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BLACKFRIARS



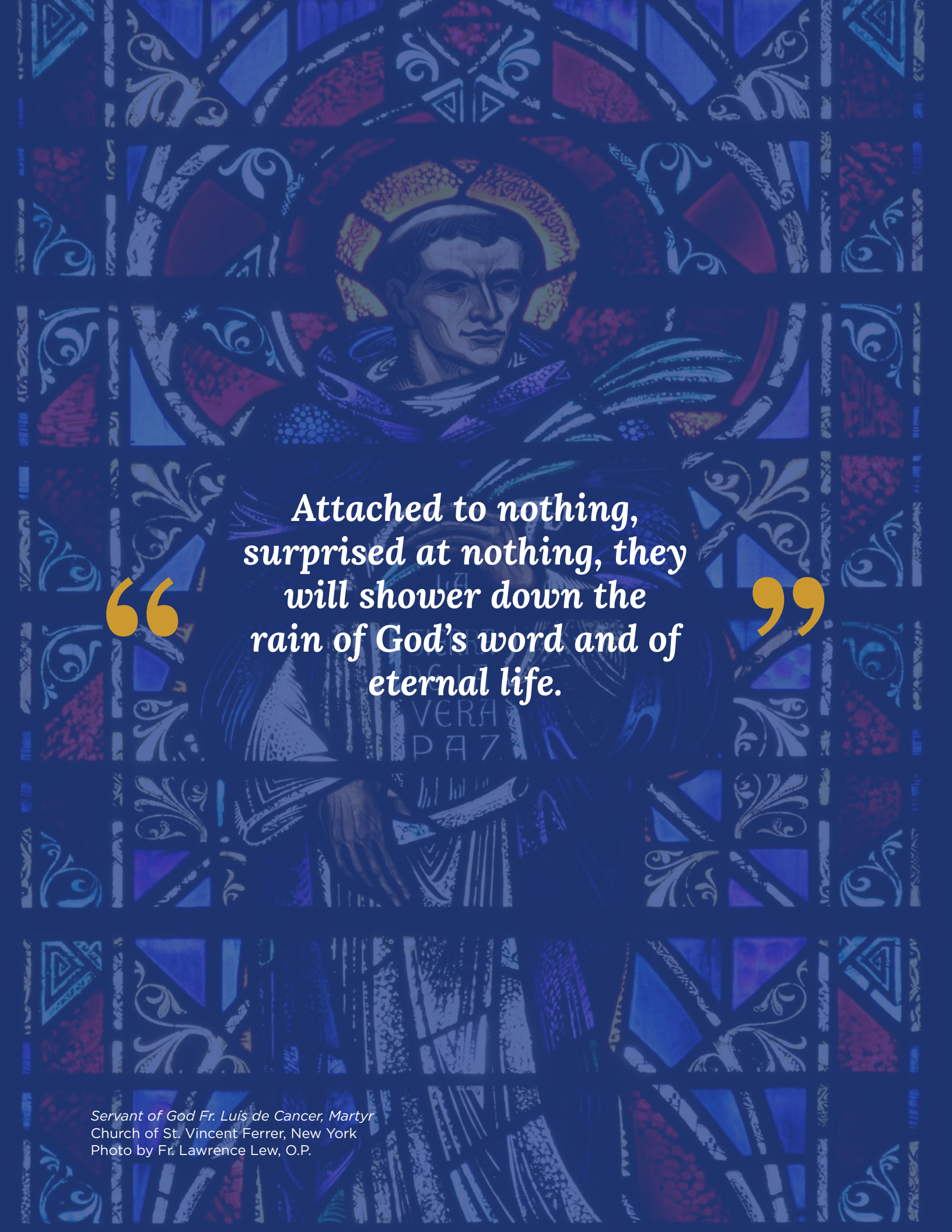
Fr. Basil Cole, O.P., professor of theology at the Dominican House of Studies (second from left) with friars preparing to depart for the March for Life, in front of the National Basilica of the Immaculate Conception. Photo by Nick Crettier

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Dominican Friars for Life

Bringing Christ to Prisoners

St. Dominic's Priory: Student Brothers Live with Retired Friars During Diaconate Year

A large, colorful stained glass window featuring a portrait of St. Vincent Ferrer. The saint is depicted with a halo, wearing a blue and red robe, and holding a book. The background of the window is filled with intricate geometric and floral patterns in shades of blue, red, and gold. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter.

“ Attached to nothing,
surprised at nothing, they
will shower down the
rain of God’s word and of
eternal life. ”

Servant of God Fr. Luís de Cancer, Martyr
Church of St. Vincent Ferrer, New York
Photo by Fr. Lawrence Lew, O.P.



Letter from the Director

Dear Friends,

After recently serving at a parish mission at the beautiful Cathedral Basilica of St. Augustine in St. Augustine, Florida, with a fellow Dominican priest, I was reminded of how much the Catholic Church in America owes the determination and ingenuity of its first preaching friars.

The Cathedral Basilica of St. Augustine was the first Catholic parish in what is now our country, established on September 8, 1565. It was from here that Catholic missionaries began the trek north and west to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ. With the Gospel came our country's first schools and hospitals, living symbols of God's love for fallen man.

Among the Dominican friars represented on the walls of the Basilica is Servant of God Fr. Luís de Cancer, O.P., who became the first martyr of Florida when he was killed while kneeling in prayer by natives of Tampa Bay (he is also portrayed in a stained glass window in our church of St. Vincent Ferrer in New York City).

Before his martyrdom, Fr. Luís de Cancer's approach to evangelizing the native peoples enjoyed particular success among the Mayans of southern Mexico and Guatemala. Aware of their affinity for music, he used it as an evangelizing tool. He learned one of the native languages, *Quiché*, and translated the principal mysteries of the faith into poetic form, creating a "Ballad of Salvation" that utilized native rhythms, images, and idioms.

Today, the Dominican Friars are continuing the tradition of Fr. Luís de Cancer, combining unflinching fidelity to the truths of the Catholic faith with compassion and understanding of the souls they seek to save and the cultural moment in which we live. In this issue of *BlackFriars*, I invite you to read how the Dominican Friars are witnessing to the joy



Fr. Gabriel Gillen, O.P. (left), and Fr. Bill Garrott, O.P. at the Cathedral Basilica of St. Augustine. Photo by Lisa Olschewske

of being Pro-Life in Washington, DC, and holding out the hope of God's presence to prisoners in solitary confinement. You will also see inside our formation program through an interview with theology professor Fr. Basil Cole, O.P., and a story about an important final step on the path to the priesthood, the diaconate year. Finally, you'll hear from the parents of a contemplative nun supporting the friars in prayer.

Now, as in the 16th century, the quality of the faith in our land depends upon the quality of its preachers. Your generosity to our cause shows that you understand that good preaching, combined with apostolic life, can heal the soul of our nation. As third order Dominican St. Louis de Montfort prophesied about the Friars Preachers, "Attached to nothing, surprised at nothing, they will shower down the rain of God's word and of eternal life." May it be so, Lord.

Yours in Christ,

Father Gabriel

Father Gabriel Gillen, O.P.
Executive Director
Dominican Friars Foundation



“Our Dominican charism comes especially to the fore during the annual March, as we preach the Gospel of Life to those who come to Washington.”

Friars from all four American Dominican Provinces were represented at the March for Life in Washington, DC.

MARCH FOR LIFE 2018: A JOYFUL WITNESS

By Br. Anthony VanBerkum

This year marked the 45th annual March for Life in Washington, DC. Marchers ranged from elderly veterans of many marches to newborns in strollers to sleep-deprived, yet enthusiastic, college students. The diverse marchers were unified by their joy—their love for God’s gift of life overflowing into infectious enthusiasm. This is a bit of an odd contrast: after all, the March for Life protests one of the most horrific aspects of modern culture, the widespread slaughter of innocent children in the womb.

Enthusiasm is fitting, though. Although we must not allow ourselves to become numb to the horror of abortion, it is good that our public witness is joyful, for the pro-life movement is not about limiting options or restricting freedoms but about helping all people to share in the joys of life and family.

Our Dominican charism comes especially to the fore during the annual March, as we preach the Gospel of Life to those who come to Washington. We offer food, shelter, and prayer to the pilgrims. We also experience our own kind of Dominican diversity during the March, as friars, sisters, and those we serve gather from around the country to walk, sing, and pray with us as we march together along the Mall.

Our witness to life continues all year round. At our many parishes and ministry sites, there are Dominican Friars promoting the cause of life in numerous ways, serving as chaplains, preaching retreats, and giving counsel and aid to suffering mothers. Most of all, we offer up many quiet Rosaries to the Lord, beseeching His mercy for this nation and especially for those mothers who are struck with fear, rather than joy, at the prospect of new life.

ST. DOMINIC'S PRIORY:

STUDENT BROTHERS LIVE WITH RETIRED FRIARS DURING DIACONATE YEAR

By *BlackFriars* Staff

“The dedication of the older friars to the Divine Office and community life is inspiring.”

Thanks in no small part to your generosity, the Dominican House of Studies is bursting at the seams with friars in formation. To accommodate incoming student brothers, transitional deacons leave the House of Studies and continue their path to the priesthood at St. Dominic's Priory, just south of the National Mall in Washington DC.

In one of their last steps toward ordination to the priesthood, clerical brothers are ordained as deacons, a role that enables them to study, preach, and get hands-on experience in some of the ministries through which they will serve the Church as priests.

“My ministry assignments have given me a sense of how busy parish life can be. It has challenged me to be more generous with my time,” says Br. Aquinas Beale, who was assigned to St. Mary's parish in New Haven Connecticut over the summer and now serves as a deacon at St. Matthew's Cathedral in Washington, DC. There he preaches at Mass and serves at Holy Hour in addition to assisting with a young adult group, a Bible study, and a marriage preparation course—all while continuing his theological education.



Br. Aquinas Beale, O.P. (left), and Fr. Matthew Rzczkowski, O.P., in the chapel of St. Dominic's Priory, Washington, DC. Photo by George Goss.

St. Dominic's priory, where the deacons live and pray together with retired friars, as well as friars involved in a variety of ministries, provides the spiritual anchor for their active ministry. “The dedication of the older friars to the Divine Office and community life is inspiring,” says Br. Aquinas. “They are present four times a day for community Mass and prayer and still hear confessions, say mass, and fulfill a variety of internal and external ministries.”

The retired friars also pass on the wisdom gained from years in service to the Church. “Hearing about the history of the Order and the ministry experiences of older friars helps prepare us for our future assignments as priests,” Br. Aquinas says.



BRINGING CHRIST TO PRISONERS: A STUDENT BROTHER'S MINISTRY IN A D.C. JAIL

By *BlackFriars* Staff

Br. Jordan Zajac, O.P., is the latest Dominican student brother assigned to minister to prisoners in the District of Columbia's Central Detention Facility, better known as the DC Jail. He meets individually with inmates confined to solitary cells because they are threatened by, or pose a threat to, the general population of the prison.

What does your ministry to these men entail?

These inmates are not allowed to participate in any religious worship outside the [solitary] unit, so my visit is the only sign of God's presence to them. Many are lonely, desperate, and want to pray. We read scripture together. Some have a favorite Psalm they want to go over. I listen to their life stories and their desire to make amends. Some are so distraught and angry they can't be reasoned with, so I just pray the Rosary aloud with them to ask for Our Lady's intercession.

How is this ministry preparing you for the priesthood?

Prison has a very concentrated dose of the despair and meaninglessness you see in the culture at large and that, as priests, my brothers and I are going to be combating for the rest of our lives. Priests get up close and personal with the messiness of our broken lives and act as instruments of healing and hope.

Do you have hope for these men?

There is goodness in them, because God is good and He's given them the gift of life. Every prayer we pray together, I start with thanks for the gift of this day and the gift of our lives. We root it the fundamental goodness and purpose of our being here. I try to reveal to them the goodness they have within themselves and show them they can find a better end in God.

Photo: Br. Jordan Zajac, O.P., at the DC Jail.

FR. BASIL COLE: TRANSMITTING SACRED TRUTH TO A NEW GENERATION OF FRIARS

By *BlackFriars* Staff



Fr. Basil Cole, O.P., teaching theology at the Dominican House of Studies.
Photo by Matthew Barrick.

Ordained to the priesthood in 1966, Fr. Basil Cole has taught moral, spiritual, and dogmatic theology at the Dominican House of Studies since 1998. He has written extensively on moral theology and is the author of *Christian Totality*, a widely translated volume on religious life.

How do your classes help form future priests?

Sacred doctrine, once understood, inspires a person to follow Christ Jesus more profoundly, more devoutly, and with more aliveness. That, in turn, stimulates the priest to be a more fervent and intelligent preacher, teacher, and even administrator. And to do it with a sense of mission: that he represents Christ the Head, Christ the Bridegroom, Christ the Leader, Christ the Representative of God the Father.

How does the contemplative life influence preaching and teaching?

St. Thomas says clearly that our preaching and teaching should flow from the gift of the Holy Spirit, whereby we taste some aspects of the mysteries of the faith. Therefore, tasting the mysteries of the faith doesn't come from human nature alone, but from the presence of the Holy Spirit in the soul, from the gifts of the Holy Spirit being activated, and from studying and ruminating over the truths of the faith so that they become meaningful to the friar preacher.

What are your hopes for the next generation of Dominican priests?

I hope they will bring a freshness of thought, creativity, and action, and inspire others to follow Christ. Our purpose, as with all Catholics, is the salvation of souls. Professors in the House of Studies are like architects who give the plans to the contractors who are going to be building the temples of God in souls. My hope is that our priests will make great buildings in people: strengthen their faith, hope, and love to have better marriages and a better sense of the vocation to holiness in the workplace.

Your generosity enables the Dominican Order to pass on faithfully the truths it has transmitted for over 800 years!

“Professors in the House of Studies are like architects who give the plans to the contractors who are going to be building the temples of God in souls.”

A Letter From Brian and Amy Shaw



Sr. Diana Marie of Christ Jesus (center) speaks with Bishop Richard J. Malone at her final profession.

We at the Dominican Friars Foundation extend our heartfelt gratitude to Amy, Brian, and Sr. Diana Marie Shaw for their generous gift. Before founding the Order of Preachers, St. Dominic wisely established communities of contemplative nuns to pray for the success of his preaching. The friars continue to be richly blessed by the prayers of these holy women.

Dear Dominican Friars,

We're grateful for all the work you're doing, especially on college campuses where the need for both knowledge of the Gospel and the love of Jesus Christ is so great! We're thankful that Our Lord is addressing the needs of His people by calling an impressive number of new vocations to the Dominican Order in recent years.

We're happy to be associated with the work of the Dominicans through our daughter, Sister Diana Marie of Christ Jesus, who made her Final Profession of Vows last month [at the Dominican Monastery of Our Lady of the Rosary] in Buffalo, New York. From an early age Sr. Diana Marie seemed to have decided she was going to pursue holiness. She was remarkably unaffected by peer pressure as an adolescent and young adult, and she truly cooperated with God in developing her intellectual gifts for His glory.

Because of her hard work, Sr. Diana Marie earned scholarships and didn't need to spend the money invested to assist her with college expenses. She asked us to help her choose worthy charities to receive her savings, and the Dominican Friars were a top choice.

Please accept this gift. We know it will be put to good use, and we pray it bears much fruit.

Please be assured that we join the nuns (the varsity prayer team) in praying for the Dominican Friars and for the success of all your good works.

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