

**I**n invite the young people among my listeners, proud of the warm-blooded intensity which makes you bold and urges you on in all your activities, whether athletic or scholarly, sacred or profane, so that you concur in the youthful fervor of Dominic de Guzman: come and consider this exemplary young man, whose very name claims him for the Lord...

**Y**es, the students were special friends of Dominic. Arriving in Bologna, he mingled with them, joined their groups, lived in their midst. He talked with them about the great problems of their life, their plans, their hopes. How lovely to observe his white tunic among them, symbol of the lily, and the black mantle, like a darkened dying rose. Here, you young students, are the great problems of this life opening up before you, as a garden planted in the most charming and fragrant of blooms. The love which Dominic bears for you is the love of Christ for that young man He invited to follow Him.”

*Eugenio Cardinal Pacelli*

*From the Discourse*

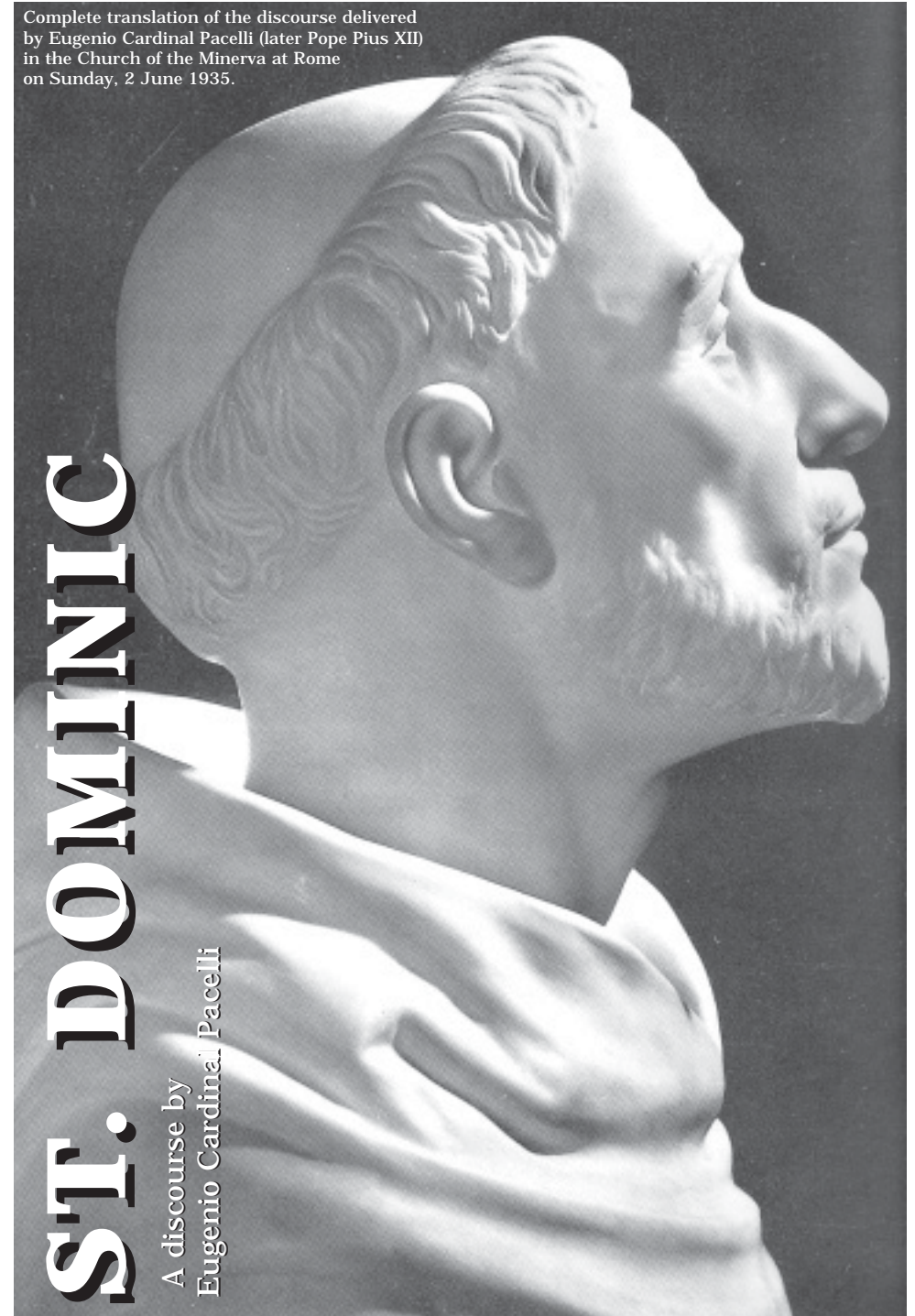
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Cover Photo:  
“*The True Likeness of St. Dominic*”  
Scientific Reconstruction by Prof. F. Frassetto  
and C. Pini. Commissioned by Pope Pius XII, 1946.

Complete translation of the discourse delivered  
by Eugenio Cardinal Pacelli (later Pope Pius XII)  
in the Church of the Minerva at Rome  
on Sunday, 2 June 1935.

# ST. DOMINIC

A discourse by  
Eugenio Cardinal Pacelli



# **ST. DOMINIC**

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## A Brief Introduction

Eugenio Maria Giuseppe Giovanni Pacelli was born 2 March 1876 in Rome. He was ordained a Priest on 2 April 1899 and consecrated Archbishop on 13 May 1917, at the very hour that Our Lady appeared to the three shepherd children in Fatima, Portugal. He was created a Cardinal by Pope Pius XI on 16 December 1929 and appointed Secretary of State of the Vatican on 10 February 1930.

In June 1935 at the closing of the celebrations of the 7th centenary of the canonization of St. Dominic, Cardinal Pacelli gave his inspiring discourse on the life and mission of the Founder of the Order of Preachers. Within a few years he made Profession as a Dominican in Santa Sabina in the hands of Fr. Gillet, OP, then Master of the Order. Upon Profession, he took as his name that of the great Dominican, St. Albert. Then, on 2 March 1939, Cardinal Pacelli was elected as the Supreme Pontiff and became known as Pope Pius XII. His motto was: *Peace, the fruit of Justice.*

As the Vicar of Christ, Pope Pius XII was often spoken of as *Pastor Angelicos*. On 1 November 1950, he proclaimed the Dogma of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Prior to this and just following it also, while walking in the Vatican gardens, he experienced a vision of the miracle of the sun as had happened in Fatima on 13 October 1917. This was made public and confirmed by a Cardinal of the Church who assisted him. In 1954 he proclaimed the Marian Year in honor of the 100th anniversary of the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception.

The following discourse on the life of St. Dominic from Pope Pius XII, so esteemed and so devoted to the Mother of God and Her Holy Rosary, is a gift and we are happy to share it, with the permission of our Sisters of Corpus Christi Monastery of Menlo Park, California.

Cardinal Pacelli addressed his discourse in a special way to young people. He wished to speak straight to their hearts and thus challenge them to imitate the virtues and the love for others that St. Dominic exemplified from his own earliest youth.

Living as we do at a time when the superabundance and speed of words threaten the very life of communication, St. Dominic stands out as a man of God, a man of contemplative silence, one who chose not to be a man of words but rather a man of **the WORD**. He was, as St. Paul, an apostle and preacher par excellence of the Gospel of our Lord **JESUS CHRIST**.



*“Preach the word, press it home on all occasions, convenient or inconvenient use argument, reproof, and appeal, with all the patience that the work of teaching requires.”*

(II Tim 4:2)

The history of the Church is the history of the Word of God, of that word which, having created the light and the universe, crowned creation by forming man and placing him for his proving in the paradise of delights; that word which summons the dead from their tombs, commands the winds and the tempests. Finally, since the world with its wisdom did not recognize God in the wisdom of God, it pleased him to save those who believe by the folly of preaching the word (I Cor 1:21). This is the word which resounds from eternity to eternity down through the centuries. Blessed are those who listen, for it is a word of eternal life! It is a word which the Incarnate Word of God passed on from his lips to those of his Apostles as a word of reconciliation between heaven and earth, when he said to them: “Go....., and proclaim the Good News to the whole creation” (Mk 16:15). This word resounded through the world; it reechoed here in Rome itself, despite the chains of Peter and Paul. The word of God is not fettered by the shackles of this world’s tyrants.

I hear Paul, the great preacher of faith and truth, sent to the world as Doctor of the Gentiles, transmitting the word received from Christ to Timothy, his beloved disciple, and urging him: Preach the word – “*Praedica verbum.*”

But the vision of the august preacher to the Gentiles evokes in our mind's eye another prospect of preachers of the word of God, a heroic, glorious troop at whose head we are gratified to see Dominic de Guzman. It is in his honor that the solemn festivities of these days find their justification, destined as they are to sing the glory which has encircled his altar for seven centuries.

In the light of St. Paul we reflect upon the great Patriarch of the Preachers; imitating Paul, he becomes the imitator of Christ; docile to Christ and to Paul, who cries out to us: "Be ye imitators of me even as I am of Christ" (I Cor 4:15; 11:1).

Thus it is that God shows himself admirable in his saints, one of whom, receiving the light from Christ, transmits it to another; and vying with one another in the radiance they shed, they all grow into the one divine light. Similarly does the sun shine upon the planets whose rays smiling upon the splendor of the stars beautify our tranquil nights.

As in the case of Paul, Dominic too becomes Christ's preacher, His legate and His ambassador: "Preach the word!" Like Paul, Dominic too feels the constant urging of zeal and solicitude for all the faithful of the Church. He gathers about him a group of companions, apostles destined to scatter across the world, in consolation and in suffering, in the days of joy and of sadness: "press it home on all occasions, convenient or inconvenient." After the manner of Paul, Dominic also masters all knowledge and every virtue, refuting false doctrine, stimulating and exhorting people to the good, reproving and correcting bad morals, and always with steadfast patience and supernatural wisdom: "use argument, reproof and appeal, with all the patience that the work of teaching requires."

On this day of joy and glory for the illustrious Order of St. Dominic, which carries the formidable burden of a prodigious work and, for seven centuries, has accumulated honors and commendations for its doctrine and virtue, Dominic stands out as a giant: preacher, founder and master. Above the ranks of his friars, his valiant disciples, radiates the splendor of his paternal glory: his apostolic zeal, his genius for pioneering, his overriding discretion. Such is the heroic magnitude which I hope to conjure up, following him through the turbulent, arduous trials of his epoch, as he trains himself and becomes a wise and holy counselor, holding aloft a new banner of faith and knowledge before the campaigners in his ranks. He teaches them by his example as well as his rule to make study and doctrine a weapon of defense for all divine and human verities.

In this Rome which witnessed the footsteps of St. Dominic and has preserved the living memory of his prodigies and his single-mindedness, along the queen of highways and on the Aventine hill; in this august sanctuary dedicated to the throne of a Wisdom which proceeds, not from the imaginary thunderbolts of Olympus, but from the glory of the Holy Ones where it was engendered from all eternity: in this hallowed place it is truly fitting that the praise of Dominic should resound most ardently. And if such sublime thoughts exceed the inadequacy of my words, then let the virtues and deeds of the great Patriarch of the Preachers speak for themselves! They will preach with the power of example which surpasses every word, for they are a word alive and active, sifting the purposes and thoughts of the heart (Heb4:12), a word that we need, exiled pilgrims as we are, wandering along the uncertain, deceptive paths of life: "Preach the word, press it home on all occasions, convenient or inconvenient: use argument, reproof, and appeal, with all the patience that the work of teaching requires."

## I

The dignity of preaching is implanted in human nature by the mystery of faith. Between humanity and the mystery of faith there opens out the abyss of divinity; who will traverse it except one who is sustained by a divine mandate: "How could anyone spread the news without a commission to do so" (Rom10:15)? Lift your gaze together with me toward this altar of faith. Within that tabernacle is present, hidden in our midst, He who was prophesied, awaited, who came, the most exalted preacher of our race: the Word of God made man, sent by the Father to announce and to demonstrate in Himself for straying humanity the bridge which spans the chasm and leads to the way of truth and life, encompassed by the mystery of faith. Christ is our sole Master, the only one who announces the eternal message. He is the Word who preaches Himself, because He is essential truth and wisdom; in preaching Himself, He preaches the Father who sent Him: "Preach the Word." Is not Christ the Master of preachers?

Did not the Apostles learn in His divine school the doctrine and the art of declaring to the world the kingdom of God? Were they not chosen, gathered together by Him into a single flock, as if for a novitiate, and under his vigilance, scattered among the people of Israel to begin that preaching which they would one day carry into the midst of all the nations of the world?

Yes, indeed! Proclaim, O Doctor of the Gentiles, that you are an imitator of Christ, not only by your life but also by your word. Having put on Christ, with the word of Christ on your lips, journeying unwearingly amid the dangers of land, sea, and men, clarion of the new Sion, awakening the dead to the life of grace: you will be the model for Dominic de Guzman. By following you, he will find the way of imitating Christ most conformed to his ardent spirit. He, too, will be a preacher of

Christ for God has also bestowed on him an intense and generous nature, so as to make of him an invincible champion of the word.

As a matter of fact, if grace does not destroy but rather vitalizes and reinforces nature by orienting it toward the sublime destiny intended for it by heaven; if providence ordains and directs all that happens, all that unfolds in the universe and in the small world which constitutes man; if among the blossoms on a single branch one is more beautiful and fragrant than another, is there any wonder that Dominic, destined by God for such great things, should, among the sons of Felix de Guzman and Jane of Aza, have been endowed with a nature of a more exceptional stamp, so that the prodigious achievements to which he was summoned by God were to be expected? This flower of Caleruega was born and grew up among the upland breezes of Old Castille, beside the murmuring waters of the clear River Duero. The heroic valor of Christian defenders against Moorish invasion was his patrimony, together with an intensity of spirit which, in later centuries, would be found in Ignatius of Loyola and Teresa of Jesus. I shall not expatiate on his nobility of blood or the splendors of a feudal castle, but rather recall the signal piety and virtue which surrounded Dominic's cradle and the concern of his very devout mother. In this third child of her womb, for whom she had longed and besought the Lord, she instilled and cultivated the seedlings sown by baptism in the soul of her little one, by way of motherly tenderness and holy words. Had she not seen him in her dreams as a burning torch setting the world on fire or as a star that would light up the night sky? I shall not elaborate on the religious spirit of his two elder brothers, Anthony whom the church of St. James would honor among its canons, friend of the poor and the sick, and Mannes who took the habit of the Preachers and, after sharing the labors of Dominic on earth would be venerated with him on the altars in company with their holy mother.

Let me concentrate upon the little boy, object of great designs on the part of heaven, who with the years would increase not only in physical vigor and spiritual strength but also in gentleness, grace, and that spirit of wisdom and prudence replete with simplicity such as God confers on little ones. By this means He enables them to overcome the effervescence of their age and the pitfalls of budding passions through such early victories which train the soul for the most sublime and arduous of conquests.

I invite the young people among my listeners, proud of the warm-blooded intensity which makes you bold and urges you on in all your activities, whether athletic or scholarly, sacred or profane, so that you concur in the youthful fervor of Dominic de Guzman: come and consider this exemplary young man, whose very name claims him for the Lord. See him as he departs from his father's house, from the vigilant care of his mother, for the school established by his uncle, Archpriest of Gumiel de Izan. There he acquires, while dedicated to piety and devotion, the first elements of that instruction which will open to him the doors of the diocesan chancery of Palencia, where there was a college of great renown in which dogma and all the sacred sciences were taught. Separated from his parents, he is well aware of God's nearness and that the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. He senses that the desolate sighs of his saintly mother ascend to heaven on his behalf. He realizes furthermore that earnest concentrated study is the solid weapon and shield of a pure heart wherein wisdom is pleased to make its dwelling. Look with admiration, you young people, on the rare and noble attractiveness of his calm, persevering virtue amid the pitfalls of adolescence. Appreciate the charm of a young man who retains the candor of his straight-forward gaze, who preserves that gentleness of spirit and manner which would give him all through his life the smiling, pleasant countenance that drew everyone to himself. And this amid the tempestuous

dispositions of his fellow students in the higher schools of letters, philosophy, the other sciences and the liberal arts. From fifteen to twenty years of age and beyond, in the morning of his life, the pleasant season of burgeoning forth, in the course of which, while the physical powers and faculties become stronger, the mind develops and grows more avid and expeditious in the diverse fascinating realms of knowledge, in studying the world, man himself and God — at this period, let us observe Dominic. He steadies the confident eagerness of adolescence by manly resolutions and solves the problem of life by orienting it toward the sublime purpose for which we are born: "The higher gifts are those you should aim at" (I Cor 12:31).

But not all understand this counsel; not all in their youth feel themselves equipped with the wings of an eagle, soaring toward the heights and, from the dizzying alpine summits, perceiving its prey so as to swoop down upon it in the depths of a ravine. Inspired by faith, the young Dominic realized that it is not in the pastures of the liberal arts that the heart is pacified; beyond human art studying and imitating nature, rises sublimely that superhuman wisdom, imitator of God, rendering us perfect and holy as our heavenly Father, as his only Son who deigned to make Himself like unto us so that we might become like unto Him. This is the art of the saints and of sanctity. Dominic's manly desire had ripened; he would be God's minister. From mortification he would draw new strength so as to give more attention to his soul; nothing would impede his study; by becoming more perfect, his mind and his will would develop and become more closely harmonized in God and in his Christ. The joy of learning would not obstruct his soul; it would transform the obligation and the triumphs of study; they would impel him to further holiness; they would help him to prepare for the priesthood. There is no need to seek for the one who directed him to the university of Palencia; his director was the Holy Spirit, speaking to

him through the Sacred Scriptures and, together with a knowledge of revealed truth, teaching him in addition the wisdom of the spiritual life. Would he be satisfied with pure speculation on faith? On the contrary, did he not study to make of faith the soul of his soul, the life of his life, the flame of his love for God and neighbor, the seal and format of his work, the star on his path? No, he was not one of those scholars of his epoch who separated mind from heart and, while pouring over Holy Scripture, remained insensitive to the fire which issued from it.

At Palencia, the first halting-place of his life's journey, Dominic is already Dominic: the mature man, with strong thoughts, a resolute will, equipped like a hero, lovable as a child. He lays the foundations of his own structure and prepares himself for the priesthood, makes ready the action, the struggles and the victories of the future. Drought and famine came upon the town unexpectedly and left the poor and indigent in extreme want and misery. In the face of such adversity, the heart of the charitable student from Caleruega came near to breaking. But what could he do to avert this scourge of widespread starvation? Recalling, after the manner of the saints, that the most excellent way is the way of Christ's charity, surpassing all knowledge and compassionating the afflicted, before the wondering eyes of his comrades and his Masters, he sold the precious books he had acquired at great expense and annotated with great skill. With the money thus obtained he bought bread for the daily needs of the poor. He would have sold himself into slavery to ransom a certain man from captivity to the Moors; the latter was the sole support of a poor woman, his sister. But the hand of God found another means of rescuing him.

From this noviceship in piety, study and charity at Palencia the renown of the devoted scholar had reached

Osma, See city of his Bishop, Martin de Bazan, a zealous promoter of reform for the clergy, who had given a rule to the canons of his chapter. On the advice of their prudent Prior, Diego de Azevedo, he summoned Dominic, ordained him priest and appointed him Subprior of the reformed chapter of his cathedral. Dominic must have been about twenty-eight years old. God was placing him in a new setting so as to instruct and form him, with most delicate skill, for the undertaking to which He destined him and to make of him the wise Master of the Preachers.

In the shadow of the cloister of the canons regular Dominic found a friend in the Prior, who shortly afterwards would become his Bishop, on the demise of Martin: a friend whose thoughts were capable of inspiring him, whose fervor enkindled his own, while his example spurred him on in the ministry of saving souls. Thus little by little the Lord often gives to His most cherished champions, one after another, a companion; thus to the planet earth He gives, in its revolution about the sun, a moon to enlighten our nights.

What were the subjects the two friends discussed in their colloquies, each in turn enkindling the other's devotion? That is God's secret; but if history does not record them, subsequent events would loudly proclaim them.



*St. Dominic contemplating the scriptures. (by Fra Angelico)*

Moved and guided by divine counsel, Dominic was advancing toward the goal marked out on the horizon of his life but still unknown to him. What did he see in himself, humble in his self-knowledge, amid the fellow students to whom he appeared as a flaming torch, first in holiness, last in the contempt in which he held himself, diffusing about him the fragrance of his virtue? He had plumbed the depths of his soul and, with regard to what God had sown there, he had seen a sheer veil, yet indistinct as the future must be. But he found there three strong loves on which he was building the present and the years ahead: an attraction to divine knowledge, to cloister, and to action: three loves which he intended to incorporate into a single love: that of Christ, the Savior of the world.

The love of divine knowledge had impelled Dominic to seek out the science of the saints, as the means of correction and perfection for himself, in a resemblance to Christ. He plunged ever deeper into the reading of St. Matthew's gospel and the epistles of St. Paul: the two books, treasure stores of all wisdom, which he would carry with him throughout his lifetime. In these pages which had exalted and raised to sublimity the eloquence of a Chrysostom, Dominic refreshed himself with the water that rises even to eternal life; he savored the floods of Christ's charity for souls and Paul's as well; and he sensed a zeal for the apostolate throbbing in his bosom, the word of a preacher trembling on his lips.

Within these pages he discovered the art of reconciling his two other loves: the cloister with action; while from the book of *Collationes*, or the Conferences of the Fathers, set down by Cassian, the monk, he learned how, beyond Nitria and the Thebaid, it is possible to struggle, advance and triumph in the spiritual desert. So it was that, in the shadow of Osma's cathedral, Dominic the Canon Regular became initiated into the recollection of the cloister and the observance

of St. Augustine's Rule for the contemplative life. But in these contemplations, these prolonged colloquies with God by day and by night before the altar, in his laments and groanings, over the misery of sinners, of abandoned and grieving souls, in the throbbing of his ardent charity, believing all things, enduring all things, hoping all things, his dream was not of a Cluniac or Cistercian monastery, nor of a Carthusian or Camaldolese solitude. It was rather of a Sinai where, like Moses, he could commune with God, and return – his brow all alight – to proclaim the divine law to an erring people; it was rather of a third heaven whence he would come down, like Paul, among the gentiles: a Master of heavenly truths, a preacher of redemption and pardon. He longed for a desert of silence and of fasting where, like Christ, the Wisdom of the Father, the blessed seer, he might prepare himself for the struggle against the enemy of the human race, becoming the envoy and herald of the Gospel in that greater Palestine, the terrain of Adam's unhappy offspring, wanderers, separated from each other by the remoteness of their souls and thoughts as much as by mountain ranges and the vastness of the oceans.

Yes, Dominic dreamed of a field open to his efforts and his zeal; he envisioned a sanctity – if I may be allowed to call it such – which would not be static, but dynamic; the holy ideal of a crusader, a knight for Christ and his Church, for his heavenly Jerusalem; the holiness of a redeemer of slaves from error and sin rather than from prisons and galleys. He would not be proud of his armor of steel or bronze, but of the weapons of the mind; like Paul, his loins girt with the belt of truth, clothed in integrity as in a coat of mail, shod with the gospel of peace, protected by the buckler of faith and the helmet of salvation, wielding the sword of the spirit which is the word of God (Eph 6:14ff). Oh Bernard of Clairvaux, great champion of the faith and the Church of Christ, gentle instrument of the Holy Spirit, mighty captain emerging from



the cloister unattended, yet returning there with victories and laurels! Oh Bernard, perhaps it was of you that Dominic dreamed, but of you at the head of a legion as brave as yourself, of you leading them to battle in an open field. He dreamed of your exploits, recent enough to be vividly recalled; and they were to him a foreshadowing vision of new athletes, differently clothed, but resembling you in their active life, as a wandering champion preaching the truth and the faith on the highroads of Europe. They would be like you, calling out with a powerful cry, the cry of a roaring lion, terror of all the other beasts, going forth in early morning searching for its prey, then exulting in its conquest as it returns at nightfall, not discouraged but dreaded, to rest in its den.

Is there any need, my Brothers, of telling you that the cloister of the Cathedral of Osma was also to Dominic an open field for his zeal in behalf of souls, especially the afflicted, that he left off his contemplation of eternal verities so as to pour forth, with the ardor of his charity and the smile of his compassion, into wounded and desolate hearts the cleansing, comforting balm which heals and gives assurance of a better life? That the word of God resonated on his lips in the tones of an apostle, a father, a physician, a true friend? Among the Canons Regular of Osma and with his friend, Bishop Diego de Azevedo, Dominic appears to us, as morning announces the day, in the brilliant dawn of his zealous novitiate. Applied to such a gifted nature as his, such a discipline would instruct, fortify and prepare him to combine, in the supereminent charity of Christ, a devotion to knowledge docile before love, together with that flame of contemplative and active self-giving wherein the preacher of the Word of God is formed, strengthened and inspired: "Preach the word..."



*Santo Domingo de Guzman,  
Lucas Jordan, Toledo, Spain*

## II

Divine Providence, who chooses and prepares, in its counsels, the heroes of its marvelous enterprises, did not intend that Dominic remain at Osma. There, for eight years now his virtue and zeal for souls had shone forth as an intense and dazzling light. Where, then, in what town, in what region would he preach? Whereunto, my Brethren, would the hero of Caleruega, the “amorous paramour of Christian Faith, the athlete consecrate”, as Alighieri sings of him, “kind to his own and cruel to his foes,” (Par XII, 55ff) – would he progress by teaching and by will combined with the apostolic office, like a torrent urged on from a lofty height; would he wend his impetuous way and yield a splendor as “of light cherubical” (Par XI, 39)? Where, indeed, in all circumstances, by declaring the truth, by the power of God, wielding the weapons of righteousness in right hand and left, in honor and dishonor, praise and blame alike his lot, overworked, sleepless, starving, by patience and kindness (II Cor 6:4-6), will he cause to spring up and burgeon forth from the land, devastated by strife this new garden of his dreams? Where will he find resonating through the voices of his comrades in zeal the harmonious utterances of his speech? In what place will the call of God declare to him: “Press the word home, on all occasions, convenient or inconvenient”.

Listen. When, on the day appointed by Himself, God sets His hand to the accomplishment of designs aimed at the salvation of souls, He then calls the hero to whom He has entrusted this work far away from the land where he lives. Holy Scripture witnesses to this great spectacle when we hear God calling out to the Patriarch of all believers, Abraham, to whom he says: “Leave your own country, your kinsmen, and your father’s house, and go to a country that I will show you. I will make you into a great nation.” (Gen 12:1-2). I find this divine decree repeated once more in behalf of the future Pa-

triarch of the Preachers, not by way of a word resounding in his ear, but of one that penetrates his heart, where life throbs more deeply and impresses an impulse which stirs up and enlivens every fiber.

I invite you to share my admiration, Brethren, for this man who, in company with his Bishop, crosses the rugged frontiers separating Aragon from Gascony. He is leaving his native soil where there are many who love and honor him, and he is bidding them farewell; he will not return, at least for a quarter of a century! His heart will be the same, likewise his white tunic and black mantle; but the palpitations of his heart will encompass the whole world, like the shores trodden by the most vagrant of souls redeemed by Christ. He will come back, his face radiating its customary joy, but manifesting the profound thought of the watchful Father, responsible for his religious followers, quite close to his end, like the fallen champion who, at the moment of death, recalls the dear land that gave him birth.

At the present experiencing nothing but an inexhaustible thirst for sacrifice as the faithful companion of his Bishop, he crosses the Pyrenees, leaving behind the ominous peaks of the Maladetta on his descent into the smiling valleys and plains washed by the Garonne, a region as fertile as a promised land, but which at that time was a territory on which the curse of Canaan seemed to have fallen, as it had upon that of Abraham (Gen 9:25): “Cursed be Canaan!” “At that time the Canaanites lived in this land” (Gen 12:6). The Canaanite was the Albigenian heretic: a name which evokes among those unaware of its fatal errors, its religious and social dangers, ill-defined feelings, confusing virtue with vice. This was the first field to which God would assign Dominic and Bishop Diego; there would they wage their first battles and earn their first laurels; and there Dominic was to assemble his first regiment and raise the standards of his first conquests.

If the lateness of the hour allowed me time, my Brethren, I would spend it describing the miserable condition of Gascony and the neighboring regions toward the end of the twelfth century and the dawn of the thirteenth. You would see how along with the renaissance of a people, the consistent rise of the epoch of chivalry, the ballads of the troubadours in the vernacular of the regions of Provence and Languedoc, there had also come forth from the tomb, lifting its sinister head, the old heresy of the Manicheans and Gnostics. Coming to life again in the Orient, it had penetrated into Lombardy and the Transalpine provinces, to appear publicly in the town squares, the courts, the assemblies, the churches and cloisters, to proclaim the insane belief in two principles, two divinities, one good and the other evil, to condemn marriage, to spread the fable of transmigration of souls, to substitute for the divinity of the Christian religion the superstition of a useless "*consolamentum*" for the dying, moral license, pharisaic abstinence, a deceptive ideal of perfection and holiness, the Catharist worship, preaching, ministry, asceticism and hierarchy which were nothing less than a lying imitation and profanation of the church founded by Christ. You would find reigning supremely in the county of Toulouse and the south of France this heresy of the Catharists, as St. Bernard had already seen it and as, shortly after his day, Raymond V, the wise Count of Toulouse, had indicated it when he said: "It has wormed its way in everywhere. It has sown discord in every family, separating husbands from their wives, sons from their fathers, granddaughters from their grandmothers. The clergy itself has succumbed to the contagion. The churches are deserted and falling into ruin. As for myself, I do what I can to impede so great a scourge, but I feel that my powers are unequal to the task. The greatest personages in my domain have allowed themselves to be corrupted. The common folk have followed their example. I no longer have the courage nor the strength to suppress the evil."

It must not be thought, however, that the Holy See had remained an inactive spectator of such depredations. A Pontiff with the lofty mind and vigilant, unconquerable soul of the great Innocent III was defending the rights of the Church, of Christian faith and morals, not only in Rome and Italy, but even beyond the Alps and the seas. While confronting the kings of Europe and the Saracens of the East, he had not forgotten this obstinate heresy along the banks of the Garonne and the Rhone, and the vain efforts put forth by his predecessors, Alexander III, Lucius III, and the other Popes, together with the Third Council of the Lateran, the Apostolic Constitution of Verona, the Cardinal Legates, Peter of St. Chrysogonus and Henry of Albano. From the first days of his elevation to the pontifical throne, his letters to the metropolitans and their suffragans, as well as to the princes of these provinces, the sending of new apostolic legates from the Order of Citeaux, Raynier, Peter of Castelnaud, John of St. Paul, Cardinal of St. Prisca, with Raoul and the other monks of Citeaux, under the leadership of their Abbot, Arnaud, all show him to us engaged in stirring up the inertia of the prelates, the lack of zeal on the part of the clergy, and winning back to the Catholic faith these straying noblemen and peasants. His tactic was gentleness: sermons, conferences, discussions with the teachers of heresy, rather than threats and ecclesiastical censures. But the error supported underhandedly or in full view by the powerful, encouraged by the nonchalance and ignorance of pastors, resisted all the zealous efforts of the legates and remained unconquered and powerful to such a point that, thoroughly discouraged, Peter of Castelnaud – whose blood was to be shed at the hands of the heretics and steep this ungrateful soil – asked the Pontiff's permission to return to his beloved solitude and contemplation in his monastic cell. But Innocent III, more intrepid and determined than he, kept him at his post of duty, telling him: "It is in difficulty that virtue shines and is reinvigorated. You must not withdraw from the work We have entrusted to you."

. . You did not succeed as you would have wished; but it is not success which God rewards, but labor. . . Bring to your evangelical task perseverance and determination; persist, reason, implore, and, by dint of patience and eloquence, bring back the wandering sheep.”

Do you not hear, my Brethren, in these words of Innocent the echo of Paul’s advice to Timothy: “Press it home on all occasions, convenient or inconvenient: use argument, reproof, and appeal, with all the patience that the work of teaching requires.” Who read them in this papal document of January 1205? Who had them impressed upon his heart and would make of them the law and rule of his life? I admire the legate Peter de Castelnau who remains on the field of battle and gives his life for the faith; but I have no less admiration for this pilgrim whom I see arriving at Montpellier with the Bishop of Osma, meeting to confer with Peter and his Cistercian companions who were as discouraged as he was over the futility of their laborious efforts. He came from Rome and had heard the apostolic appeal of Innocent which he carries in his heart, with the ardor of an audacious love unknown to the world, known only to the revered friend with whom he journeys in perfect communion of mind. It was the profound sentiment which the two pilgrims might have perceived, as they traversed Umbria, radiating also from the countenance of a young man of Assisi, like them a future champion of Christ and disdainful of ostentation and affluence. It was the season for the knighthood of Christ’s poverty.

Diego, who in Rome had desired to lay at the Pope’s feet the insignia of his dignity as Bishop of Osma, so as to preach the gospel to the infidels, had, on the contrary, together with this companion, been invited by the great Pontiff to convert the Albigensians by going to the aid of Peter, the legate, and the Cistercians. Would their encounter at Montpellier be opportune or inopportune? Certainly it was fortuitous that

the support of these two new companions should be added to the discouraged representatives of the faith; they were prepared to do battle against the enemies of truth. But what new weapons did they bring for doing battle and for carrying off the challenged victory? What new methods and advice? It was the method and counsel of Christ that Diego offered, of Christ who sent out his apostles to the lost sheep of Israel with the command: “As you go proclaim the message: ‘The Kingdom of Heaven is upon you.’ Provide no gold, silver or copper to fill your purse, no pack for the road, no second coat, no shoes, no stick; the worker earns his keep” (Mt 10:7, 9-10).

The Albigensian heresy was possessed of two powerful weapons in particular: their preaching of error and the austerity of life practiced by the Masters who, under the name of the Perfect, had no trouble, given the strictness of their poverty and way of life, to persuade the crowd of drifting believers and confirming them in their false teaching and corrupt morality. With regard to these false teachers, I would not say that they had all been hypocrites, for I know that more than one philosopher of the pagan world managed to scorn riches and practice stoic virtue which astonished people. Even if it did not lead them to Heaven. But was it not to be expected that these two weapons of preaching and poverty should have been blunted in the hands of the heretics and that the children of light should have appeared as more prudent than the children of darkness? Was it not to be expected that where the strongholds of heresy were best fortified and its resistance most stubborn, the fire of the divine word and the example of virtue would strike most forcefully? Was it not to be expected in the designs of God that, in the widest and most agitated field, Dominic should have trained himself for battles whence he must come forth truly a leader for his disciples? From the school of wisdom at Palencia he had passed on to that of contemplation, and from the priestly ministry to the

cloister of Osma. Was this the final preparation of his spirit for becoming the father of the Order of Preachers? No, my Brethren; you will see how the Canon Regular of Osma, on the battlefields of Gascony and Provence, from being a soldier capable of bearing arms, became a captain and learned the art of guiding apostolic batallions.

Against the haughty indigence of the Albigensian masters, together with Diego, Dominic raised the new standard of mendicant religious poverty, begging food from hospice to hospice, walking barefoot, announcing the goodness and peace of Christ, preaching salvation by proclaiming to Zion: It is your God who will reign and not the prince of darkness and of the abyss. "How lovely on the mountains are the feet of the herald who comes to proclaim prosperity and bring good news, the news of deliverance, calling to Zion, 'Your God is King.'" (Is 52:7).

Oh, the wondrous richness of the faith! God has set in our midst, on our altars, a Master in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, so that no one may be led astray by subtle reasoning. "In him lie hidden all God's treasures of wisdom and knowledge... to save you from being talked into error by specious arguments." (Col 2:3-4). He is Master of truth for all times and places, a model of every virtue, infinitely imitable, sowing his counsels of chastity, submission, temperance in the deserts of Anthony, the hermitages of Bruno and Romuald, the retreats of Basil and Augustine, the houses of Benedict, forever communicating new teachings and developing them through the centuries. In the school of this divine Master who, while the foxes have holes and the birds of the air their nests, has not whereon to lay his head, in this school the Canon of Osma with his holy Bishop learned the divinely heroic poverty lifted up upon the cross with Christ. Exalted with him above the earth, it has drawn to itself the universality of humankind, of epochs and

of things; it has taught people's cupidity that whoever has nothing because of giving self, to the advantage of another, that one possesses all in the treasury of neighborly charity: "penniless, we own the world." (II Cor 6:10). In the shadow of this tree of poverty turned mendicant, a seed planted by Christ in the religious garden of his Church, watered by Dominic de Guzman and Francis of Assisi, future centuries were to see gathered together an army of saints and virgins, varied in their vesture and observances, but relishing its fruits in an austere, laborious and crowning life.

No less powerful was the weapon of the word by which the Albigensian masters of all ranks led the crowds after them into the strongholds and the churches they had usurped, challenging to debates on doctrine the sluggish clergy and the unwary prelates of that portion of Christ's flock. Against such an offensive, Dominic, in company with the Bishop of Osma, raised his voice in eloquent preaching. God, who becomes "a tower of strength for the oppressed, a tower of strength in time of need," (Ps 9:10), guides them both to the defense of that truth which was their shield in public disputes against the heretics at Servian, Beziers, Carcassonne, Verfeil, and Montreal. He opens to them a pathway through that wild forest, by which they could lead back some of the lost sheep to the fold of Jesus Christ and extend to other districts the ardor of their apostolic zeal, although the results were not yet fully commensurate with their privations and hardships.

But to a great commander, the impact of conflict inspires clear-sightedness in the contest. The Cistercian companions who remained with him thought that henceforth, to succeed better and overcome the obstinacy of the heretics, persecutors of the faithful, profaners of churches, enemies of divine worship, the swords of princes would be more effective than the word of the gospel. On the contrary, Dominic, who

had learned from Christ meekness and humility of heart, who never considered himself vanquished by difficulties or obstacles, or amid dangers, contempt, insult, injury, threats of death, but was ever serene of spirit, unfailing in gentleness, and magnanimous in patience – Dominic wished to overcome evil by good and to continue up to the most unassailable bulwarks of the heretics, giving battle with the sword of the word, with the arguments of faith, with sermons and prolonged discussions, if necessary, over a number of days, so as to strengthen the weak, to convince the straying, and to snatch his prey from the infernal prince of this world. “Press it home on all occasions, convenient and inconvenient, for the oppressed, in time of need.” What seemed importunate to others he considered to be an opportunity for victory; he was ready to give his life amid the most cruel torments, after the example of the gentle, silent Lamb who had loved Him and given Himself up for Him, and not only for Him, but for all men.

But one day in January of 1208, death, in the person of a fanatical squire in the service of Raymond VI, Count of Toulouse, traitorously attacked the papal legate, Peter of Castelnau, on the banks of the Rhone. This barbarous crime, as you can well imagine, my Brethren, grieved the august Pontiff, Innocent III, offended in his dignity and in the love which moved him to convert, not to destroy the wanderers. Against the enemies of the faith, scourge of the Christian people, assailants of the bonds of the family and civil society, ravagers of property and of Catholic morals, there could be seen gathering along the plains and valleys of the Rhone and the Garonne the new battalions of a crusade which Innocent strove to hold back, since he wished to curb its impetuosity, to mitigate and restrain its consequences. The Count of Toulouse, faithless to his promises, was both the aggressor and the vanquished; the heroic conqueror, with his banner, was Simon de Montfort; the heralds were Arnaud, Abbot of

Citeaux, and Foulques, Bishop of Toulouse. Let not historians be scandalized if some of the acts of this epoch seem harsh: you know that this was not the only brutal war “over this threshing-floor which people dispute with so much ferocity”, as the divine poet declaims (Par XXII, 151). But where was Dominic de Guzman at this time? If, with regard to the heretics, he could no longer, as formerly, combat openly by preaching and the word of God, he still struggled with the Lord to their advantage, as Jacob had with the angel, throughout the nights of his silent contemplation and the times of his severest trials. He could be seen during the terrible battle of Muret, where they dug the grave of a king allied with the heretics, praying and weeping before the altars for the faith of which the finest victory over the world is the victory for souls. You know, my Brethren, what was his most shining sword: you possess it, it is in your hands – it is the Rosary of the Virgin Mary, still “terrible as an army in battle array” (Song 6:3).

With his weapons, while he waited, Dominic had fought under a great captain, his Bishop Diego, begging his bread from door to door, preaching, discussing; and recollecting themselves at the foot of that Albigenian citadel



*St. Dominic reaches for the Rosary - the great spiritual weapon.*

of Fanjeaux, at Prouilhe, where they rested and braced themselves for further undertakings. There they had already gathered in the fairest fruits of their conquest around the shrine of Mary: some noble young women, enlightened and converted among many others whom error had caused to wander from Christian faith and piety. This was the first monastery of consecrated virgins erected by Dominic and Diego, in the region most hostile to the Catholic name. It was Bishop Diego's noblest trophy; he left and entrusted it to Dominic, as he took the road back to Osma for the last time. Farewell, hero of Christ's charity and of His word, Dominic's father and Master, precursor of an apostolic band! You will not see Prouilhe nor your faithful friend again, but in his heart and in those of his sons your name will abide in eternal benediction. You leave Dominic alone with three other companions of your labors; but the heritage of your spirit is within him; your work will remain. The Canon of Osma will become Friar Dominic; he will be Prior of Prouilhe, founder and Master to a legion of heralds of the Gospel and of truth.

Let us marvel at Dominic, my Brethren: for eight years, practically alone, he persists in following the path marked out by Diego; he presses the word home to the heretics on all occasions, convenient and inconvenient. His mind filled with the great idea of the reform of the clergy and of the apostolate, with the dangers inherent in the Albigensian and Waldensian heresies usurping the preaching faculty of Bishops and clergy; rich in the poverty of Christ, he advances against the strongest citadel of error, Toulouse. There he establishes the active center of his apostolic missions. He finds there another friend, Bishop Foulques, a counterpart of Diego in zeal. He encounters a prosperous citizen who offers him board and lodging and himself as companion. With a small group of followers and under the shadow of Episcopal authority, he sows the seed for the gigantic tree which becomes the Friars Preachers. I hail this soil where the memory of his first journey and the conversion of his heretical host calls Dominic

back to confirm the faithful in the right way, dispel heresy, combat vice, become a Master and defender of dogma and morals, and at the same time increase and form, like an able leader, the little group of his disciples in the territory of Toulouse, before making the whole world the field of their enterprises. I hail these battlements, mirrored in the Garonne, nest of the great-winged eagle, dear also to my heart, for one day the greatest of its eaglets, the genius of Aquinas, would rest there in his mortal remains; returning from the highest contemplation of Heaven and earth, he would see once more the cradle of his first brethren, awaiting in the resurrection the renewal of his youth.

But let us not anticipate the time! If for the Order of Preachers the dawning points to Toulouse, it is in Rome that its noonday was to shine forth. At the time of the fourth Lateran Council, convoked by Innocent III in 1215, Foulques of Toulouse and Dominic of Guzman were in the Eternal City seeking the confirmation of the new religious institute of Toulouse missionaries. The great Pontiff, who agreed with the Council that preaching the word of the divine Shepherd was the proper ministry of Bishops, and that no new religious order should receive approbation, found their request inopportune. But it was not inopportune in the designs of God who had inspired it in Dominic and who would soon, by a mysterious vision, cause Innocent to yield and incline him to take the monastery of Prouilhe under his protection, to praise the apostolic zeal of Dominic by urging him to choose from among the already approved apostolic rules the one he would follow.

As for Dominic, if at Rome the sun had appeared for him on the horizon, it had not yet reached its zenith. But in that mother-city he had encountered the benevolence of the Sovereign Pontiff's nephew, Cardinal Ugolino Conti, a friend who was to glorify the two new Patriarchs: one of them

Dominic himself who “by his wisdom upon earth a splendour was of light cherubical”, the other “all seraphical in ardour” (Par XI, 37-39). This seraphic Patriarch, who in his intensity had already trodden the roads of France and Spain with which Dominic was acquainted, had met Dominic in the devout semi-darkness of a church in that Roman ambiance. It was an admirable spectacle for the angels to see the two most passionate votaries of voluntary poverty recognizing each other as if in a heavenly apparition, embracing, declaring their brotherhood and companionship in the following of Christ and for His mission. This kiss of peace is renewed from generation to generation, from century to century, among the sons of Dominic and Francis when, traversing various roads, they meet on the vast fields of the Church of God. How many campaigns and victories they share! What acts of heroism together! How many dangers and struggles in common! How many mutual trophies and crowns! In the rays of the divine sun do they not sparkle upon the diadem of Christ’s Bride with marvelous brilliance, like diamonds and rubies?

But meanwhile, behold Dominic a third time in that Rome which he had left in company with Foulques to return to Toulouse, rejoice there to see the number of disciples increased, gather them together and unite them at Prouilhe, select a rule, according to the Pope’s advice – namely that of St. Augustine – make it the basis of an apostolic Order wherein Contemplation would be at the service of action, study of the word of the Gospel, fasting and prayer of vigorous, intrepid virtue, erect the first convent near the church of St. Romain at Toulouse, and appoint a Vicar to represent him. He goes back to the banks of the Tiber with the new Constitutions of the Order of Preachers. He no longer finds the great Pope Innocent on the throne of Peter, but his successor, Honorius III; prostrating before him, he implores the confirmation of his work.

High noon had struck. Honorius engraves, as if on marble, the character he recognizes in the Order established by his dear son, Dominic, prior of St. Romain of Toulouse, the approval he grants to this Order of future champions of the faith and true torchlights for the world. Exult, O illustrious lineage of Dominic! Honorius even affixed your name: the Prior and the Brethren of St. Romain would traverse the centuries before the princes and people of the Church under the name and escutcheon of the Preachers. Exult, O Dominic! The tree you planted with approval or disapproval, would grow and extend its life-giving branches into the boundless skies. The eagle’s nest you built would send forth its magnanimous sons beyond the summits of the Alps and the shores of the ocean. In the full noonday radiating and shining upon you, a new sun would appear rivaling the light of day. “Press it home on all occasions, convenient or inconvenient.”



### III

You know that the works of the saints are the works of God; of that God who from the height of His throne in the new Jerusalem, coming down from heaven, said to the evangelist of Patmos ravished in ecstasy: "Behold, I make all things new" (Apoc 21:5). God does not withdraw His hand from His work, but abides and persists. And in the course of centuries, amid human vicissitudes, favorable or not, which surround the bark of Peter like the waves of the sea, calm or tempestuous, He provides and equips it with new oarsmen, guides and impels it toward new ports and further conquests across the immensity of an ocean of peoples. By means of the Order of Preachers founded by Dominic, the Savior of the world was renewing His work as He had done in Palestine when, at the side of the twelve Apostles, He placed the company of seventy-two disciples, selected from among the elite of those who followed Him, and sent them, as cooperators with the Apostles, to preach the kingdom of God and care for souls. Was this not a new work, the institution of an Order of religious, no longer tranquil dwellers in the deserts, mountains or valleys, or Canons living in the shelter of a cloister, or faithful ransomers of unhappy wretches condemned to the galleys or fallen into slavery, but coming forth from the retirement of a cell which had witnessed their prolonged contemplation, their study and their fasts, to break and distribute to the people, to the wandering flocks hungering after faith and truth, the bread of the divine word to nourish, not their bodies but their souls? Let the disdainful poverty of Valdo keep silence, rebellious as it was against the legitimate shepherds of the flock of Christ and usurping the ministry of the sacred word. That is not how Dominic went about it. It was under the aegis of obedience to a Bishop that he dedicated himself to preaching; under the aegis of obedience to a Bishop that he preached along the banks of the Rhone and the Garonne; under the aegis of obedience to a Bishop that

he became a recruiter and father of a legion of preachers whom the Bishop of Bishops, the Vicar of Christ, constituted an advanced guard of champions of the faith and true lights of the world. This is the new and great idea of the Order of Preachers; here is the new rampart and the new garrison of soldiers and defenders, ready for the most difficult forays, the most remote attacks against ignorance, the most ensnaring ambushes set up against faith and truth, against the corruption and perversion of good sense and Christian virtue. Here at their head is the captain, elect of God, who would guide the new knights - errant, promulgators of the Gospel, in their pursuit of people's salvation.

What an admirable captain! Of invincible courage, of extraordinary harmony between thinking and willing, of an intelligence wherein the Wisdom of the Gospel and of Paul shines supremely beyond every other kind of knowledge; athirst for Christ alone and Him crucified, endowed with a nature rich in a courage and kindness capable of forming and raising above the ordinary those heroes who create new forms of religious and Christian life. He is a captain who seems to be Master of the art of withstanding false doctrines, a priest in that of exhortation and prayer, a father in that of magnanimity and counsel. Master, priest and father: but lovable with a sweetness full of forbearance, a patience recognizing the full value of all his projects and all his works, and a mastery skillful in discerning the way to the heart so as to achieve every victory. "Use argument, reproof, and appeal, with all the patience that the work of teaching requires."

Does it astonish you that, under the flag which such a leader brought back from Rome to Toulouse, hallowed by the seal of Christ's Vicar, his comrades should be filled with joy, prepared to follow him loyally along the steep, rugged path of the Constitutions he had written, listen to his instructions, respond to his appeals which were entreaties rather than

commands, correct and overcome themselves in trials which the example of their father softened and rendered attractive in the eyes of his sons, when it was a question of gaining a challenging victory over self? I can see them gathered around their beloved father in the convent of St. Romain in Toulouse, on the feast of Mary's Assumption in 1217. It was a memorable day when Dominic, after having his



*St. Dominic Blesses and then sends forth his first Brethren*

Vicar elected for governing, would speak to his sons with the authority of first Master of the Order with the vision and memory of a saint in whose ear still resounded the order from Heaven re-echoing Paul's cry: "Go, and preach!" He would say to them, to the great wonder of nobles and plain folk: "Go, preach to all the nations", and he would disperse them among the peoples. From a handful of sixteen followers, he would keep two in Toulouse and two for the direction of the nuns at Prouilhe; he would send four into Spain to sow the seeds of highest virtue: Paris would receive seven of them who would steep their minds in scholarly pursuits at the newly founded University. They would establish the famous convent of Saint Jacques, future abode and school of the two greatest geniuses of the century, Albert the Great and Thomas of Aquin. I shall

not rehearse how the pain of separation from their father was alleviated by the hope of seeing him again; how poverty went with them from door to door on their way; how they would find new friends, other companions, and, within the space of four years, founded houses beyond the Pyrenees at Segovia, Madrid, Palencia, Barcelona, Santarem, Zamora, and beside Toulouse, after Paris, Lyons, Montpellier, Bayonne, Puy-en-Velay and Narbonne; how they would reach even into Hungary, Germany, England and Scandinavia. I shall not follow these heralds of the word of God in their careers, for their Master and Father calls to me, he who, with one companion, Stephen of Metz, departs from the banks of the Garonne to cross the Alps and prostrate a fourth time at the feet of Peter's successor: he comes to establish in this holy city the most secure, the most glorious sanctuary of his work.

Following the path of Dominic during the last three years of his life when his increasing ardor puts wings on his feet for the purpose of spreading, visiting and organizing the Order of Preachers is more difficult for my inadequate words than tracing the steps of his disciples. It is easier to contemplate the eagle encouraging his young to fly by wheeling about above them than to keep one's gaze fixed on the majestic sweep of his wings among the precipices and valleys of his alpine kingdom. Will it not suffice to point him out, indefatigable at this decline of his life, climax of his story and his sanctity: the reform of the monastery of Prouilhe and the foundation of the Sisters of the Order of Preachers, the inauguration of the Militia of Christ, the great plan of selecting as seed-bed and garden of his new plantations Paris, the University of the sciences, and Bologna, the University of Law; the captivating of great personages and professors so that they became his followers; his treks back and forth through France and Spain to revisit and meet with his sons experimenting with the rule he had chosen; missions and conquests among the heretics of the Lombard regions, founding the convents of Bologna,

Bergamo, Milan, Verona, Piacenza, Brescia, Florence and Siena; illnesses and cures, dangers and rescues, welcomes and rejections, joy and sorrow; all that was fortuitous and adverse, favorable and prejudicial, meeting in his magnanimous undertakings; two Chapters General held at Bologna to reaffirm voluntary poverty and render it stricter, and, exhausted in body and nigh unto death, three journeys to the banks of the Tiber?

Here at Rome, stop for a moment, my brethren, to admire the founder of the Preachers. On this soil, made rugged by its seven hills, the heart of Latium and of the world, Dominic had also given his mind and heart. More than the annals of a glory submerged by the migration of nations, he read, amid the ruins of majestic Imperial monuments, the heroic deeds of Peter and Paul. The word of Peter's successor was to him the solution for every doubt, such as the debates arising from the Paris foundation, the revision of the Order's Constitutions, the resistance and problems encountered in the erection, opposite the Baths of Caracalla, of the monastery of St. Sixtus. There, to increase discipline and piety under the rule of the Sisters coming from Prouilhe and the direction of his disciples, he reassembled the nuns of St. Mary and St. Bibiana, and this before Honorius III had bestowed upon the Preachers the Basilica and house of Santa Sabina on the sunny slopes of the Aventine.

It was here that he received among his Brethren Reginald of Orleans, professor of law at the University of Paris. Shortly after the latter's return from the Holy Land to which his devotion to the tomb of Jesus had drawn him, the two academic centers of Bologna and Paris would hear him preach like a new Elias and see him clothe famous professors and students filled with zeal in the white scapular which Mary had given him in a vision. Here the apostolic voice of Dominic would touch, convert, attract to virtue both the humble and

the great. His words resounded in the Basilicas and the pontifical court. His prayer, which worked miracles, amazed populace and princes, while his affability, his gentleness and his charity transformed admiration into affectionate regard, that regard into veneration for his holiness; and that veneration into generous assistance.

Hence I do not hesitate to claim Dominic as a Roman citizen: Roman after the manner of Christ, after the manner of Peter, shepherd of the universal sheepfold, Roman after the manner of Paul, apostle and doctor of the nations. From the first kiss which the Canon of Osma imprinted, together with his Bishop Diego, on the sacred stone of the Vatican, when he ardently desired martyrdom among the infidels, the preacher of Gascony, the founder of the Order of Preachers, the prince of religious legislators in the Middle Ages, felt and experienced that the divine source of life murmured here, that from it gushed forth, limpid and salutary, the royal stream of eloquence and the apostolic word, watering the vine of Christ and rendering it fruitful even to the ends of the earth. Just as, the first time he had come to the eternal city with Bishop Diego, original inspirer of his apostolate, so now, at the moment of leaving it for the last time, he would find himself there – blessed favor from Heaven! – with Foulques, Bishop of Toulouse, the second supporter of his work, delighted that the great enterprise of the prior of St. Romain in his see city should be receiving a higher approbation than his own, that of the Sovereign Pontiff who confirmed, protected, and extended it to the whole world. It was the last salutation that Dominic would offer to Rome and to his generous friend from Toulouse, whose holy friendship was redolent of that charity which rendered it eternal.

Henceforth, oh great Patriarch of the Preachers, leave this holy city, to which your thought, your heart, your name, your glory, and, during these memorable days to the joy of

the faithful, also the signal relic of your sacred head will return, but never you in life. Bologna awaits you, your wisdom as father and Master is expected by your devoted sons gathered for the second General Chapter. The magistrates are waiting to grant you the freedom of the city as well as the warm hearted crowd of young students from that celebrated University.

Yes, the students were special friends of Dominic. Arriving in Bologna, he mingled with them, joined their groups, lived in their midst. He talked with them about the great problems of their life, their plans, their hopes. How lovely to observe his white tunic among them, symbol of the lily, and the black mantle, like a darkened dying rose. Here, you young students, are the great problems of this life opening up before you, as a garden planted in the most charming and fragrant of blooms. The love which Dominic bears for you is the love of Christ for that young man He invited to follow Him. As he left them he urged them with gentle affection to spurn the world and to remember death: "Believe me, my dear friends," he said to them, "before long I shall leave this life."

And I can see him some months later, in that year of 1221, after a journey to Venice to which he had hastened to pay a visit to his great protector, the Cardinal Legate Ugolino, coming back broken by travel, by suffering, fatigue, vigils, fasting, and an illness which threatened his life. Should I mention death on this day of joy and glory, before this altar aflame with lights which make the vestments of morning pale and banish every melancholy thought? Oh yes, I shall speak of it because the death of the saints is their birth into the life of glory, because their tomb is an altar and the cradle of their immortality. Dominic dies; he dies as a Friar Preacher. From his bed of pain at Bologna, as from the threshold of heaven, he preaches and commends to the circle of his sons who weep, both novices and proven religious, the truths which he had urged upon his congregations a thousand times: "use argu-

ment, reproof, and appeal, with all the patience that the work of teaching requires."

His last words are a warning, an appeal and a threat, accents which had never been heard escaping from his lips; he manifests a patience which overcomes all the blows of death; he teaches a lesson which is already lighted by all the gleams of approaching eternity. "Have charity; preserve humility, persevere in voluntary poverty, I conjure you; the wrath of God will fall upon those who dare to violate it" This testament, illustrious Friars Preachers, these solemn recollections of your blessed Patriarch – as attested by seven centuries – were the song at your cradle, the spur to your steps, the nourishment for your life, the insignia of your glory.

It was thus that he left this earthly field of battle for the blessed peace of heaven, this great Founder, Legislator and first Master of the Order of Preachers, unconquered athlete of the faith, and of the Bride of Christ, the gentle teacher of the straying, the friend of youth, with noble brow, inspiring respect and affection, joyful of face, ever smiling except when moved by the grief of his neighbor. The faithful servant was entering into the joy of his Lord; here below, surrounding his venerated mortal remains, amid bishops, abbots, prelates, lords and the populace deeply moved, the Cardinal Legate, Ugolino Conti, as spokesman for the Church, prayed aloud. It would be he, after his elevation to the splendor of the Supreme Pontificate, who was destined, under the name of Gregory IX, to crown with the nimbus of sanctity the two greatest Patriarchs of his century: along side the Seraphic Poor Man of Assisi, the Cherub of Caleruega. This halo of sainthood has shone forth for seven hundred years upon our altars about the head of Dominic, and today amid the splendor, the harmony and the chant of this magnificent temple dedicated to the Mother of Divine Wisdom, he proclaims to the world how it is possible to be raised to the altar bearing

in hand the lily and the torch of apostleship. “Preach the word, press it home on all occasions, convenient or inconvenient: use argument, reproof, and appeal, with all the patience that the work of teaching requires.”

From this altar whose century-old glory is so dazzling and on which Dominic’s head is exposed in an exquisite reliquary for the devotion of the faithful, he speaks, almost prophecies; he is addressing us as well. “May the bones of the ... prophets also send forth new life from the ground where they lie” (Ecclus 49:10). In the first place it is to you that he speaks, generous and worthy sons of so great a Patriarch, who as athletes of the faith and lights of the world have learned and are learning from him to run in his footsteps, as much by example of the most evident virtue as by speech. He is your glory, just as his crown is your illustrious company gathering palms and laurels from age to age down through the centuries. “Grandchildren are the crown of old age, and sons are proud of their fathers” (Prov 17:6). If about this altar, under the vaulting of this church, the centuries were to reassemble the noble ranks of Preachers, amid the splendor of its Popes and Cardinals, how



*Cell where the Saint died  
Bologna, 6 August 1221*

many Bishops’ mitres they could already exhibit! How many Legates, Nuncios, Apostolic Commissaries, Ambassadors and Councillors of Kings, Peacemakers and Apostles, Masters and Doctors, Writers and Philosophers, Theologians and Mystics, Ascetics and Saints! And the leaders of this holy band, the Universal doctor, Albert the Great and the Angel of the Schools, Thomas Aquinas, for whom divine and eternal designs prepared (in order to give him as a sun to the world of scholars and as a shining light against the murky enemies of the faith) the bosom of Dominic’s cloister and the classroom of the most celebrated of Masters!

But how idle are my words addressing athletes who plunge ahead to attain the goal pointed out to them by so holy a leader and father! Hence I shall admonish myself and you as well, happy by my halting speech to render more vivid and energetic the invitation Dominic addresses to us to imitate him as he became an imitator of Christ and of His Apostle Paul. If our word does not reach the sublimity of the conceptions of Dominic or Thomas Aquinas, of a Chrysostom or an Augustine, it can nevertheless be disseminated in the humble preaching of a wise counsel, a devout warning, a gentle reply, a holy prayer, an opportune correction, a charitable insistence which makes itself heard. If the intention motivating our message finds no place to alight, let our example, our actions, speak and preach, let our patience become instruction and doctrine. Did not the divine Master begin by doing before teaching? Does not example persuade and convince more than speech?

If the model of Dominic’s virtue is a sermon to us, let our example be an exhortation to good for those around us, for our families, for all those who see us often and have dealings with us. Is it not the cowardice of a timidly Christian soul when his virtue and goodness recoil before the malice and contempt of the world?

Between this blind, corrupting world and the Church, Bride of Christ, there still rise up today, as in Dominic's time, tragic, insurmountable obstacles. If Christ was set up as a sign of contradiction (Lk 2:34); if from the beginning, the furious hatred of the petty, proud fanaticism on the part of the Pharisees was aroused, as well as the frivolous materialism and haughty arrogance of the pagans, how could the Church expect a different welcome for her preaching of the Gospel in today's world? Weak, fearful natures can be terrified before such obstacles and the consequent need to admit one's faith frankly and face up to painful struggles. But the Church of Christ and all those who belong to her recognize that "love must not be a matter of words or talk; it must be genuine and show itself in action" (I Jn3:18). They do not flinch in such trials. As Mother of souls, She suffers from the misunderstanding and enmity into which the errors of our time lead so many of Her children. But She also knows that Her apostolate is an apostolate of truth; to sacrifice even a single iota of the Deposit of Faith to the broad but shallow currents of modern errors would be to betray Her divine mission to save the world. The program of the prophets of error in our day is to dethrone Christ. "We do not want this man as our king" (Lk 19:14). Such is the cry uttered in unison by those who preach social upheaval and promise the deluded and enslaved populace an earthly paradise whence Christ is banished, those who would wish to exclude the Church from public life and replace the divine mystery of Christ by a new "myth" negating and destructive of all Christian civilization; those who reject all revealed truth and, like Lucifer at the dawn of creation, revolt against divine law. The Church suffers with Christ; She does not come to terms with the Antichrist. No flattery, no threat, no proposal, no violence will ever succeed in hindering Her from calling the truth the truth, error error, a lie a lie, injustice what is not just. There is no iniquitous judge, no dungeon so dark, no harshness of imprisonment, exile, frozen solitude for deportation which can

ever fetter the word of God, for "the word of God is not shut up" (II Tim 2:9). And nothing in the world could prevent the Church from reminding Her courageous but suffering children of the strong, consoling words of the Savior, a harbinger of certain victory: "Do not fear those who kill the body and after that have nothing more they can do" (Lk 12:4).

Let us not fear the world: let us fear God. Let us follow, hearken to and invoke His saints so as to share in the joy by which, in the Heavenly fatherland, God will recompense infinitely their earthly exile.

Yes, oh glorious Patriarch, we invoke you. Fragrant lily from the virginal vales, indefatigable herald and propagator of faith and truth, father of unconquerable champions and admirable Masters of the flock of Christ, you know how to persuade gently and sweetly, to encourage in every virtue. Since you have been and still remain an incomparable teacher of the sons you have chosen, be also our Master in the true paths of doctrine leading to salvation! Destroy in our minds the senseless wisdom of the world,



*Apparition of the Virgin Mary to St. Dominic. (by Coello)*

the mad clamor of uncontrolled passions! May the light of this day which for seven centuries has raised you to the veneration of the Christian people impress your teachings indelibly upon our hearts! Teach us — all of us — how watching before the tabernacle of God, present and hidden, charity is enkindled, inflamed and dilated, blazing up into the love of neighbor, and transforms into an instrument for good both poverty and suffering, study and prayer, the domestic hearth and the streets of the city. Teach us how the faith of Peter and of that Rome you loved so much should urge us, by the cries of the martyrs buried there, to esteem the salvation of the soul above the conquest of the world, to bear the name of Christian with an unmasked face, to increase in merit for Heaven in the course of our mortal life, to help and enlighten our brethren. Teach us how at your school, even in the soul of a humble virgin, in this Catherine of Siena who sleeps under the altar at the feet of her Heavenly Spouse, your own zeal for souls and for the Church penetrates her inmost depths and engenders such heroism; how a holy audacity, confidence in God and the word of eternity triumph; how the faith which works through charity overcomes the world. Be our Master, our consoler and our intercessor in the vicissitudes, joyous or sorrowful, of our lives, in the risks of righteousness and the magic spell of evil, in the constant daily struggle to safeguard in ourselves the divine image purified and sanctified by the Blood which takes away all the sins of the world, which opens heaven to us and admits us into the bliss and peace of eternal glory with God. Amen. So be it!



*Translated by Mother Mary of the Trinity, O.P.*

*Dominican Nuns  
of  
Corpus Christi Monastery  
Menlo Park, California*

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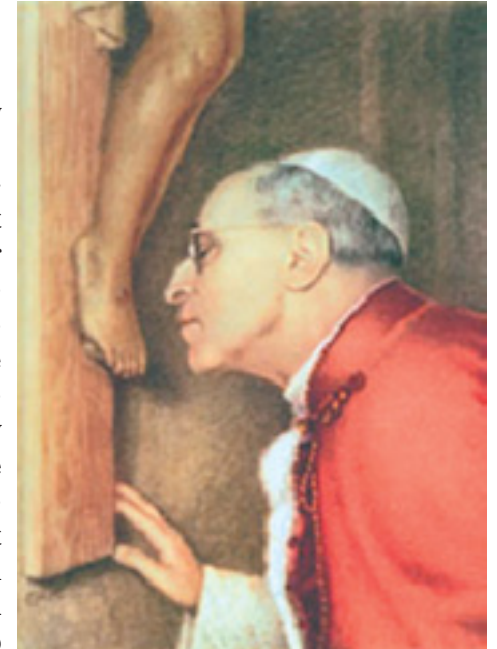
**To the Most Reverend Master General,  
Michael Browne, O.P., concerning the Marian Rosary.  
Pius P.P. XII**

*At the center of this discourse, while others took up arms for battle, we found St. Dominic in the Church, “praying and weeping before the altars for the faith of which the finest victory over the world is the victory for souls.” Cardinal Pacelli reminds his Brethren of St. Dominic’s “most shining sword” - that is, the Rosary of the Virgin Mary. Already, the Rosary was uppermost in the heart and mind of this Dominican Cardinal who would soon after be elected Supreme Pastor. It is not surprising then, that near the end of his earthly life, after having witnessed the inexpressible tragedy of a World War and the spread of militant atheistic materialism, he would once again speak of the Holy Rosary to the sons of St. Dominic.*

*We conclude this booklet with Pope Pius XII’s brief but inspiring letter on the Holy Rosary dated 11 July 1957 and sent to his brother in St. Dominic, Fr. Michael Browne, O.P., then Master of the Order of Preachers. May the Holy Rosary, once again prayed and preached with fervor bring to bear the great fruits of the moral renewal of society, unity and peace which are always associated with it and for which St. Dominic and Pope Pius XII labored so vigorously.*

*Beloved Son, greeting and  
Apostolic Benediction.*

We are pleased to know from the reports that you, in a spirit of greatest obedience, have sent Us that the Dominican Order, over which you worthily preside, has been striving zealously and diligently to the utmost that the Marian Rosary might more ardently be recited daily by the faithful in honor of the Virgin Mother of God, and that the pious Sodality which take their name from it and which are given over to your sedulous and unceasing care might flourish ever more day by day. This comes as most agreeable news, seeing that in this method of prayer a quick and easy means is laid out for the whole Christian people, even the unformed and uninstructed, whereby they may nourish, enkindle and arouse their piety and religious devotion to the greatest possible degree.



For the Marian Rosary is “a marvelous garland woven from the angelic annunciation interspersed with the Lord’s Prayer and joined together with a course of meditation, a most efficacious kind of entreaty.... and most especially fruitful for the



*attainment of everlasting life*" (Leo XIII in his letter *Diuturni temporis*, 5 Sept. 1898; A.L., vol. XVIII, pp. 154-155). For this reason, in addition to the most excellent prayers of which it is comprised and which are, as it were, plaited into a crown of heavenly roses, it also offers an invitation to stir up one's faith, a help to devotion and outstanding models of virtue through the mysteries presented for contemplation. It therefore cannot fail to be most pleasing to the Virgin Mother of God and to her Only Son, who undoubtedly considers any praise, honor and glory rendered to his Mother as likewise rendered to Himself. It is also to be maintained as certain that these forms of prayer, whether recited in consecrated places or in domestic gatherings, even if recited in an altogether private manner, avail abundantly for the attainment of divine grace and the amendment of morals among Christians. It is well known that it was above all for this reason that the Roman Pontiffs, and most particularly Our Predecessor of undying memory, Leo XIII, extolled this method of prayer with the highest praises and enriched it with salutary favors. We Ourselves, in Our Encyclical Letter beginning with the words "*Ingruentium malorum*" (A. A. S., vol. XLIII, 1951, pp. 577 ff.), have strongly recommended the Marian Rosary to Christians of every degree, as we believed, and do believe, that the most powerful and generous Mother of God, moved by the voices of so many of her children, would obtain as gifts from God that public and private morals should be strengthened with each passing day, that the Catholic religion might engage in the service which is acceptable to God free from all unjust impediments whatsoever, and that its salutary power should extend not merely into the minds of all citizens individually, but likewise into the very veins of the commonwealth; in order that, through mutual respect of all and the order derived from just laws, they may be so governed and united that there may arise among them not rivalry but concord, not hate but love, and not a new encounter with ruin but the growth of prosperity rightly so called.

Continue, then, as you are doing, zealously, diligently and devoutly promoting the Marian Rosary and the various associations that take their name from it; this is a particular mark of your Order, and the pious service of that same Order does not stand in last place in the eyes of the exalted Mother of God, of the Church or of the Catholic religion.

We then, wishing to render fatherly thanks to you for things well done, to inspire in you a resolve to be no less eager in the future pursuit of this cause, and to extend a sign of heavenly graces and a token of Our goodwill, most happily bestow upon you, beloved son, upon each of those associations committed to your care and that of your Order, and most particularly upon those who render assistance to you in carrying this work forward, the Apostolic Benediction.

Given at Rome, at St. Peter's, on the eleventh day of the month of July, in the year one thousand nine hundred fifty seven, the nineteenth of Our Pontificate.

**P. Pius XII**

TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN BY ROBERT MACDONALD, ARCHIVAL ASSISTANT,  
PROVIDENCE COLLEGE DOMINICAN PROVINCE OF ST. JOSEPH (USA)

***Dominican Nuns of the Perpetual Rosary***

*Monastery Pius XII*

*Rua do Rosario, 1*

*2495-444 Fatima, Portugal*

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