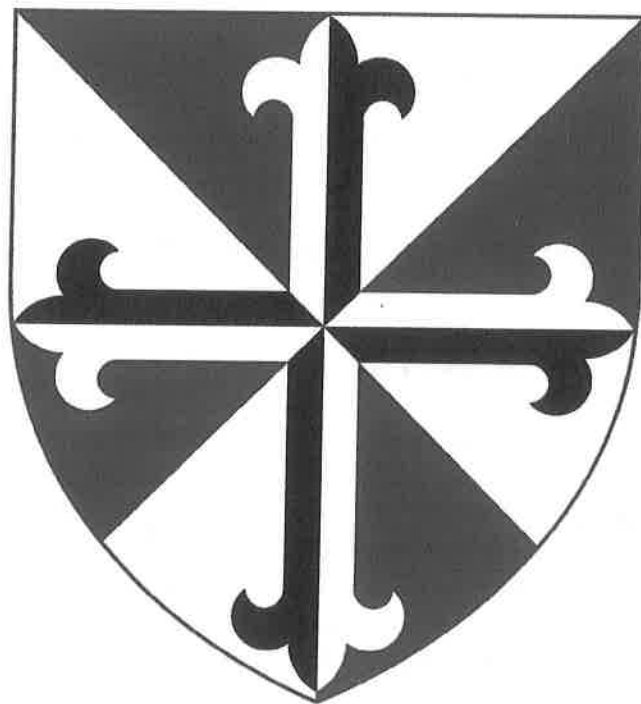


**Lay Dominican
Inquiry Formation
for the
Province of
St. Martin de Porres**



Becoming a Lay Dominican



Loving God.

Loyal to the Catholic Church.

Seeking Holiness.

Pursuing Truth.

Dominican Laity.. for those seeking a richer, deeper spiritual life while living in the world.

Dedicated to a life of liturgical prayer, study of sacred truth and zeal for the salvation of souls.

Living a positive response to the gospel message while combating the evils of the age by preaching the Truth of Christ.

Dominican Life and Spirit

“Lay Dominican life is all about having a passion for the Word of God. It is about committing oneself to a community of like minded brothers and sisters that immerse themselves in the Word of God. “If you remain in my word, you will truly be my disciples, you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free” (St. [John 8:31-32](#)). Lay Dominicans seek to be in an environment where they “breathe” the Word of God in the Holy Scriptures, in the teaching of the Church, in personal and liturgical prayer, in study, and in every day life experiences. They discern ways, with the help of a community of believers, to deliver that Word according to their abilities and the urging of the Holy Spirit”

*Rule and Directory of the Lay Dominicans of the
Province of St. Martin de Porres*



In 1216 Saint Dominic de Guzman founded the Order of Preachers for the primary purpose of defending the truths of the Catholic Faith through prayer, study and holy preaching. Today, just as in previous ages, the Order of Preachers is called to bring God's Truth to others to help revitalize, support and strengthen their faith through sound theology and the teachings of the Church.

Saint Dominic chose to dedicate his life to Jesus Christ and His Church by dedicating himself to prayer and the preaching of truth. He was remembered as speaking only to God or of God. Realizing the destructive effects of sin and the theological errors of his time, Saint Dominic made the study of sacred truth, *Veritas*, one of the pillars of his Order.

The motto of the Order is: "To contemplate and to give to others the fruits of our contemplation." The Dominican is first formed through a life of prayer, study and penance before he preaches to God's people.

The many forms of Dominican preaching and witnessing must flow from graces received in interior silence, prayer and study. Saint Dominic realized that one first needed to be filled with the grace of the Holy Spirit before being able to bring His truth to others.

Lay Dominicans live in the world as married or single persons choosing a specific path to holiness by freely following a Rule based on the spirit of Saint Dominic. They bring the truth of the Gospel to their families, parishes, workplace and social gatherings, thus permeating all of society. In turn, the members share in the spiritual benefits of the Dominican Order.

Chapter meetings provide community opportunities to pray, study and share the truths of the Gospel and the traditions of the Catholic Church.

The stages of formation include:



Getting to know one another: Above all else, this first step allows the candidate to get to know the Order better. This step is normally conducted through regular meetings with one of the local chapters in the candidate's area. The vocation director at the candidate's local chapter will help the candidate discern whether or not he or she is made for Dominican life. If there is a positive response at the end of this step, the candidate will be invited to proceed to the next step.

Inquiry Period: One must be Catholic for at least two years before beginning the inquiry period. Through a series of classes over the course of one year, the local chapter presents an overview of what it means to be a Dominican. As this period of formation ends, the candidate may decide to request admission to the Order.

Novitiate: The duration of the novitiate is twelve months. The novitiate begins with the Dominican Order recognizing the candidate as a member of the Order. This is a more formal formation period in the life of a fraternity member. This period includes diverse activities: the study of the life of St. Dominic and other great Dominican figures; the study of the Constitutions, the history of the Order, and the Rule of the Fraternities of St. Dominic; and the general practice of the commitments of a lay Dominican (e.g., daily Mass, Morning and Evening Prayer from the Liturgy of the Hours, daily Rosary).

Simple Profession: As the novitiate ends, candidates and the Order make a decision as to whether the candidate should make a commitment as a lay Dominican. Temporary profession is a commitment to live according to the Rule of the Fraternities of St. Dominic for a period of three years. Formation in Dominican life and spirituality continues during this time. At the end of this period, the candidate and the Order decide if the candidate is prepared to make final or permanent profession.



Final Profession: When the decision is reached to move ahead and make final profession, the individual makes a commitment to live according to the Rule of the Fraternities of St. Dominic for the rest of his or her life.

On-going Formation: Dominicans are particularly committed to on-going formation both in the chapter and individually. Even though one has made a permanent commitment to be a Dominican, on-going study continues in the area of Dominican spirituality, the Scriptures, the

teachings of the Church, etc. Dominicans are always concerned about growing in understanding of both their faith and their Dominican vocation.

If you are interested in joining us send an email to vocations@laydomsouth.org or you may use the contact form below. We would be overjoyed to have you with us on our journey to Our Lord Jesus Christ by the path of Saint Dominic.

Formation Guidelines

The intent of these guidelines is to provide a general framework for formation programs by identifying the essential elements for instruction. These guidelines are not intended to impose burdensome requirements, but rather to aid chapters in forming members to the Dominican way of life.

It is crucial to acknowledge that the call to the Dominican Order is a call to a *vocation* for the purpose of sanctification of its members. Union with God and personal holiness are the goals for every Dominican.

As followers of St. Dominic, it is important to instruct our newest members in the twofold aspect of the Order's charism; the contemplative life and the active life. To bear good fruit in the active life, we must first begin with the contemplative life. Accordingly, the greatest emphasis must be placed on developing a deep and rich contemplative life, so we may thereby attain our goal in the active life, which consists in the salvation of souls.

A good Dominican formation program provides detailed instruction (which can be tailored to the needs of each chapter), that helps us integrate The Rule, The Particular Directory and the promises we make, into our daily lives. The guidelines presented here list the standard aspects for proper formation. Also provided is a list of basic and recommended materials for each year.

I. YEAR ONE

The year of Inquiry (Postulancy), is the year in which new members seek to discern whether they are, in fact, called to Dominican life. During this year, the study is centered on what it means to be a Dominican, familiarity with Dominican history and saints, as well as the role of the Laity in the Church today.

Topics of Instruction in Year One:

- Liturgical Prayer
- Loyalty to the Church
- Contemplative Prayer
- Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary and The Rosary
- Devotion to St. Dominic and St. Catherine of Siena
- Study
- Community Life
- Familiarity with the Rule and Particular Directory
- History of Saint Dominic / Dominican Order
- Mission of the Order
- Four Pillars: Study, Prayer, Community, Preaching

Required Materials for Year One:

- *Holy Bible*
- *Catechism of the Catholic Church*
- *Liturgy of the Hours* (4 volume set) (You may want to buy one book at a time or go to iBreviary website for the daily hours.)
- *Dominicana: A Guidebook for Inquirers, Second Edition* by Robert Curtis, OPL and Karen Woods, OPL
- *Saint Dominic* by Sister Mary Jean Dorcy, OP (Tan Books and Publishers)
- Rule and Directory of the Lay Dominicans (access on website)

Recommended Materials for Year One:

- *St. Dominic's Family* by Sister MaryJean Dorcy, OP
- *Dominican Saints* by Dominican Novices (TAN Books and Publishers)
- *My Way of Life* pocket edition - *recommends* by Walter Farrell, O.P., S.T.M. and Martine J. Healy, S.T.D.

"The Summa of St Thomas Aquinas" in easy to understand stand language

Orientation and Introduction to the Dominican Order

We welcome you today for the first stage of Formation in the Lay Dominicans. This first year is known as "Inquiry". For the next year you will be learning the fundamentals of the Order of Preachers (Dominicans). It is only the beginning of a lifetime of continuous learning. Fundamentally, Dominican life is centered on four "Pillars" (key characteristics of the Order that make the Dominican Order what it is): Community, Prayer, Study, and Preaching. Upon the completion of the Inquiry year, the Formation Director will present to the Chapter Council a list of Inquirers who qualify for reception into the Order. If the Chapter Council is in agreement, then the Inquirer receives the Dominican pin (usually in a reception ceremony) and begins the next phase of formation, "Candidacy".

For one year, the Candidate attempts with the help of God and the Chapter to be formed as a Dominican. At the end of this year, the Candidate asks to make Temporary promises for three years. The new Temporary Promised is given the Dominican Scapular and the Rule and Directory of the Chapter.

The Lay Dominicans are a part of the world wide Order of Preachers, otherwise known as the Dominican Order. In some areas Dominicans are also known as "black friars" because of the black cloak and Cappus that the Friars and religious wore for travel and during Lent.

The Order had its beginnings in 1203 when St. Dominic of Guzman was sent with his bishop to arrange a marriage between the son of the king of Castile and the daughter of the Lord of the Marches. While traveling through southern France, Dominic was appalled at the major inroads a heresy known as Albigensianism was making in that part of the world, (so called because it started in the town of Albi). Albigensianism taught that all matter was evil and all spirit was good, and that the "good" God created the spirit realm while a demon god created and reined over the corporal world. This meant that all material things and pleasures had to be rejected.

The "Elect" of their society lived strictly, while everyone else could do whatever they desired , as long as they accepted all Albigensian teachings as true. They had to renounce the Catholic faith and , instead, admire and respect their Elect.

As soon as his mission was completed, and with permission, St. Dominic resolved to return to Southern France and endeavored to counteract this heresy with the preaching of the truth. It must be remembered that at this time it was not common for any priest to preach – only the Pope and bishops could preach. Dominic began to attract many men and lay people to him. The lay people at first were known as the "Militia of Christ," and would soon be given a rule and become known as "The Order of Penitents". This was the beginning of the "Third Order" or more commonly known today as Lay Dominicans, which is now the largest branch of the Order.

As time went by, Dominic realized that it was not just Southern France that needed the preaching of the truth, but rather the entire world. With the approval of the Holy See, Dominic began to assemble a band of well-educated men to be itinerant preachers. Eventually they were to become the Order of Friars Preachers. He dedicated the Order to preaching, winning souls for Christ. St. Dominic placed great emphasis on study. A preacher had to be educated to know what he was talking about before he got into the pulpit. Another characteristic of the Order that was even more innovative for the time was the democratic spirit of the Order. All superiors were to be elected for certain limited terms, and laws were to be made by elected delegates. It is this democratic characteristic that has allowed the Dominican Order, of all the major religious Orders, the ability to be able to reform itself from within – the Dominican Order has never split into several different Orders, as have the benedictines who are in several groups (Trappists, Cistercians, and regular Benedictines), or the Franciscans (who are Conventuals, Capuchins, and Minors), or the Carmelites (who are either Calced or Discalced).

At about the same time as St. Dominic was gathering a group of men around him to be the nucleus of the Order, he also founded a monastery of cloistered nuns in Prouille near Toulouse. Most of these were women who had been Albigensians, but who had returned to the Church and wanted to continue to serve God in some kind of Catholic religious life. Thus, the Friars, the Laity and the nuns came into being at roughly the same time.

The Dominican Order or Family is worldwide and is composed of various branches. First are the Friars. Second are the cloistered nuns, living in monasteries. Third are diocesan priests and apostolic Sisters/Brothers (Third Order Regular/Religious). Lay Dominicans are Third Order Secular, living in the secular world, not in a conventual setting.

The head of the Order is known as the Master of the Order. He has direct jurisdiction only over the Friars, Nuns, and Laity. The convents of Dominican Sisters are under Pontifical jurisdiction. Each convent has a Superior.

In the United States, there are four Dominican provinces: Eastern, Central, Southern, and Western. There are Lay Dominican Chapters located in each Dominican Province.

The units of Lay Dominicans are called Chapters. In the Southern Province, the Chapters are lead by a Moderator. The Chapter elects a Council which conducts the business of the Chapter. When necessary or desirable, a council's decisions are presented to the entire chapter for approval or input. Following the tradition of the Friars, all the officers including the members of the Council are elected directly by the Chapter. Chapters typically meet once a month. At the provincial level, there is also a Lay Provincial Council which meets annually.

Becoming a Lay Dominican is not like joining a club, a sodality, or even a Confraternity. One is joining a Religious Order, and becomes a Dominican in the fullest sense of the term to be taken very, very seriously. Inquirers and Candidates receive a period of formation. They make public promises to live according to the Dominican spirit and the Rule and Directory of the Chapter.

History of the Dominican Order

LAY DOMINICANS ARE MEMBERS OF A WORLDWIDE FAMILY

The Dominican Family was founded by St. Dominic de Guzman, a Spanish priest born in Caleruega in 1170. In 1203 he organized his traveling preachers and founded the Dominican "Order of Preachers" (the meaning of the OP that you see after a Dominican's name). Dominicans all over the world continue to draw upon the charisms of St. Dominic and are formed throughout their entire lives according to the priorities and fundamentals of the Dominican way of life. There are four principal branches of the Order, all true members of it:

The Friars: the brothers and priests who profess solemn vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience and who may be involved in a variety of ministries. All serve the primary role and ministry of the Order: preaching. Like the other branches, the men dedicate their lives to prayer, study, and community life in order to carry out the priorities of the Order, preaching and care of the poor.

The Laity: men and women from all walks of life who commit themselves through formal profession to the Dominican way of life integrated into their established life styles, sharing in the charism and priorities of the Order.

The Nuns: women who live intense lives of prayer in monasteries, profess solemn vows, and participate in the mission of the Order from their cloisters.

The Sisters: women who profess the simple vows and live active apostolic lives along with the prayer and community life that is the hallmark of Dominicans.

Binding all of these branches together is the common love for the Church and the Order, commitment to the mission of preaching, and devotion to prayer (especially the Liturgical prayers of the Hours and the Mass).

LAY DOMINICANS STRIVE TO LIVE THE CHARISM OF THE ORDER

Prayer: a faithful regimen of daily prayer: daily Mass, the Liturgy of the Hours in the morning, in the evening and before bed, personal meditation, particularly of the Scriptures, and the Rosary are essential elements of Dominican Spirituality. In addition, a yearly retreat, preferably in community, is considered essential for remaining centered and committed to the Christian and Dominican vocation.

Study: a vigorous seeking after truth, especially in Scripture, Church documents, and writings of the saints and theologians, lead the Dominican to greater truth. The principal part of the meetings of the Laity is the organized study program in which all participate and for which all prepare.

Works: a willing and cheerful fulfillment of apostolic work such as ministry to the poor, the marginalized, the unfortunate, the sick; preaching as the opportunity arises and in accord with the station in life of the lay Catholic and Dominican, the example of a joyful and moral life, readiness to enter into dialogue with the unbelievers or faith-troubled, eagerness to witness to the Good News.

Community: an empathetic eagerness to enter into the relationship of brothers and sisters in our father Dominic, to gather for support, encouragement, and appreciation of one another, to study and pray together, and to accept the obligations of belonging to a cohesive group.

LAY FRATERNITIES AND THIRD ORDERS IN THE CHURCH

When we speak about Lay Fraternities and Third Orders in the Catholic Church, we generally mean lay members of religious orders. The Dominicans, Franciscans, Benedictines, Norbertines, Carmelites, and Missionaries of Charity are all examples of

orders in the Church who have lay branches, although each order may have a different way of referring to its lay members. (For example, in the Dominican Order, we are called lay Fraternity members, or tertiaries. In the Missionaries of Charity, lay cooperators are called coworkers. It should also be noted that some orders receive professions from those in their lay branch, as with the Dominicans, while others simply invite laity to participate fully in the living of the order's charism without making professions.)

Lay men and women in the Fraternities of St. Dominic do not necessarily live in community with each other but practice many of the same spiritual disciplines of the religious of that order. Any Catholic in good standing may join these associations.

The Beginnings of the Fraternities of St. Dominic

In the early days of the Dominican Order, neither St. Dominic nor the early Preachers desired to have under their jurisdiction-and consequently under their responsibility-either religious or lay associations. During his life, then, St. Dominic never wrote a rule for the Fraternities. Instead, it happened that a large body of laity who were living a life of piety found themselves attracted to St. Dominic and his initiative; they grouped themselves around the rising Order of Preachers and constituted on their own a "third order."

In 1285, the need for more firmly uniting these lay people to the Order of Preachers and its direction led the seventh Master General, Munio de Zamora (at the suggestion of Pope Honorius IV) to devise a rule known as "The Third Order of Penance of St. Dominic." Pope Honorius IV granted this new fraternity official Church recognition on Jan. 28, 1286.

In the rule written by Munio de Zamora, some basic points are: 1) the government of the Dominican Fraternities is immediately subject to ecclesiastical authority; 2) in the spirit of St. Dominic, those in the Fraternities should be truly zealous for the Catholic faith; 3) Fraternity members visit sick members of the community and help them; 4) Fraternity

members help others through their prayers.

After the Fraternities of St. Dominic got off the ground, it drew many new members. Its fraternity in Siena especially flourished. Among the list of members of that fraternity was she who would become St. Catherine of Siena. Wherever the Dominican Order spread throughout the world, the fraternity chapters spread with it.

Further Information about Dominican History

The original purpose behind the Fraternities of St. Dominic was the preaching of penance. However, over time the Fraternities began to stress the importance for lay Catholics of having strong, solid formation in their faith. The Fraternities became, and continues to be, a group that strives to know their faith and to be well-formed and competent in sharing that faith with others. Persuasive communication of Catholic truth to the secular world is perhaps the most pressing mission of the Fraternities of St. Dominic.

We should mention too that, at its conception, the Fraternities served the Church in a military capacity, defending her from opposition. Now, certainly, Third Order Dominicans do not serve militarily but instead defend the Church from error through preaching and teaching the truth about Catholicism.

St. Catherine of Siena is the patroness of the Fraternities of St. Dominic. Following her example, Dominican tertiaries have always shown special devotion to the Church. Also in imitation of their patroness, who wrote profound mystical works and emphasized the truth of Catholic teaching in all of her letters, Fraternity members labor to know well their faith and to articulate it to others with persuasion.

Several saints and blessed in the Church have been in the Fraternities, including St. Catherine of Siena, St. Rose of Lima, Bl. Pier Giorgio Frassati, and St. Louis de Montfort.