

WHAT IS A Lay DOMINICAN?

"His (St Dominic's) thirst for knowledge of the Word was insatiable, and his love for holy books a passion. He was wholly devoted to the pursuit of learning. Why? For the sake of preaching, defending the Faith and illuminating the minds of men with sound doctrine."

What is a Dominican? The first, obvious answer is that a Dominican is a follower of St. Dominic, a member of the Order of Preachers which he founded in the early 13th century to combat the evils of the age by preaching God's truth. The motto of the Order is Veritas (Truth), the Truth that never changes. The purpose of the Order is to praise God; to bless Our Lord in prayer, adoration, meditation and contemplation; and to preach His Truth ("Laudere, Benedicere, Praedicare")

Today, just as in 1216, the Order of Preachers is called to preach and defend the Faith throughout the world, to revitalize those of dormant faith, lax morality, and heretical wanderings. The Dominican priests and brothers, preach Christ crucified (the Way for us all, the Truth and the Life) and teach theology to religious and laity, in missions, colleges, seminaries, and parish churches.

The cloistered nuns of the Order study, continually praise God, and pray for all of us. So important was their mission of prayer, that St. Dominic established their order even before the Friars. The Sisters were praying long before Dominic sent the first pairs of his friars out to combat untruths and heresies with the Truth that is Jesus.

Those who do not fall into those two groups have been known in the past as the "Third Order", and include many congregations of active Dominican Sisters who live in community but have active apostolates in the world. These are the Sisters that we have known as teachers in our schools and in other ministries.

There are also the many Fraternities throughout the world for lay and ordained Catholics who are not already members of congregations. These Fraternity members (formerly called Chapters) are fully members of the Order of Preachers who live in, but are not of, the world: sanctifying their secular vocations by offering all to and for Our Lord; interspersing their daily work with prayer, study, contemplation, and praise; approaching others with love as they share the Truth which the fathers preach.

All Dominicans are one family united as followers of the clear-thinking, humble, obedient, most loving Dominic. Lay Fraternity members of the Order follow the Rule of St. Dominic by: praying (Rosary, Liturgy of the Hours, daily Mass, prayers for deceased Dominicans, etc.); reading, studying, and contemplating Scripture and other spiritual works; fasting; attending monthly meetings with the community, confessing frequently; making yearly retreats; and observing other practices.

All Dominicans are involved in the charism of preaching. The Catechism states: (904) "Christ . . . fulfills this prophetic office, not only by the hierarchy . . . but also by the laity. He accordingly both establishes them as witnesses and provides them with the sense of the faith [sensus fidei] and the grace of the word" To teach in order to lead others to faith is the task of every preacher and of each believer. The call of a Lay Dominican is to bring Jesus into the world, and to make His love manifest to others in our apostolates.

There are 80,000 Lay or Secular Dominicans worldwide. Members may be married, single, or ordained, and in any field of work.. Many vocations are represented in most Third Order chapters. Secular (diocesan) priests and deacons may also be members of the Third Order.

FORMATION PROGRAM OF THE LAY DOMINICAN SPIRITUALITY

After a postulancy period of 6 to 12 months, a Catholic in good standing with the Church can seek admittance to the Dominican Order as a Lay novice. This is a commitment to seek God's will and practice the Rule of St. Dominic. Once a postulant is received and chooses to continue in their formation, he or she commits to pursue a one year novitiate formation course.

After the novice formation is completed, the candidate may request to make a three-year temporary profession as a Lay Dominican. If accepted, the member continues to live by the Rule, becoming more involved in the life of the Fraternity. At the end of the three-year profession, the member may renew the profession for one year or request to make perpetual (lifelong) profession as a Lay member of the Order of Preachers. Culmination of this five-year formation program is Lifelong Profession, a solemn occasion usually celebrated in the context of the Eucharist, with the Religious Promoter, Fraternity members and invited family and guests in attendance.

BL. MARGARET OF CASTELLO

Bl. Margaret of Castillo Lay Dominican Fraternity was established in early 2005, by four life-professed Lay Members, our Religious Assistant Bro. Irene Richard, OP, and one postulant. We meet on the third Saturday of each month at St. Peter and Paul Basilica in Lewiston from 9am to noon , including postulant and novitiate formation. Sts. Peter and Paul Church (now Basilica) was the site of the original Dominican parish founded by the Dominican Friars of the French Canadian Province. Signs of Dominican presence are everywhere around us!

Bl. Margaret of Castillo was chosen as patron of our Fraternity because of her piety and devotion in spite of her own physical deformities. She was born blind and infirm, yet spent her life in loving service to others as the first unmarried woman to become a Dominican Tertiary. She is known as the patron to the abandoned and unwanted, and is an inspiration to the Pro-Life movement.

Bl. Margaret is also an inspiration to this Fraternity whose members are involved in various apostolates to the sick and elderly, alcoholics and drug addicts, prisoners, foster care, as well as to the homeless and hopeless. We are preachers by virtue of our baptism, and hope to affirm the sanctity of life in all its phases. In addition, this chapter seeks to spread the Good News through group apostolates, youth ministry and teaching, Scripture Study, music and the arts, and as a significant presence to the destitute.

For more information and to contact the Bl. Margaret of Castillo Lay Dominican Fraternity, contact Mrs. Denise Mailhot, OP at 786-3380 or by email at Blmargaretopmaine@gmail.com.

“For my father and my mother have left me; But the Lord has taken me up. Ps. 27:10 in the context of the Eucharist, with the Religious Promoter, Fraternity members and invited family and guests in attendance.

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Bl. Margaret of Castello Novena Prayer

Oh God, by whose will the Blessed virgin Margaret was blind from birth, that the eyes of her mind being inwardly enlightened she might think without ceasing on You alone, be the light of our eyes, that we may be able to flee the shadows of this world, and reach the home of never-ending light. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be.. Amen

<http://www.marypages.com/MargaretofCastello.htm>