

Dominican Sisters of Saint Cecilia

LAUDARE, BENEDICERE, PRAEDICARE

TO PRAISE, TO BLESS, TO PREACH

Summer 2020

Discovering True Freedom

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Treasures in Heaven

A REFLECTION ON SAINT DOMINIC, EXAMPLE OF POVERTY

Many of us have our favorite pen or beloved pair of shoes that we might be hesitant to lend to someone, much less to give away forever. In the late twelfth century, a man studying for the holy priesthood would have felt the same way about his books, few in number, but precious to him because of the hours he had spent annotating and transcribing them by hand. For St. Dominic, these books were his greatest possession and an avenue for him to grow in greater knowledge and love of the Sacred Truth, but he was never attached to them. When a famine devastated all of Spain, St. Dominic sold his prized possessions so he could feed and care for the poor.

He was a true “example of poverty” for his fellow students who were inspired to go and do likewise. Even today his witness stirs our hearts and makes us ask: What do I prize? What am I holding onto? What do I need to let go of so I can better see the needs of my neighbor? Material possessions as well

as personal ideas, opinions, and fears can weigh us down and keep our gaze focused on the ground so that we cannot see the needs of those closest to us. At times these things hold us captive and inhibit us from having that poverty of spirit which Christ called blessed and which is a necessary criterion for inheriting the Kingdom of Heaven.

The true interior freedom which pervades those who are poor in spirit results from storing one’s “treasures in Heaven” (Mt. 6:20) while “looking to Jesus” (Heb. 12:2) rather than comparing or looking at others. This gaze towards Christ does not cause tunnel vision but rather gives us a panoramic view of the beautiful world and helps us to see all from God’s perspective. May St. Dominic’s example of poverty, both in spirit and in fact, form us so that our vision may ever be fixed on Christ and the spiritual and temporal needs of our neighbor.

*Saint Dominic, Example of Poverty,
pray for us.*



Photo of one of the Saint Dominic windows at the Saint Cecilia Motherhouse Chapel



Welcoming

OUR NEW VOCATION DIRECTOR

Sister Mara Grace

This summer, Sister Mara Grace will begin to serve our community as Vocation Director. We are so grateful to Sister Peter Marie for her beautiful and steadfast service in this role for the last eight years and we pray for her as she transitions to once again serving in the community's teaching apostolate.

Below is a message from Sister Mara Grace to introduce herself to you.



Blessings! It is with great joy that I begin serving as vocation director for the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia. By way of introduction, I grew up in Lexington, Kentucky and spent many happy years there with my parents and four siblings.

After two years of university studies, I entered the convent in 2006. As a sister I have served as a primary school teacher in Denver and Nashville, assisted with vocations and the novitiate, and served in a parish in Limerick, Ireland. I count as one of the greatest joys of religious life the opportunity to walk with people in their journey with the Lord, so I look forward to serving young women as they seek the Lord's will and discern His call.

To all of you I echo the words of Pope Benedict XVI: "Do not be afraid of Christ. He takes nothing away and gives you everything." Let us pray for one another to courageously follow after Christ!



AN EVENING OF ADORATION AND PRAISE

in honor of the

SACRED HEART OF JESUS

On the Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the sisters at the Motherhouse were joined by our sisters across the world for a beautiful evening of Eucharistic adoration and praise.



SUMMER STUDIES

This summer our sisters were blessed to take several classes both at the Motherhouse and online through various universities. The sisters enjoyed learning about the prophets, the Church, the Old Testament, and Ethics among other subjects.



THE FOURTH OF JULY

The sisters began their celebration of Independence Day with a Flag Raising Ceremony and prayers for our country. The entire day was filled with various fun activities and concluded with the praying the Patriotic Rosary and time together in community.



SAINT SPOTLIGHT

St. John of Cologne

FEAST DAY: JULY 9 | "GREAT ATHLETE FOR CHRIST"

His Decree of Canonization praised St. John of Cologne as a "great athlete of Christ." As his title suggests, this Dominican priest is best known for the victory of his martyrdom, but it was his lifelong training in fidelity, lived through the Dominican charism, which prepared him for this final conquest.

St. John attended the University of Cologne in the middle of the sixteenth century. At this time, western Germany, Belgium, and Holland were dominated by ideas which viewed human nature as completely corrupt and denied the healing action of grace. As a result, even many Catholics had lost a sense of the reality of the sacramental life. Not unlike today, many in John's age found moral absolutes hard to identify, and faith had become relegated to the private sphere.

Amid these uncertain cultural currents, John discovered the solid foundation of truth when he began his studies. Not only did John acknowledge intellectual truth, but he also came to know the Person of Truth, Jesus Christ, and followed His call to the Dominican Order. He entered the Order at Cologne and received his formation there. After completing his education, John was assigned to a parish in the Netherlands, where he served for twenty years. Although we do not have records of his sermons, his final actions give the most eloquent testimony about what he considered the purpose of his priestly vocation. In the spring of 1571, raids were made in Dutch villages, particularly focusing on the arrest and capture of the Catholic clergy. In June of that year, the neighboring town of Gorkum was attacked, and fifteen priests had been imprisoned.

Upon hearing of their arrest, John immediately disguised himself and sought to bring these priests, majority of them Franciscan, the consolation of the sacraments. For several days he was successful, but was eventually captured along with three other priests. These nineteen were imprisoned in Gorkum from June 26 until July 6, undergoing much abuse as they were asked to deny the tenets of the Catholic faith.

On July 6, the nineteen martyrs were transferred to the prison at Dordrecht. Once there, each of them was asked to deny belief in the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist and in the primacy of the Pope. Each one remained steadfast in his profession of faith. All were cruelly killed on the night of July 9, 1572. The Dominican John of Cologne, great athlete of Christ, had won his final victory of martyrdom. Along with his companions, he was beatified on November 14, 1675 and canonized on June 29, 1865.



Recommended Reading

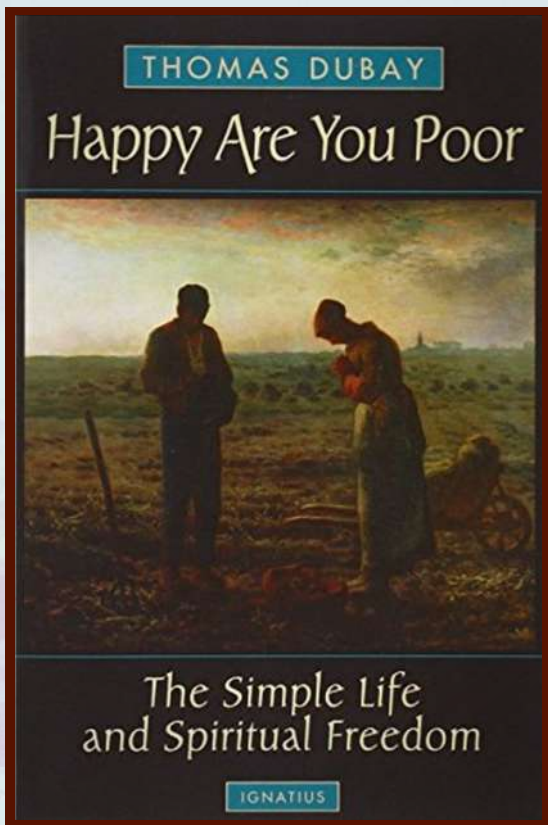
HAPPY ARE YOU POOR

THE SIMPLE LIFE AND SPIRITUAL FREEDOM

By: Father Thomas Dubay, S.M.

To the modern mind, the concept of poverty is often confused with destitution. But destitution emphatically is not the Gospel ideal. A love-filled sharing frugality is the message, and *Happy Are You Poor* explains the meaning of this beatitude lived and taught by Jesus himself. But isn't simplicity in lifestyle meant only for nuns and priests? Are not all of us to enjoy the goodness and beauties of our magnificent creation? Are parents to be frugal with the children they love so much? The renowned spiritual writer Dubay gives surprising replies to these questions. He explains how material things are like extensions of our persons and thus of our love. If everyone lived this love there would be no destitution. After presenting the richness of the Gospel message, more beautiful than any other world view, he explains how Gospel frugality is lived in each state of life.

- Taken from the back cover of the book



Click on the photo above to purchase this book.



"Nowhere in Scripture are we asked for much or most or quite a bit. Always it is everything.

The God of revelation is never a God of fractions. It is not enough to love him with 95 percent of our heart, not enough to be detached from major obstacles, not enough to be merely cordial and helpful in community, not enough to be regular in prayer. No we are called to love with a whole heart, to be detached from all we possess, to enjoy a complete communal unity, to pray always."

- Taken from page 42

DOMINICAN SISTERS OF SAINT CECILIA | NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

Retreats at St. Cecilia Motherhouse

for single, Catholic women, ages 17-30



Jesu Caritas Weekends

October 2-4, 2020

February 5-7, 2021

Vocation Retreats

November 5-8, 2020

January 7-10, 2021

March 4-7, 2021

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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