

THE LAY DOMINICAN FRATERNITY OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT MONASTERY

Fully “Lay” and Fully “Dominican” by Ed Shea, - Dominican Laity



“We must sow the seed, not hoard it.” With these simple words, St. Dominic, founder of the Order of Friars Preachers (i.e., the Dominicans), summarizes the shared purpose of the four branches of the Dominican Family – the friars, the cloistered nuns, the apostolic sisters, and the Lay Dominicans. While each branch carries on the mission of the Order in a different manner, all are fully Dominican.

Lay Dominicans are Catholic men and women, married and single, who have committed themselves to “living Dominican” through study, prayer, community and mission – the four pillars of the Dominican Order. The Lay Dominicans take the fruits of their prayer and study into the secular world, preaching in words and actions through their everyday family, community, and work lives. Some of the greatest Dominican saints and blessed were Lay Dominicans, including Catherine of Siena, Martin de Porres and, one of the most recent saints canonized by Pope Francis, Margaret of Castello.

Lay Dominicans exist worldwide. They are formed into “fraternities” within the Order’s 39 provinces, all under the jurisdiction of the Master of the Order in Rome. The Blessed Sacrament Fraternity is 1 of 29 fraternities within the Province of St. Albert the Great (the Central Province), which is one of four provinces in the United States. For more than 25 years, our Fraternity has shared in the preaching mission of the Order. We currently have seventeen active members.

Lay Dominicans are not ordained and do not take religious vows. However, after a period of discernment and formation, they make professions, first “temporary” and then “perpetual,” to live according to the spirituality of the Order. While not canonically binding under the pain of sin, such professions are taken seriously as signs of being truly Dominican. In fact, the professed Dominicans use the O.P. suffix after their names, indicating their status as members of the Dominican Order – the Order of Preachers.



In March, Ellen Licavoli, O.P. (center) made her temporary profession in the presence of (right to left) Fr. David Santoro, O.P., Monastery Chaplain, Patricia Shea, O.P., Fraternity President, Gwen Weinberger, O.P., Provincial President, and Br. John Steilberg, O.P., Provincial Promoter.

Fraternity. At this point, the candidate can request to make “temporary profession” into the order, which is a three-year commitment to formation and full participation in the life of the Fraternity. Upon completion of this period, the candidate can request approval to make “perpetual profession” – a life-long commitment to live as a Dominican, to continue ongoing formation, and to actively participate in the community life of the Fraternity.



Earlier this year, members from three other Michigan fraternities joined our Fraternity for a visit from Br. John Steilberg, O.P., Central Province Promoter for the Lay Dominicans.

Life in our Fraternity is built on the four pillars of the Dominican Order – study, prayer, community and mission. Our Fraternity meets monthly (generally the second Sunday of the month at 1:00 p.m.) in the Guild



In 2017, members of the Fraternity enjoyed a pilgrimage to what is now the Basilica of St. Anne de Detroit.

Room at the Monastery. We begin our meetings in prayer by praying the Liturgy of the Hours (Office of Readings) in the Chapel. Afterwards, we engage in ongoing formation and study. Currently, we are studying the book “Knowing the Love of God” by Fr. Reginald Garrigou-Lagrange, O.P. We also provide an opportunity each month for one of the members to “preach,” typically reflecting on the Gospel for the day. We then finish with community fellowship centered, in true Church fashion, around food. After our meeting,

members are invited to join the nuns, sisters, and Father David in the Chapel for Rosary, Evening Prayer, and Benediction. We also schedule a yearly pilgrimage to a holy site (e.g., the Solanus Casey Center), an annual picnic (in July), an annual retreat (usually at an off-site retreat center), and a Day of Remembrance (in November) at the Monastery. In addition to the monthly meeting, the Fraternity engages in mission activities, putting the fruits of our prayer and contemplation into action. Several years ago, the Fraternity assisted a Dominican sister who was leading the Archdiocese’s Iraqi Resettlement Program.



Our 2018 pilgrimage was to the Our Lady of Consolation Shrine in Carey, Ohio, where members of the Fraternity were invited to carry the statue during the daily procession.

Laity tab at the top of the home page.

You can also call the Monastery at (248) 626-8253 and leave a message for our President and Formation Director, Patricia Shea.

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Fr. David Preuss, OFM Cap, joined Fraternity members during our pilgrimage to the Solanus Casey Center earlier this year.

Currently, the Fraternity is supporting “God’s Favor,” a ministry that provides lunches to those in need in the Cass Corridor in Detroit. In addition, each of our members are engaged in ministries, often through their parishes.

Welcome is any Catholic who is at least eighteen and looking to advance their Faith through participation in the Dominican charism.

Contact for more information through the Monastery website (opnuns-fh.org). Just click on the Dominican



Members of the Fraternity prepare lunch bags for the God's Favor Ministry.

Laudare, Benedicere, Praedicare – To Praise, To Bless, To Preach

Jesus Christ is Lord!