

Called to Follow CHRIST

in the Footsteps of St DOMINIC

Amidst the material world of swift action and measured progress, the spiritual needs of humanity may be lost or forgotten. Yet, "in the heart of the Church and the world, monasteries have been and continue to be eloquent signs of communion, welcoming abodes for those seeking God and the things of the spirit, schools of faith and true places of study, dialogue, and culture - for the building up of the life of the heavenly city." (*Vita Consecrata*)

Filled with compassion for the spiritually blind or confused, St. Dominic's charism was to preach the Gospel in the manner of the first Apostles. As missionaries and messengers of the Gospel, he and his brethren relied on the strength of the prayers offered by the nuns in the silence and solitude of their monastery. Dominic understood well that there is no evangelization without contemplation. Preaching must be accompanied by grace. "As an expression of pure love which is worth more than any work, the contemplative life generates an extraordinary apostolic and missionary effectiveness." (*Vita Consecrata*)

The Dominican Nuns share today in that same "grace of prayer for sinners, the poor and the oppressed" which Dominic received nearly 800 years ago. Continually renewed and vivified by the Holy Spirit, such a charism remains ever young in the hearts of Dominican men and women of each new generation.

The Perpetual Rosary Nuns were founded in Calais, by Fr. Damien-Marie Saintourens, O.P., in France in 1880. In his journal he wrote: "If the Rosary is the base and form of the interior life of the Sisters, it is the apostolic spirit which vivifies it..." That is to say, the love of Christ in His Joyful, Sorrowful and Glorious Mysteries forms the interior life of the Nuns, while the desire for the salvation of the whole human family ever more enkindles it. Our cloistered way of life is simple, yet totally full. It is a life of faith, lived in the heart of the mystery of the Church.



Here in Fatima, within a few minutes walk from the blessed spot where Our Lady appeared to the Little Shepherds, the Nuns live their hidden apostolate of prayer and sacrifice. Their cloistered contemplative way of life with daily Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours chanted in choir, exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Perpetual Rosary includes a special call to live the mystery of Mary's Apparitions, to respond to Her appeal to pray the Rosary everyday and to assist in the eternal salvation of souls who have no one to pray or sacrifice for them. This mission is truly Dominican!

In the Church, every vocation no matter to what state of life, is founded on love - the love of Christ, Who is Head and model for us all. To follow Christ as Dominic followed Him - this is the Dominican vocation. This gift of vocation is both a joyful and, at times, difficult challenge. Yet, the sweetness and the strength of the love of Christ embraces each one all along the way.