

AUTUMN 2021

# *The Southern Star*

ISSUE #25

Newsletter for the Dominican Sisters of Wanganui

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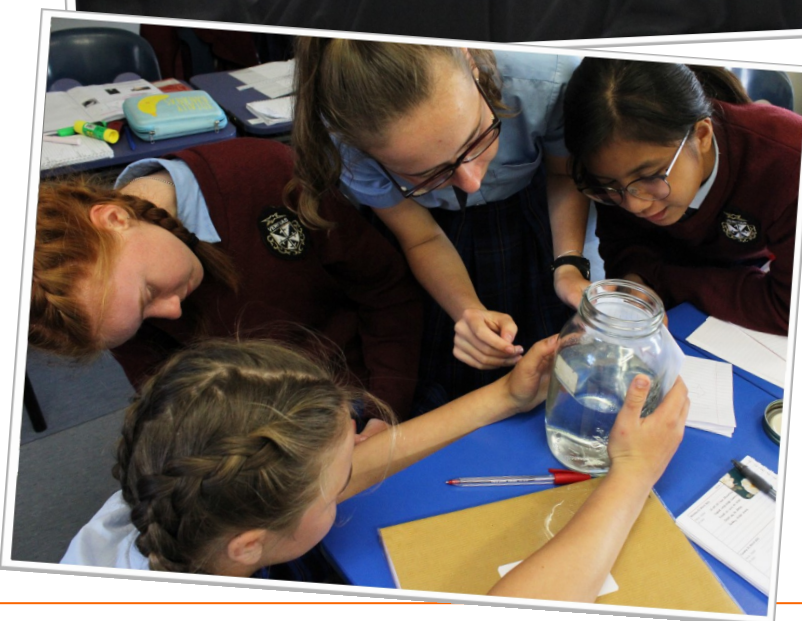
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**“Be what God wills you to be and you will have peace... love and be humble interiorly and you will work wonders in this more than desolate world.”**

Mother Margaret Hallahan, Foundress of the Dominican Sisters of Stone

# LETTER FROM MOTHER Prioress GENERAL

Mother Mary Madeleine, O.P.

*E*n avant, tout est votre! (Go forward, all is yours !) Thus spoke St Joan of Arc to her soldiers at the siege of Orleans assuring them that the victory was theirs because of their trust in God.

St Joan has been chosen as the patroness of our senior French class this year and the Sisters are working to fill those girls and all of our pupils with confidence in God in these difficult times. You will see in this edition of the newsletter articles about the activities the Sisters have been involved in over the Autumn months.

We have new members joining our various groups to further their spiritual life. We will need young women like St Joan of Arc willing to fight the battles we are faced with in the world today. They will need the strength that comes from receiving the Sacraments and knowing that they are part of a group banded together sharing the same experiences and supporting each other in the fight. "United we stand, divided we fall!"

Father Albert has written an article about the Dominican Third Order and we encourage our friends and ex-pupils to consider becoming a tertiary. This will give them a closer relationship with the Sisters being a part of the Dominican family and supporting our work by their prayers and sacrifices and in return they themselves will benefit from the prayers and sacrifices of the Sisters.

Also during this period we were dazzled by the musical abilities of our pupils in their inter-house music competition. Playing a musical instrument, singing and traditional dancing are all very good pastimes to be encouraged to maintain good spirits among the girls especially in a world where people don't know how to entertain themselves.

We were honoured to have the presence of Fr Themann, the District Superior, on this occasion during his visit to the parish. He willingly accepted to be on the panel of judges.

Soon after Father's visit we were sad to see our Dominican chaplain depart for Canada. He was replaced by Fr Elias OSB as our new chaplain. It reminds us of the many contacts that Dominicans have had in the past with Benedictines and as Mother Margaret Hallahan O.P. said, "If you cannot have a Dominican, then a Benedictine is the next best thing." Our holy Father Saint Dominic was himself named after an 11th Century Benedictine saint - Saint Dominic of Silos. And it was in the Monastery of Santo Domingo de Silos that his mother, Blessed Jane of Aza, received an answer to her prayer - and the meaning of the vision that she had about the dog with the flaming torch in its mouth, setting the world on fire. Additionally, St Thomas Aquinas was educated by the Benedictine monks of Monte Cassino from the age of five. So, we are in good hands!

In June the girls walked proudly in the processions for Corpus Christi and the feast of St Anthony, patron of the parish. These occasions give them opportunities to show their faith and loyalty to the Church. We hope that in all of these activities the girls hear St Joan of Arc speaking to them, "Go forward, all is yours!" and we hope and pray that they continue to realise, even when they are no longer at school, the need for loyalty to the Church and to their Alma Mater.

Mother Mary Madeleine OP

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# News from St Dominic's Convent

Wanganui; NEW ZEALAND

## Third Order Dominicans

One branch of the Order of Preachers that is experiencing growth here in Oceania is the Third Order. In Samoa, a group of six postulants is preparing to receive the habit, God willing, on the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary. Meanwhile, they have been studying the Rule at monthly meetings and, on the apostolic side, promoting the Rosary in a prison they visit and among children in foster care. Here in Wanganui, we have several new postulants, and on Pentecost Sunday, just before Fr Albert left, he gave the Third Order scapular to a new novice, Sister Catherine Marie Joyce. The Sisters attended the ceremony and a small celebration afterward to welcome this new member to St Dominic's family. May she receive the grace of holy perseverance under Our Lady's mantle!



## Sodality of the Children of Mary

*On this day, O beautiful Mother, we give thee our love*

On the beautiful feast of the Queenship of Our Lady, 31st May, three girls made their consecration as members of the Sodality of the Children of Mary. Nine more girls were received as aspirants into the sodality and made the firm resolution to "labour to acquire the virtues of piety, charity and obedience." The consecrated members of the sodality adopt the livery of Our Lady – the blue cloak in which she appeared to Saint Catherine Labouré in 1830. On writing about the sodality, one author says that 'a Child of Mary must not be content with labouring for personal piety alone – she must be an apostle to others. In this she has a splendid model in her holy Patroness.' May Our Holy Mother and Queen protect our young girls and may they become more pure and saintly with a great zeal for souls.

*O Mary conceived without sin, pray for us!*

## Eucharistic Crusade Promotions

On the Thursday within the Octave of the Sacred Heart, the Feast of the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, the Eucharistic Crusade received into its ranks seven Pages, six Crusaders, six Handmaids and two Knights. It was a most fitting day to receive these soldiers of Christ. By commemorating the "love of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the mystery of the Eucharist," our newly promoted candidates were encouraged to be inflamed by the love of Our Lord Jesus Christ and to be zealous for the spreading of His Kingdom in the hearts and souls of their neighbours. "He must Reign" is a motto of the Eucharistic Crusade. In his talk, Reverend Father Johnson, the Chaplain of the Eucharistic Crusade, inspired his young listeners by taking as a good example the late Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre, who was himself a Eucharistic Crusader. Father Johnson encouraged the children that a Eucharistic Crusader is a member for life, and being faithful to one's promises will win many souls for Christ. May the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Queen of the Eucharistic Crusade, ever watch over her little army and help them to always be faithful to their promises for the greater glory of God and salvation of souls.





# The Dominican Third Order

Fr Albert, O.P.

*Dominic & Pius 1825*

*Verso Pillo*

One hears sometimes people talk about something called a “Third Order.” It is obviously some sort of group of some kind in the Church but what it is exactly is difficult to know, unless you happen to know someone who actually belongs to one (which is not easy to know either because they don’t seem to wear any distinctive habit or anything to show that they do). The mystery can be cleared up very simply by seeing what the Church herself says. In her canon law she gives the following definition of what it means to be a member of a “Third Order”:

*The Third Order seculars are those faithful who, living in the world under the direction of a religious order and according to its spirit, strive to attain to Christian perfection in the secular life according to rules approved for them by the Holy See. (Canon 702 §1)*

The key words in this definition are: “strive to attain to Christian perfection.” The essence of all religious life is to accept Our Lord’s invitation: “If thou wouldst be perfect... come follow me” (Mt XIX: 21). This is in fact a commandment for all Christians, for Our Lord says explicitly: “Be you therefore perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect” (Mt V: 48).

This obviously does not mean that we have to *be* perfect but rather that we must *tend towards becoming* perfect. Now something is perfect when it has fully attained its end: for example, a watch is perfect when it keeps time perfectly. The end of man, however, his purpose, is, as the catechism tells us: “to know, serve and love God and by this means attain salvation.” So to obey Our Lord’s commandment to “be perfect” means simply to know, serve and love God, because that is what we are made for, it is our purpose. This is what He calls “the great commandment”: “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind (Mt XXII: 37).”

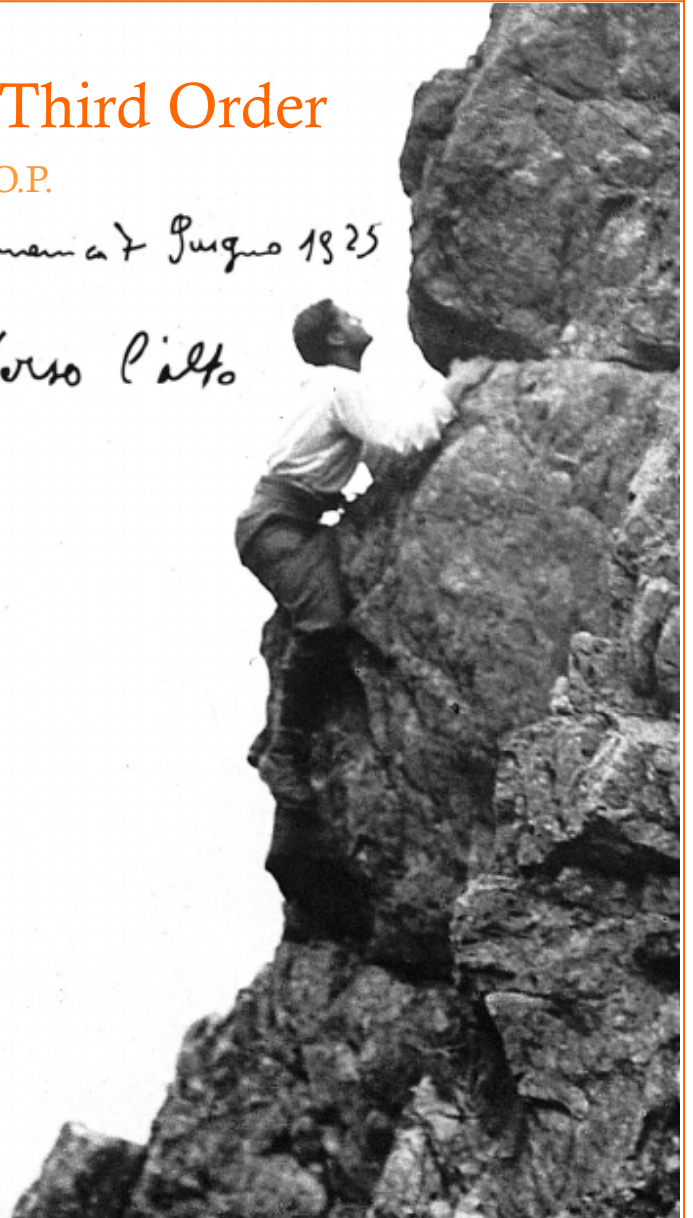
This commandment to “be perfect” in the love of God, however, can be fulfilled in different ways. To fulfil it *at all* we must *at least* strive not to love anything *more* than we love God, to the point where we choose some created good even when it means losing God’s friendship by doing so.

The commandment is fulfilled in a *more* perfect way, by those who strive to avoid not only what is contrary to the *existence* of the love of God in our souls, but also to avoid what hinders it from *acting* and *growing*. This is what “religious” do, that is, the members of the Church who make the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, because those vows help to eliminate the obstacles that distract us

from loving God “*entirely*”. Poverty frees us from worries and desires about money, chastity frees us from worries and desires about a wife or husband and a family, obedience frees us from worries and desires about our own selves, our projects, our “goals” and thus these vows dispose our hearts to love God more freely and entirely.

Tertiaries do not make the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience. They live and work in the world, they have families, they run businesses, etc. Being tertiaries, however, helps them to live the *spirit* of these vows in order to be able to love God *more*. The Rule they follow allows them to avoid being “of the world” in spite of being “in the world”.

Many of the established Orders (Benedictines, Franciscans, Dominicans, Carmelites, etc.) have these “Third” Orders, “Third” because they are related to a First Order, an Order of monks or friars, and a Second Order, an Order of nuns. These Third Orders follow the spirit of these Orders to which they are affiliated and have a Rule to follow which has been approved by the Church, approval which gives an infallible guarantee that anyone who faithfully keeps it will go to heaven.





The Rule of the Dominican Third Order is quite demanding, according to the principle in the Order to have a difficult Rule but to allow dispensations from it in particular cases. For example, tertiaries are normally required to say fifteen decades of the Rosary every day, or the Little Office of Our Lady which can seem like a lot of prayers. This is not required, however, from the very beginning: a long period (two years or more) of preparation precedes the actual promise to keep the Rule until death and during this time the novice has time to slowly learn to manage to say all these prayers. The Rule adds, however that “when unable to satisfy the above obligation” they are allowed to simply say five decades of the Rosary.

The best way to explain the spirit of the Dominican Third Order is to look at some of its members down through history. Many canonized saints were Dominican tertiaries. First of all Saint Catherine of Siena, who is the official patroness of Dominican tertiaries, and also Saint Rose of Lima, Saint Louis de Montfort and others less known, like Blessed Zedislava, a wife and mother who lived in the thirteenth century in what is now the Czech Republic.

But let us look in more detail at two other examples of tertiaries closer to our own age who have not been canonized.

The first one is Pier Giorgio Frassati, an Italian from a well-to-do family who died in 1925 at the age of 24 from polio which it is thought he probably contracted in his many visits to the poor in the slums of Turin, his home town. About the farthest thing from a “plaster saint” as can be imagined, Pier Giorgio was one of these people that the French call a *boute-en-train*: the life of the party, to the point that his cause of beatification was stalled for years because of accusations (later proved false) that some trips he organized to go mountain-climbing (his great passion) were morally questionable.



His fun-loving nature was not a compromise with the world, however: on the contrary, he chose as his patron in the Order the austere Fra Girolamo Savonarola because of his courage in fighting, he said “against corrupt morals.” Like Saint Catherine of Siena, he had a great love for the poor and the sick. He writes: “By drawing closer to the poor, little by little we become their confidants and counsellors in the worst moments of this earthly pilgrimage. We can give them the comforting words of faith and often we succeed, not by our own merit, in putting on the right road people who have

strayed without meaning to... God gives us health so that we may serve the sick.” At his funeral, to the great surprise of his family who were not aware of his charitable activity, hundreds of the poor of Turin showed up and it was largely through their request that the cause of his beatification was introduced. When his body was exhumed in 1981 as a part of the canonical process it was found to be completely intact and incorrupt.

The second example will be perhaps surprising, but, as we said at the beginning, most often very few people know if someone is a tertiary because they do not wear a habit and they live like other people, so there are surprises. This example is the famous actress Jane Wyman, Academy



award winner and ex-wife of Ronald Reagan. The surprise in this case is even greater since her life was not exactly, as an old priest in our diocese used to say, “according to Saint Luke.” After a difficult childhood (her parents divorced when she was four and she was brought up by her grandparents) she started her career in Hollywood at the age of fifteen, lying about her age in order to be hired. From little bit parts

at the beginning she gradually rose to more important roles, finally attaining stardom in the forties. She was married and divorced a total of five times (something not all that unusual for people in Hollywood in the twentieth century when people used to get married), including her divorce with Ronald Reagan in 1948, which was brought on by an affair she had with another man.

Grace was working, nonetheless: she was deeply grieved by the death of a new-born daughter that she had had with Reagan in 1947 and although she was born Protestant she began attending mass with a Catholic friend. An article in the *National Catholic Register* after her death tells how her final conversion happened during the filming of one of her movies:

“Wyman’s next film, *The Blue Veil* (1951), set in and around St. Patrick’s Cathedral in New York, long-time friend Virginia Zamboni confided, was her “favourite” — and the catalyst for her conversion. (...) A favourite destination was the Dominican Sisters’ Monastery of the Angels. While filming *The Blue Veil*, premised on the loss of the protagonist’s new-born son, the teachings of the Catholic faith, especially the redemptive meaning of suffering, “hit” Wyman “in the face,” Zamboni recalled. Wyman developed a strong devotion to Mary; three years later, on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, she was received into the Catholic Church. Her faith, Zamboni said, “meant everything” to Wyman. (...) In 2007, Jane Wyman died at age 90. A Third Order Dominican, she was buried in her habit in a pine coffin.

## Annual Music Competition

“Six long months I spent in Dublin, learning to dance for Lanigan’s Ball.” It might not have been six long months, and it certainly was not in Dublin, but the three Houses did put much time and effort into presenting their versions of *Lanigan’s Ball* - along with many other performances - as part of the annual Inter-House Music Competition. *Lanigan’s Ball*, a traditional Irish jig, along with *Báidín Fheilimí*, a children’s song in Gaelic, were the test pieces for the night, in keeping with the year’s theme of Ireland and the Dominican Order. The audience were treated to three very different musical interpretations, which also incorporated tailor-made outfits, designed and sewn by some very creative House Captains, for the handpicked Irish dancers who really did have to learn to dance for *Lanigan’s Ball*. The test pieces were not the only items on the evening’s programme; there were also Junior and Senior Solos, as well as Ensemble performances. The audience were delighted throughout, but the adjudication

panel, comprised of Fr Laisney, Mother Teresa Joseph, Sr Maria Lucia, and a very special guest adjudicator, Fr Themann, were hard pressed to arrive at final decisions. In the end, Bologna’s liveliness won them Best Test Piece; Calaroga won Best Ensemble for their stirring rendition of Shaun Davey’s *Free and Easy*; Talia Ioakimi’s breathtaking *Loch Lomond* (voice and guitar) won Best Junior Solo for Prouille; and Ellarose Vakadranu’s confident and powerful singing of *For Un Amor* won both Best Senior Solo and the People’s Choice Award for Bologna, this result securing Bologna’s victory as overall winning House for the night. All three Houses, however, put on some spectacular performances, and credit must go to the House Captains and Vice-Captains, as well as all of the performers, for giving so much of themselves and thereby bringing such joy to their audience.



The music competition was enlivened by each team’s presentation of the Irish jig, Lanigan’s Ball. From left to right: Team members from Prouille, Calaroga and Bologna practised their singing and dances for many lunch-times leading up to the big day, and put in much effort to coordinate their costumes and even hairstyles for the event.



Dark horses Talia Ioakimi (Prouille) and Ellarose Vakadranu (Bologna) wowed the audience with their performances. Both managed to clinch the top prize for Best Solo in their respective categories, and Ellarose also won the People’s Choice Award. As Fr Themann mused later, it was tough being an adjudicator!



(From L—R): Performing in front of a large audience on the piano tests not only the technical skills of the performer, but also her ability to cope under pressure! Our honoured adjudicators for the evening were Rev Fr Laisney, Rev Fr Themann, Mother Teresa Joseph, O.P. and Sister Maria Lucia, O.P. It was stiff competition, but Evana McKenna’s charming performance on the Ukulele brought many a smile to a spellbound audience.



# Photo Chronicle

Life in St Dominic's Convent and the Girls' College



We were honoured by the visit of the District Superior of Australia and New Zealand, Fr Daniel Themann, in the last week of Term 1. He graciously addressed the girls at their school assembly, and adjudicated at the annual Music Competition held on April 20th.



The holidays meant an opportunity to catch the last beautiful weeks of autumn at Virginia Lake. The Sisters were able to take a relaxing stroll along the lake and meet the various birds that populated the park - including a large swan that was coyly displaying its brilliantly white plumage!



The annual Corpus Christi procession was held in the evening of the Feast, with many of the faithful in attendance despite the inclement weather.

St Anthony was fittingly honoured on his feastday, 13th June, which fell on a Sunday this year. The parish marched around the neighbourhood of Wanganui accompanied by the beat of drums and the sonorous droning of the Scottish bagpipes.







The Sisters took the opportunity of the term break to make a trip to Wellington. We were able to visit the magnificent Gallipoli exhibition at the Museum and have a picnic lunch at Oriental Bay before going to the Home of Compassion, site of Mother Suzanne Aubert's final resting place.



We bid farewell to Fr Albert, O.P., in the first week of June, but were consoled by the arrival of Fr Elias, OSB, who took over as chaplain for the Sisters.





*If He had not so fallen in love with you He would never have created you.  
But because of the love He had for you as He saw you within Himself,  
He was moved to grant you being.*

— St Catherine of Siena

## As True Daughters of the King

At some point in our lives, this question possibly pops up - "Who am I meant to be? What am I to do with my life? What is my vocation? What does God want of me?" As Saint Catherine of Siena wrote so many centuries ago, each soul has a specific role to play in the plan of God. Each soul was in the mind of God before it existed, was individually created by God, and will exist for the rest of eternity.

Thus, every soul is unique and priceless in the eyes of God; He has a plan for every soul, a path by which He wants to lead her through time, to reach, at last, her lofty goal and destination - unutterable beatitude with Him for all eternity. It is up to the soul to seek this path, and once found, to persevere on it until victorious.

Yet, underlying the specific and particular vocation given to each soul, there is an elementary, fundamental vocation of her nature. In his book *The Nature, Dignity and Mission of Woman*, Reverend Father Karl Stehlin, SSPX, notes:

*The feminine mystery comprises three great realities: each of them has its own value, yet the whole mystery of woman is fulfilled only in the intertwining of the three. While this fullness can be suggested here on earth, it can be fully realized only after the abolition of space and time, in eternity.*

The first phase is that of a virgin – which Father writes is “the mystery of woman as such, her most authentic nature, her heart, her vital force and thus woman considered in herself.”

The second is the attainment of the fullness of the woman's physical and intellectual powers, in which she is able to accomplish her mission as a bride and spouse. It is in “the bridal mystery in which a woman discovers herself as being ordered to a beloved Thou, to whom she wants to give herself, to whom she reveals herself, with whom she unites herself.”

But, the highest and noblest aspect of womanhood is the third: maternity, or motherhood, “which conceives, brings forth and cares for new life as the fruit of love for the beloved Thou.”

To be faithful to this triple aspect of the feminine nature is to fulfil a woman's personal vocation in life. A woman must truly live all three realities – of *Virgo*, *Sponsa* and *Mater* - in any specific vocation she is called to. If she is not called to be a married woman, her Spouse will be Christ, and her maternity brought forth in spiritual fecundity: her children will be the countless souls she comes into contact with, whether she is in the convent or not.

It is a privilege to be a woman. God created woman – every part of a woman – with a specific purpose in mind. As the life of our Blessed Mother shows, in the economy of salvation, women are granted a very special place. It was a woman, our Blessed Mother, who contained within her something the whole world could not contain – Christ. By looking to Our Lady, we see the perfect fulfilment of all three aspects of the feminine nature, in total obedience and humility, an “*ecce ancilla Domini*” that



speaks of a total giving of self in conformity to the will of God.

*Noblesse oblige.* Any woman who truly realises the nobility of her feminine character and the privilege she has to be a woman will instinctively remember that nobility obliges. And this obligation is two-fold: with regards to herself, ensuring that she remembers and lives up to the high ideals set for her by God; and with regards to her future spouse – be it Christ or an earthly husband.

If she is called to be a spouse of Christ, she will find that she has a Beloved Who has given everything for her and will transform her soul throughout her life so that she may one day reign with Him in His eternal kingdom, after having worked with Him and through Him here below.

And should she be called to cooperate with God in bringing forth children in an earthly marriage, she must beware of settling for someone who does not or cannot recognise the unique and noble role of her womanhood.

Reams of paper and gallons of ink have been expended on the qualities of the ideal woman. But one must never forget that the qualities and supernatural virtues cultivated with the help of God's grace take precedence over the natural beauty of rosy cheeks and ruby lips.

Reverend Father Mary Raymond, O.C.S.O. writes in his book, *The Family that Overtook Christ*:

*... its character you want in a woman, not complexion. Look at her eyes, yes! And see starlight if you will; but then look deeper and see if you can see the glow of her baptismal candle in her soul's depths. Look at her lips, yes! And see the ruby of the rose, if you must; but then look closer and find out if those lips can be firm; find out how often they are rubied by the Blood of Christ. See lights dancing in the raven blackness of her hair if you will, but find out if a halo of holiness, not womanish piety, mind you, but a halo of genuine holiness can as fittingly be placed there.*

Fr Raymond continues:

*Real beauty... comes from a strong personality, a lily-pure soul and a character of sterling worth. Beauty lies not in the skin, for that wrinkles and withers and cracks; but a woman who has character possesses a beauty that never dims but always develops.*

The strength, character and purity depicted in the description above are qualities which every woman should strive to realise so that a similar observation might be made of her. The full development of the beautiful flower of feminine personality enables the soul to sing *Magnificat* together with her Blessed Mother. She is conscious of being loved by Christ, bought and redeemed by His Blood, and rejoicing that she can do all



things with the help of God's grace – for He Who has created the feminine nature has endowed it with a special dignity and nobility that is unique among all His creatures.

In conclusion, every young woman must take care to remember and foster her high vocation – to be a true Daughter of the King. “*All the glory of the king's daughter is within*” (Ps 44:14). This is the privilege and nobility of being a woman: the mysterious depths of her soul are known only by her spouse.

And if one is called specially to be the spouse of Christ, “*Hearken, O daughter, and see, and incline thy ear: and forget thy people and thy father's house. And the king shall greatly desire thy beauty; for he is the Lord thy God, and him they shall adore*” (Ps 44:11-12).

True happiness will be found in doing His Will. It is, of course, to our Lady that we must turn in order to learn how to follow the path which God has traced for our lives. She fulfilled the triple mystery of femininity to perfection – as *Virgo*, *Sponsa*, and *Mater*. She is our model to imitate, in every stage of our lives, the ideal every woman ought to seek to reflect – so that whoever looks at her, may see the likeness of Mary. This is God's plan for a woman's sanctity, to live to the fullest the triple mystery of her feminine nature, in the path that He has seen from all eternity.

*Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire.*

-St Catherine of Siena



# Photo Nook

...a place for past-pupils to share notable events in your lives...

Xenia, née Magnoli, and Kolbe Hungerford-Morgan received the holy sacrament of matrimony on the Saturday within the Octave of Easter - 10th April 2021, at St Anthony's Parish in Wanganui.



As a regular section of the *O.P. Corner*, we invite you to share with us and your fellow alumni, in the *Photo Nook*, notable events in *your lives* that have taken place recently. Please send photos with captions (eg. date, event, etc.) to [o.p.corner@dominicansisters.net.nz](mailto:o.p.corner@dominicansisters.net.nz)!

In June of this year, Signadou Boarding School bid farewell to Miss Juliana McKenna, who has gone to join the Sisters of the Society of St Pius X as a pre-postulant in Rockdale, Sydney. We wish Juliana all the best as she follows the call of God in pursuing a religious vocation!







## Grow with Us!

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

Thank you to 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.

*May Our Lady of the Rosary obtain many graces for you and your families.*

### AUSTRALIA

Westpac Account Name: Dominican Sisters of Wanganui  
Westpac Account BSB Number: 033-636  
Account Number: 334285

### NEW ZEALAND

Westpac Account Name: Dominican Sisters of Wanganui  
Westpac Account Number: 03-0791-0728558-00

*Please note that the banks in NZ no longer accept cheques. Apologies for the inconvenience.*

**All donations now qualify for a 33% TAX REBATE from the IRD.**

**Please quote our NZ Charities Services Number: CC37884**

### UNITED STATES

Account Name: 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:  
Dominican Sisters, Attn: Loren Vaccarezza, 1590 Berryessa Road, San Jose, CA 95133  
**All donations to our U.S. account now qualify for a tax deductible receipt!**

### OR VIA PAYPAL

Visit our website at <https://www.dominicansisters.net.nz/fundraising>