



ST. DOMINIC'S FEAST DAY NEWSLETTER 2023

The Year 2023 started off auspiciously with the inauguration of the Jubilee of St. Thomas that will last from January 28th, 2023 to January 28th, 2025. The Jubilee consists of three anniversaries: the 700th Anniversary of his canonization (July 18th, 2023), the 750th Anniversary of his death (March 7th, 2024) and the 800th Anniversary of his birth (2025). His wisdom, eloquence, devotion, angelic purity and saintly example continue to profoundly influence the Church in our day, and we are filled with happiness to honor and celebrate him as one of our own. The Eucharistic Adoration hymns he lovingly composed are still used in the Sacred Liturgy. Our Master General, Fr. Gerard Francisco Timoner, III, O.P., has highlighted the role of St. Thomas as our preeminent teacher and reminded us of the profound letter on St. Thomas by Pope St. Paul VI: "Grace does not diminish nature, but brings it fulfillment, while nature is subordinate to grace, reason to faith and human love to divine charity."



In February we elected our new prioress for the next three years, Mother Mary of the Sacred Heart, O.P. We are grateful to her for accepting this office and for the joy, generosity, creativity and energy she has put into learning all the ins and outs of being in charge of everything! As all the Sisters have been reassigned to new charges, we also are learning to adjust and grow in grace as we continue our journey together. May Our Lady continue to be with our community as we seek to always be her Guards of Honor.



The open space left from the tree provides a broader view of the sky, and a new four-foot red dogwood promises more shade in future years.

We decided it was time to say good bye to our magnificent hybrid American Elm tree, which grew in the cloister garth. The graceful vase-shaped tree had provided needed shade for almost forty years, and although still lovely to look at, it was obviously rotting away inside. Of course, taking a 30-foot tree out of the cloister garden posed a serious logistical problem, but the tree removal man soon had it solved. With his truck's large boom working from outside the garth on the other side of the novitiate wing, his crew were able to remove all the large branches safely. Then the crew commenced to saw the huge trunk into sizeable pieces easily carted out in a wheelbarrow.



Goodbye!

There are some who think that because nuns live inside the cloister, the atmosphere of penance and silence must strangle joy and good humor. Actually, constantly living – like Mary – for the "one thing necessary" helps develop a woman's sense of humor. Thus one Sister recently shared this fruit of her culinary contemplation with the Community: *Q: What do you get when a good-humored cook is preparing fruits and vegetables? A: Peels of laughter!*

In June, we held a Vocation Retreat for young women interested in learning about monastic life. Fr. Pier Giorgio Dengler, O.P., came to offer Mass, Confession and conferences. The girls were open and attentive. The climax of this year's retreat was the Corpus Christi Procession after Mass on Sunday. Despite a stormy forecast, the weather was perfect. Father entered the Choir holding the large Monstrance, accompanied by the Sisters carrying acolyte sticks, the processional cross and censor. We made our way outside the building around to the cloister gate, which was open, and where there was a small altar set up for Benediction. The people from our chapel had gathered outside the gate and when Jesus in the Monstrance approached they all fell on their knees in loving adoration. After Benediction the laymen took the acolyte sticks, cross and censor to continue accompanying the Blessed Sacrament up the steep hill and back into the chapel. *Adoremus in Aeternum Sanctissimum Sacramentum!*



Benediction with Fr. Francis

One of the highlights of this year was the visit of several of our Dominican Friars. The first was Fr. James Moore, O.P., from California, whom we have not seen in many years! Then in June the Novice Master of the Southern Dominican Province, Fr. Francis Orozco, O.P., stopped by for several days with his group of five novices. God graciously provided them with a few days of pleasant weather after a plethora of storms so they could enjoy our quiet country surroundings. We pray for their perseverance and holiness as they prepare to pronounce their Vows in August.