aim too low. We do have many teachers in the spiritual life who can guide us on our journey.



“What then is the true interior life? The great spiritual writers reply: *The interior life is a life of intimate union with God, achieved by perfect self-denial and by constant recollection and prayer.* This doctrine, taught and developed by St. Augustine, St. Anselm, St. Bernard, St. Thomas, the *Imitation of Christ*, St. John of the Cross, St. Francis de Sales, has strong scriptural foundation, in particular these words of St. Paul: “Therefore if you be risen with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God. Mind the things that are above, not the things that are upon the earth. For you are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God.” (*The Priesthood and Perfection*, ch. 9, *Interior Life of the Priest*, by Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange)

The *Catholic Catechism of the Catholic Church* speaks of ‘Christian Holiness’ in that “Spiritual progress tends toward ever more intimate union with Christ.” (#2104)

“Keeping the same rule of life, believers share the ‘blessed hope’ of those whom the divine mercy gathers into the ‘holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.’” (# 2016)





The CS Lewis Institute Blog nicely lays out a description of a Rule of Life:

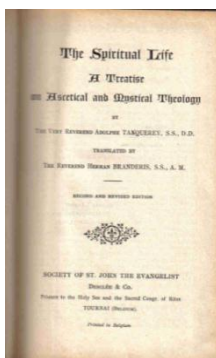
“A Rule of Life is an intentional pattern of spiritual disciplines that provides structure and direction for growth in holiness. A Rule establishes a rhythm for life which is helpful for being formed by the Spirit, a rhythm that reflects a love for God and respect for how he has made us. The disciplines which we build into our rhythm of life help us to shed the ‘old self’ and allow our ‘new self’ in Christ to be formed. Spiritual disciplines are means of grace by which God can nourish us. Ultimately a Rule should help you to love God more.”  
*(Instructions for Developing a Personal Rule of Life)*

So we are seeking by means of our Rule of Life no less than a total transformation of ourselves so that we can echo St. Paul: “Yet I live, no longer I, but Christ lives in me.” (Gal. 2: 20) This is admittedly a tall order but what a goal! It has been done by Lay Dominicans.



## KEEPING A RULE OF LIFE

Now that we have examined the need and the purpose of a Rule of Life, we must ask how are we to observe it? We know that blessed Father Dominic kept the Rule completely. It is a fact that our Rule does not bind us under sin but, rather, binds under love no less demandingly.



“[The Rule] must be observed **in its entirety**, that is to say, fully, in all its parts, and with punctuality. If we pick and choose among the various points of our rule, and this without reasonable cause, we shall carry out those that cost us less and omit those that are more difficult. We should then lose the chief advantages to be derived from the exact observance of a rule...The rule, then, must be kept in its totality and to the letter, as far as possible. (#569)...The rule must be observed **in a Christian manner**, that is to say, with supernatural motives, in order to do the will of God, and thus give Him the most genuine proof of our love. (#572) (*The Spiritual Life: A Treatise on Ascetical and Mystical Theology*, by Adolphe Tanqueray SS)

## THE LAY DOMINICAN RULE

Sometimes it seems that we take our Rule lightly, if we take it at all. When we were received into the order, we were presented with a copy of the Rule of the Dominican Laity. Did we become familiar with it? The Provincial Formation Program, Candidacy I, devotes Unit 9 to *The Rule*. It is necessary to understand it to prepare for Candidacy II and our “promise to live according to the Rule of the Dominican Laity for three years.” Now we are preparing to promise: “I will live according to the Lay Dominican Rule for my entire life.” Before members make a life-long commitment they should understand and love their Rule and see its real value and place in their sanctification.



### “HE WHO LIVES BY RULE LIVES UNTO GOD.”

“With a rule of life, it is easy to infuse *supernatural motives* into all our actions. The mere fact of conquering our tastes and whims puts order into our life and directs our actions towards God...Thus each and every one of our actions is explicitly sanctified and becomes an act of love.” (op. cit., A. Tanquerey, #561)



Our Rule is what helps to keep us together in peace. Rule #2 states:

“Some of these disciples of Christ, moved by the Holy Spirit to live a life according to the spirit and charism of Saint Dominic, are incorporated into the Order through a special promise according to their appropriate statutes.”

During this unit of study we have looked at the *Need*, the *History* and the *Purpose* of a Rule. Now it is necessary for us to study carefully our Rule. Read it and discuss it and then *live it with joy*. It is a wonderful life.



**PEACE AND MERCY TO ALL  
WHO FOLLOW THIS RULE**