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The Southern Star

ISSUE #16

Newsletter for the Dominican Sisters of Wanganui

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"The love of God is fulfilled and completed in the love of your neighbour."
St Catherine of Siena

LETTER FROM MOTHER prioress GENERAL

Mother Mary Micaela O.P.

Just lately we had a visit from Father Albert, O.P., who has always been true to the Dominican motto “Veritas” in discussing our rendition of the Divine Office. In other words, when it was horrible he said it was horrible! At his recent visit however, I asked him what he thought of the Office and he said it was as different as night from day – presumably from previous horrible efforts. I took the remark as a compliment, and the experience moved me to ask myself how I, a tone-deaf person, came to be possessed of a little Congregation which was actually doing rather well with the Divine Office.

My own liturgical career was hardly glorious, though the Dominicans in Dunedin were incredibly long-suffering and never reproached me for my poor singing. So how did we manage to restore the Dominican Rite with such a poor conduit for passing on the tradition?

First of all, I was not exposed in my novitiate days to the full tradition as the Sisters were using the 1967 English translation of the Dominican Office when I entered. About a year after that the whole Congregation switched to the Roman Breviary in English, which meant the end of the Dominican Rite for us, though the Sisters did keep some of the ceremonial they had been used to all their lives.

However, when I left the Dominican Sisters of New Zealand I stayed for a time with the lovely Conventual Dominicans of Ganmain, who were older than me and who had kept the Dominican ceremonial better than the New Zealand Sisters. From the Wagga Wagga Sisters I first learned to sing Compline in Latin and to sing the Salve Regina after Compline, rather than after Vespers as was done in Dunedin, also how to do the Libera procession which I had never seen before.

Then, when I was wandering in the wilderness the Lord sent me a great desire to say the Office in the Dominican Rite, so I sent to a bookshop in America to

buy a set of Dominican Breviaries, fortunately guessing that 1962 Latin Breviaries would be right. When the Breviaries arrived, I began saying the Office out of them, finding that at first it was best to say the Sunday Office every day of the week and to introduce the other days slowly. When I had mastered the weekly cycle of the Office, I introduced the celebration of the Saints’ days and so I arrived at saying the full Office in the Dominican rite. My Latin, thanks be to God, was good enough to read the rubrics and I found that I could remember enough of the Dominican ceremonial learned in Dunedin and Ganmain to understand what the rubrics meant. At one stage I tried getting up for the Night Office but a few days convinced me that, however romantic the Night Office might be, it was not for school-teachers! I already had a Compline book, sent to me in Ganmain by one of the Dunedin Sisters, and the Ganmain Sisters had sung Compline according to the Dominican Rite, so I knew the ceremonial and I had heard the tunes, though I knew I could never sing the tones accurately or even keep in tune when the Office was recto-toned. I just hoped that the Lord would look after that if he ever sent me some candidates for a new religious community.

Well, the Lord did send me candidates in his own good time and while they were not musicians one of them had stayed with the Fanjeaux Dominicans and had picked up the tunes for Compline and knew how to recto-tone, though our first efforts must have been pretty shaky. Gradually more people arrived and we had a couple of helpful visits from Father Albert Kallio, O.P., who was able to help us improve our singing. We also brought over a chant expert from France in two Christmas holidays and had really good chant schools for the whole Congregation. Finally, some very musical Sisters entered the Convent so that Father Albert told me that the quality of our chant had improved until it was “as different as night from day” from our previous efforts.

Motherhouse of the Dominican Sisters of Wanganui

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Tel: 00-61-3-5629-2167

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www.dominicansisters.net.nz

During the month of November, we did the Libera Procession for the Holy Souls both here in the Convent and in the Bunyip Cemetery during our week of visiting the cemetery after the feast of All Souls. There was something very lovely about processing round a country cemetery with candles and Holy Water doing our best for the Poor Souls. And while we prayed for the Holy Souls we were also grateful to God for having enabled us to celebrate the Dominican Liturgy in all its glory, including such seasonable “extras” as Tenebrae and Matins sung in all its glory before major feasts, as well as chanted on ordinary days.

As you can tell from the above: Dominicans love the Liturgy and we are very grateful to God for giving this gift to the Order, that we are permitted to celebrate the

full Divine Office, and that the Lord has brought us little by little to the point where we can celebrate the Divine Office with the beauty of chant and ceremonial which reflects the beauty of the Heavenly Liturgy.

Mother Mary Michaela, O.P.

An Important Announcement

In order to better prepare a future solution for the Catholic Education of girls in Tynong, His Lordship Bishop Bernard Fellay and the Dominican Sisters have established a long-term plan which will also accommodate the new regulations of the Victorian Government regarding the running of schools. Rosary Convent will function from this coming year uniquely as a Novitiate and House of Studies for the Dominicans of Wanganui, while endeavouring to complete the construction of the Convent facilities. It is the desire of the Society of St Pius X and of the Dominicans to work towards the day when the Sisters can fully assume the direction of their own girls' school. The Sisters count on, and are grateful for, the continued support of the faithful who understand the need for Catholic Education in today's world.

The Dominican Sisters of Wanganui

ROSARY CONVENT

Tynong; Melbourne; AUSTRALIA

Race-Day Gala - Thank You All!

The first day of the September holidays saw the Sisters busy with our major fundraiser of the year: a Family Gala at the Pakenham Racecourse. With many of the faithful from Corpus Christi mobilised to help the Sisters, it was a busy but enjoyable day at the races. With market stalls, tid-bits, games, live music and rapid raffles galore, there was something for everyone, whether you were eight or 80! It was also a good opportunity to reach out to the wider community, as the race-day gala had been featured in the Pakenham Gazette and advertisements placed in the post offices of the suburbs around Tynong. So there were plenty of unfamiliar faces among the friends who came to join us at the racecourse - many of whom had never seen nuns before!

The Sisters would like to say “Thank You” again to all who have helped us make this event a success. We hope to see you next year!





A Musical Soiree

Fundraising is always an ever-present need here at Rosary Convent, with the other half of the Convent still a dream yet to be materialised. God has been good however, with generous benefactors initiating fundraising events to assist the Sisters. Over two weekends in October, the family of Sr Mary Agnes kindly opened up their garden and house for an afternoon of music and culture. A ticketed event which was well-attended, the audience all agreed that it had been a real treat to listen to lively renditions of Bach, Ravel and Debussy executed with flair by guest performers Sr Mary Anna O.P., Sister Mary Agnes, Nicholas Hovens, Paul Fitzpatrick, and Bernadette Fitzpatrick. With the tune of *Czardas* (a fast-paced Hungarian violin-piano duet) still ringing in our ears, the Sisters would like to thank the Hovens family for their kindness and generosity.

A Happy and Holy Death: Our Privilege

There is a well-known saying in Italy: "Be a Dominican when you die," for every Dominican shares in the merits of the entire Order. Furthermore, we also have the consolation of the many prayers offered for the repose of our souls after death. The Dominican Order also has many customs such as the singing of the Salve at the hour of death, and special indulgences at the moment of death. Towards the end of November we had the great honour of assisting at the deathbed of one of our Dominican Tertiaries here in Tynong, Sister Therese-Dominique T.O.P. (Mrs Sonia Borgonovo). Sister Therese-Dominique was only 55 when she died and edified all by her patient suffering and cheerful resignation. As is customary for lay Tertiaries, she was buried in the full habit of the Dominican Order. Sister Therese-Dominique T.O.P. now has the consolation of knowing that members of the Dominican Order will be continually offering up suffrages for the repose of her soul. May she rest in peace.



Floodwaters Hit Rosary Convent

Wild weather wrecked havoc around the Convent as flash floods hit the third weekend of December. With a deluge of rain equivalent to an entire month's rainfall pouring down from the Heavens over the space of a couple of hours, the pond at the end of the driveway quickly overflowed its banks and formed a massive pool of water that covered our driveway and flowed halfway across the boys' playing field of St Thomas Aquinas College. While the ducks were ecstatic at the expansion of their watery environs, the Sisters were literally stranded in the Convent with access out onto the main road cut off by the floodwaters. Happily the waters subsided in time for us to hop into the van and travel to Mass on Sunday morning, but the ground remains wet and swampy. Hopefully that will be rectified when further works are carried out on the Convent and driveway (though that can only happen when funds flow in!).

A Dominican House of Studies

Forming our young Sisters in the Image of Veritas



The motto of the Dominican Order is “*Veritas*” – the Truth. In an Order dedicated to preaching and teaching for the salvation of souls, study is not just a suggestion or an optional activity – it is of strict obligation. One cannot give what one does not possess. A Dominican aspirant ardently applies herself to study in order to equip her mind and soul with the knowledge needed to teach well, for the benefit of souls.

From this year on, the Motherhouse in Tynong will serve as the Congregation’s Novitiate and House of Studies. Like an active hive of bees, the Sisters make honey from the sweet nectar of a thorough program of well-rounded studies.

The Postulancy and Novitiate begin a life of learning with a wide variety of courses. In addition to daily, personal study of Holy Scripture, Theology and spiritual reading, Postulants and Novices attend lectures on:

- Liturgy and Divine Office
- Holy Scripture
- Latin
- Gregorian Chant
- Philosophy and Theology of St Thomas Aquinas
- Vows and Constitutions
- Religious Virtues
- History of the Dominican Order and its Spirituality
- Humanities (Literature and History)
- and sound Catholic Pedagogy

Does that sound like a lot? Well, that’s the groundwork, the variety of nectar if you like, which prepares the Novice to make her Religious Vows and temporary Profession. The busy bees delight in such nectar!

For two more years after her first profession, the “Junior Professed” Sister will continue deepening her religious, philosophical and human formation. If she needs to complete her higher education and obtain teaching qualifications, that is pursued at this point. Here at the House of Studies in Australia, we will be working on developing a Teachers’ College which will provide a Bachelor’s Degree for the Sisters who do not already have one, as well as the teaching qualifications which are required in Australia and New Zealand. It is important that the Sisters receive training in the most effective pedagogical methods which they will need in the classroom, in keeping with the principles of Catholic

education. This, too, keeps the bees buzzing with enthusiasm!

But the Teachers’ College will not only benefit the members of our religious Congregation. It will also be available to other young Catholics wishing to obtain a thorough preparation for teaching, thus providing well-trained lay teachers for our schools, and for other Catholic schools.

Once a Sister has her qualifications, has she finished studying? A Dominican continues studying both religious and secular subjects during her whole life. She must provide for today’s youth an education that equips them for their place in the world. As Catholics, they will need to be *in* the world, but not *of* the world – this is the daunting but sublime task of the Dominican teaching Sister. Yes, the bees continue producing the sweet product of their labours.

Where does she obtain the strength and stamina for this pace of studies? From the deep wells of prayer – daily Mass and the Divine Office, as well as the meditation of the Holy Rosary. Thus prayer and study rhythmically alternate throughout the day, without forgetting the wholesome balance of recreation and exercise which add a harmonious note of joy to the melody to the Sisters’ formative years. All taken together, the buzzing bees create a stunning symphony of the wide-ranged wisdom gleaned from their reading and learning.



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thesouthernstar@dominicansisters.net.nz

A Day in the Life of a Dominican Novice

If, like most people, you have ever wondered just *what on earth do the Sisters do all day*, we give you a sneak peak into life in the Convent - through the eyes of a Novice! It can get pretty busy at times, but with the grace of God and lots of prayer, we survive!



5:10am: A new day dawns, and the bell rings to rouse the Sisters from their beds. I'm not sure the neighbours around us appreciate the bell going at cockcrow nearly every morning!



Our first work of the day is the Divine Office. The Sisters are bound to the choral recitation of the Office, which means that each Hour of the Breviary is either chanted or sung together as a community.

The Dominican Rite incorporates many external gestures and signs that signal the interior sentiments of our hearts as we pray, such as bows, inclinations, and other customs dear to the Order, modelled after our Holy Father Saint Dominic's *Nine Ways of Prayer*.



After Lauds, Prime, Pretiosa and Terce, we make half an hour of mental prayer in silence. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is then offered in our little chapel.

Study is an important part of Dominican life. The Novices and other Sisters all do some form of study.

This may take the form of classes taught by Mother, or secular studies through a University, or personal study of Holy Scripture, Liturgy, Music, or some other aspect relevant to our apostolate and spirituality.





Time is also allotted for various duties around the house, such as cooking and cleaning, washing and folding of the laundry - or, if you have the fortune of being appointed Sister Sacristan, taking care of the linens and setting up for Mass and other liturgical ceremonies and community exercises of piety.



Meals are taken together in common in the Refectory. A spiritual book is read while we take our meals in silence. Meals are concluded with the Monastic grace, which involves chanting of the Psalm *Miserere* as the Sisters go in procession to the chapel.

Each day concludes with Compline and an exercise dear to every Dominican's heart, the *Salve* procession. Two-by-two, we salute Our Lady and thank God for the many graces received during the day.



Then there is also two periods of recreation daily to look forward to: half an hour of blessed companionship with the Sisters, where we get to speak with each other while doing some useful activity such as crafts, embroidery, or sometimes, a walk around the bush. The rest of the day, you see, is spent in silence; we don't talk unless absolutely necessary.



The cat appreciates the silence, since her preferred activity is taking many cat-naps.





The Dominican Sisters of Wanganui

warmly invite you to a

Solemn High Mass

offered by

Reverend Father Alphonsus Mary, C.Ss.R.

Sunday, 6th January 2019

10.00 a.m.

and the ceremonies of

Renewal of Vows

Sister Teresa Joseph, O.P.

Sister Mary Amata, O.P.

Sister Mary Imelda, O.P.

Sister Mary of Compassion, O.P.

First Profession

Sister Mary Agnes

Sister Mary Osanna

And thereafter to a lunch reception in the parish hall.

Please bring a plate and come join us on this joyful occasion.

Corpus Christi Church, 15 Granite Lane, Tynong, Victoria 3813

Laudare. Benedicere. Praedicare

You Can Help Us

Give a once-off donation

Sponsor a convent cell or room

Donate grocery items or supermarket vouchers

Undertake fundraising projects for us

Sponsor an individual Sister

Give regular weekly or monthly donations

Sponsor the studies of a Sister

Make or donate items we can sell

Pray for us; have Masses said for our intentions

Give your life to God in the religious state

Join our fundraising committee

Join the Dominican Third Order and help us by your prayers and good works

Your generosity will help us rebuild Catholic Tradition by...

- completing our Motherhouse
- providing rooms for postulants
- building facilities for our Teachers' College and nurturing a new generation of Religious Teaching Sisters for your children and your children's children

If you are able to help us in any way, please contact Mother General at (03) 5629 2167 or email mother.micaela@gmail.com

We promise a lifetime of prayers and are confident that God will reward you a hundredfold.

St Dominic's Convent

Wanganui; NEW ZEALAND

Camp Immaculata 2018

If all the tales of valiant Poland were put into a story book, it would probably outsell the current bestsellers in a matter of hours. Our girls at St. Dominic's discovered how much more there is to discover about Poland in our annual school camp to Pahiatua, an out-of-the-way New Zealand town which was once a refuge site for 734 WWII Polish orphans. As well as being privileged to meet with one of the original orphans - a lovely lady and deeply Catholic - our girls choreographed their own Polish dances, designed their own Polish hairstyles (flowers, red ribbon and plaits are essential) and gave beautiful polyphonic renditions of Polish Christmas carols. We visited a replica of the famous icon of Our Lady of Czestochowa, ate Polish-style food and even experienced what it was like being woken up at midnight by Soviets! A camp about Poland had to include St Maximilian Kolbe, and it was grand to see so many girls enter into the theme of the camp by their fortitude, kindness and spirit of service. This we hope will make Camp Immaculata 2018 worthy of inclusion at least as a footnote in the Tales of Poland - the Tales of the Triumphs of Our Lady.



Australia vs New Zealand

The pupils of Saint Dominic's College were somewhat relieved from their study for mock examinations when the senior girls of Saint Thomas Aquinas College visited from Australia. Impromptu debates were held during which the two schools were challenged to use their communication and speaking skills. The girls were evenly matched and provided good entertainment for each other and for the Sisters and priests. The pupils also competed with each other in an exciting netball match during which a healthy sense of patriotism was displayed by both Australians and New Zealanders. The game was exciting throughout, with the Saint Dominic's College team winning with a score of 17-12.



Bike-a-thon 2018: A Record Breaker!

Once again the girls and Sisters of St Dominic's College took to their bicycles for the semi-annual school bike-a-thon. Much time had gone into seeking sponsors for this fundraiser and many who were on their bikes, had pledges per lap, which only served to intensify their drive to go as fast as they could throughout the hour they had to ride. A cheerful spirit surrounded the riders during the entire event, as those who were counting laps continued to cheer on the riders in the united cause for their school. By the end of the day, all were tired, but with what gratitude and joy did all hear the news that this bike-a-thon turned out to raise the most money on record. *Deo Gratias!*



Instaurare Omnia in Christo

Restoring All Things in Christ Through Catholic Culture



For several months prior to September 3, the girls of St Dominic's College were very busy singing, dancing, writing and acting - preparing to present to their parents, friends and fellow-parishioners a sample of the great variety found within Catholic culture. Their three-in-one concert and inter-house competition (Music, Dancing and Drama) took place on the feast of St Pius X, whose motto, "To restore all things in Christ," signified his great vision of uniting all nations under the rule of Christ the King. The pupils presented performances from different nations throughout the world – nations which have all been influenced by Our Lord, and which we hope will one day be restored to Christ "through Mary," as St Maximilian Kolbe used to add. The performances began with an example of this motto in action: *Mo Maria*, a hymn to Our Lady written by New Zealand's first Catholic Bishop in the Maori language. As the test piece for the singing competition, it was sung by each of the houses in turn.

Throughout the school year, we had encouraged the students to learn about their ancestry and the diverse origins of their families. To further their awareness of this diversity, each of the school houses – Calaroga, Bologna and Prouille – was assigned a particular region of the world to become more familiar with, and the next item on the programme, their dance, was chosen from that region. With their flowing skirts and vibrant colours, Calaroga were recognisable representatives of the Asia-Pacific area as they performed *Sayaw Sa Cuyo*, a Filipino Dance in honour of Saint Augustine. Bologna's Ukrainian dance was part of their representation of the culture of Eastern Europe. Tambourines in hand and a lively pace are characteristics of the Italian *Tarantella*, and were faithfully represented in a rendition by Prouille, our representatives for Western Europe.

Next came the anxiously-awaited drama competition. Presented with a folk-tale from their region, the members of each house, led by their captain and vice-captain, had been required to dramatise, stage, and now perform it. The plays also incorporated the second component of the music competition: a song originating from the same region as the play.

Bologna kept the audience entertained with their dramatisation of a German tale, "Charlemagne the

Robber." In the quiet town of Ingelheim, peace is shattered by chaos as the Emperor Charlemagne is awakened by an angel and commanded to become a robber. This is a tale of chivalry, a fight for the protection of throne and life; a tale of a black knight, as righteous as Robin Hood himself, who is wrongfully exiled, and a villainous noble whose greed provokes him to plot against his own brother-in-law. Thanks to the message of the angel, right triumphs in the end, and victory (in this rendition) was celebrated to the strains of Handel's *Hallelujah Chorus*.

Prouille presented a Breton legend, *Lady Yolanda's Thimble*. When the men of Brittany must leave to aid the Crusade in the Holy Land, the women are left to occupy themselves with their needles as they await their return. But "Old Nick" and his band of imps try to frustrate the women's work, ensuring that they return to idleness and vanity. One Lady Yolanda, however, continues to sew, discovering the protection a mere shell can give. The women, using the humble thimble, overcome their vices in time for the Crusaders' return, thus winning their own victory over Old Nick.

Calaroga presented a Japanese fairy tale, *The Black Bowl*. A fatherless beggar-maid promises to obey her dying mother's wish that she wear a black bowl on her head 'until the right time comes'. After the death of her mother, the young girl, facing ill-treatment and misunderstanding, is tempted to disobey. Nevertheless, she persists and is rewarded through the providential visit of a ballad-singer, whose recommendation leads to her employment by a rich farming family. At her eventual wedding with the family's eldest son, the black bowl is magically removed and showers the bride with jewels forming a matchless dowry.

Diversity in unity: these words indicate that even where there is unity, diversity can still exist. Saint Pius X desired to unite all nations within the Church, whilst allowing them to keep their unique character. On a smaller scale, such a union amidst diversity can be seen in our parish – "from all the lands on earth we come", yet we are united in our Catholic faith and culture. Though the diverse expressions of that culture handed down by tradition in many lands seem to be disappearing, we hope that the work that went into our St Pius X celebrations will be a small contribution to the restoration of these, as of all things, in Christ.

WE ARE TRUE MENDICANTS NOW.

With Rosary Convent now functioning uniquely as a Novitiate and House of Studies, the Sisters in Tynong, Australia, depend entirely on your goodwill and generosity to help us cover our day-to-day expenses while we continue to organise fundraising events for the completion of the construction of the Motherhouse.

Please consider helping us out - whether with gifts of cash or regular monthly donations. In the absence of a regular stipend, we are truly grateful for every little effort and sacrifice that helps us to continue living our traditional Dominican way of life.

We would like to thank those who have already pledged regular donations - these gifts, no matter how small, do make a difference.

May Our Lady of the Rosary reward your generosity and kindness to the Spouses of Her Divine Son. The Sisters pray specially for you during our weekly Chapter.

*Please note
Important
changes*

AUSTRALIA

Our account details in Australia are: Dominican Sisters of Wanganui,
Westpac Account, BSB: 033-636, A/C #334 285

Cheques can be made out to "The Dominican Sisters of Wanganui"
and sent to: Motherhouse and Novitiate, P.O. Box 50, Tynong, VIC. 3813, Melbourne, Australia.

Please note that donations no longer qualify for a tax deductible receipt

NEW ZEALAND

Our account details in New Zealand are: Dominican Sisters of Wanganui
Westpac Account, Victoria Ave, Wanganui BSB: 030-791, A/C #0728558
Cheques can be made out to "The Dominican Sisters of Wanganui" and sent to:
Motherhouse and Novitiate, 12b York Street, Wanganui, 4501, New Zealand.

SINGAPORE

Our account details in Singapore are: Friends of the International Priestly Society of St. Pius X
United Overseas Bank (UOB), A/C # 143-300-495-2, Changi Airport Branch
Airport Boulevard #B16-17 Passenger Terminal 2 Building Singapore Changi Airport
Singapore 819643, Institution Code: 7375; Branch Code: 068; SWIFT: UOVBSGSG
Cheques can be made out to "Friends of the International Priestly Society of St. Pius X" and sent to:
Motherhouse and Novitiate, SSPX, 286 Upper Thomson Road, Singapore 574402.

UNITED STATES

Our account details in the United States are: Dominican Sisters of Wanganui,
Wells Fargo Bank, A/C # 2 015 569 425, Routing # 1210 42882
Cheques can be made out to "The Dominican Sisters of Wanganui" and sent to:
Motherhouse and Novitiate, Attn: Loren Vaccarezza, 1590 Berryessa Road, San Jose, CA 95133
All donations to our U.S. account now qualify for a tax deductible receipt!

