

The Newsletter of the Dominican Friars Foundation



BLACKFRIARS



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Prayer to Servant of God Rose Hawthorne Carries Woman Through Cancer Ordeal

A Pilgrimage to North America's Oldest Shrine Brings Healing

St. Margaret of Castello Canonized after 700 Year Wait

Colleen O'Rourke-Heredia, pictured with hospital chaplain Fr. John Devaney, O.P., was found cancer-free after praying to Servant of God Rose Hawthorne. (See page 4.)

Volume VIII, Issue II



“The saints can fly because
their humility allows them
to take themselves lightly.”

*The Dominican sisters were founded to establish hospitals, schools, colleges, nursing homes, retreat houses, orphanages, and domestic and foreign missions. St. Dominic's Church, Washington, DC
Photo by Fr. Lawrence Lew, O.P.*

Front cover photo by Christopher Mathews



Letter from the Director *Dear Friends,*

“Moderate strength is shown in violence, supreme strength is shown in levity.”
-G.K. Chesterton

Does the onslaught of negativity in the news weigh down upon you? Chesterton shares his secret to remaining joyful in the midst of trials by pointing towards the mystics who showed not only the power of levitation but also exhibited the gift of levity in difficult circumstances.

My favorite example is from St. Teresa of Avila who made her way back home after a stressful journey around Spain implementing reforms in the Carmelite order. As she entered her convent during a fierce rainstorm, she slipped down an embankment and fell squarely into the mud. The irrepressible nun looked up to heaven and admonished her Maker, “If this is how You treat Your friends, no wonder You have so few of them!”

To paraphrase Chesterton, the saints can fly because their humility allows them to take themselves lightly. But in the midst of violence and suffering, our hearts, which are made to sing with gratitude, can become hardened, “Like birds which are caught in a snare, so the sons of men are snared at an evil time, when it suddenly falls upon them.” (Ecclesiastes 9:12)

Chesterton escapes this trap: “The swiftest things are the softest things. A bird is active, because a bird is soft. A stone is helpless, because a stone is hard. The stone must by its own nature go downwards, because hardness is weakness. The bird can of its nature go upwards, because fragility is force. In perfect force there is a kind of

frivolity, an airiness that can maintain itself in the air.” (*Orthodoxy*)

In other words, humility frees us from the pride that drags our hearts into a downward spiral of solemnity. As Chesterton explains, “One ‘settles down’ into a sort of selfish seriousness; but one has to rise to a gay self-forgetfulness. For solemnity flows out of men naturally; but laughter is a leap. It is easy to be heavy: hard to be light. Satan fell by the force of gravity.”

I pray that our fifteen aspirants who will be entering into novitiate may follow the advice that St. Ignatius of Loyola gave to one of his novices, “Laugh and grow strong, I see you are always laughing, and I am glad of it.”

As we look forward to summer’s slower pace, may your hearts also be lifted by God’s unexpected gifts. In this issue of *BlackFriars*, we have tried to highlight a few of them: five friars ordained to the priesthood, a medically unexplained healing from cancer through the intercession of a Dominican Servant of God, the healing from Crohn’s disease of the new president of the teaching faculty at our House of Studies, and the canonization—after 700 years—of a Dominican Blessed.

Yours in Christ,

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



“I just want people to know that prayer works.”

Colleen O'Rourke-Heredia and Fr. John Devaney, O.P., stand outside Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, where Colleen was pronounced free from cancer after praying to Servant of God Rose Hawthorne. Photo by Christopher Mathews

PRAYERS TO SERVANT OF GOD ROSE HAWTHORNE BRING WOMAN THROUGH CANCER ORDEAL

By *BlackFriars* staff

On December 6, 2018, Colleen O'Rourke-Heredia received a life-altering phone call. After experiencing medical symptoms that summer, she had visited several doctors in search of an explanation. An oncologist was on the line with the results of a biopsy: Colleen had an aggressive form of uterine cancer and would require immediate surgery.

The fifty-four-year-old wife and mother of two's first thought was, "Oh my God, what am I going to do? Pray." Prayer, her own and that of others, would carry Colleen forward from that moment.

Two days later, Colleen and her family attended Sunday Mass at their parish in Summit, New Jersey. Afterward, Colleen told Fr. Gregory Salamone, O.P., about her diagnosis.

"He said, 'Colleen, I want to anoint you right now and I want to anoint your family,'" Colleen recalls. "It was just the most beautiful thing. He prayed for all of us and said, 'Colleen,

this is not only your diagnosis, but your family's.' Then he talked to me privately and said, 'I want you to pray to Rose Hawthorne.'"

Servant of God Rose Hawthorne (1851-1926), also known as Mother Mary Alphonsa, was the daughter of author Nathaniel Hawthorne and a convert to the Catholic faith. After her only child died of diphtheria and her estranged husband of alcoholism, Rose devoted herself to caring for cancer sufferers among the urban poor. More women joined Rose's ministry and, after becoming Dominican tertiaries, they formed the Dominican Sisters of Hawthorne, who run a hospice in Hawthorne, New York, to this day.

Colleen entered the care of an oncologist at Sloan Kettering Memorial Cancer Center, formerly the New York Cancer Hospital, where Rose Hawthorne had been trained. The oncologist confirmed a grade three uterine tumor, and tests showed

it had spread to Colleen's lymph nodes. Removal of the uterus and lymph nodes would likely be followed by chemotherapy. Surgery was set for January 2, 2018.

The Monastery of Our Lady of the Rosary, where Fr. Gregory served as chaplain, is an imposing edifice overlooking the town of Summit. In 2016, when Colleen's son Sebastian was looking for a service project to make Eagle Scout, she suggested asking the contemplative Dominican nuns who lived there, hidden from the world, if they needed anything. The women requested a prayer garden with walkways to pray outdoors. They deliberated in prayer before inviting the scouts, Colleen, and her husband into the enclosure.

By the time of Colleen's diagnosis, the project had gone on for two years, during which Colleen frequently accompanied her son to the monastery. "I've often reflected that, before I realized I had cancer, God brought me into that sacred space," Colleen recalls.

On the day of the surgery, the nuns texted Fr. John Devaney, O.P., Catholic chaplain at Sloan, and urged him to visit Colleen.

She recalls, "I'm in pre-op with my husband, and they're putting in the IVs, when all of a sudden I hear a voice behind the curtain, 'I'm looking for the mom of a Boy Scout!'"

Fr. John, himself an Eagle Scout, gave Colleen the sacraments and asked if she had ever heard of Rose Hawthorne.

"When I found out Colleen had been praying to her, I said, 'let's specifically ask God that, if it be His holy will, He would give you complete healing through the intercession of Rose Hawthorne.'"

As she was wheeled into the operating room for a four hour surgery, Colleen was at peace. Doctors removed her uterus and sent her lymph nodes for testing.

Ten days later, she received a call from the oncologist: "Colleen, we cannot find any cancer cells in those lymph nodes. Your tissues went to the top pathologist at Sloan Kettering. There is no medical explanation." Colleen tested cancer-free and would not need chemotherapy.

Colleen visited the grave of Rose Hawthorne at the hospice run by her daughters and is now a novice in the third order (lay) Dominicans.

Fr. John is in the process of requesting testimony to the medical inexplicability of the cure from Colleen's oncologist. This has the potential to elevate Rose Hawthorne to the rank of blessed.

Colleen is not concerned with the technicality. "I just want people to know that prayer works," she says.



"When I found out Colleen had been praying to her, I said, 'let's specifically ask God that, if it be His holy will, He would give you complete healing through the intercession of Rose Hawthorne.'"

Photo: Rose Hawthorne, from Peterson Magazine (April 1897)



THE 15 PROMISES OF THE ROSARY

The Holy Father, Pope Francis, recently urged the faithful that “today, in this time of pandemic, it is necessary to hold the Rosary in our hands, praying for us, for our loved ones and for all people.” The Rosary, as St. Dominic witnessed during his mission to the Albigensians, is also a powerful prayer for increasing the receptivity of souls to orthodox preaching.

Many readers of *BlackFriars* have shared with us that devoutly praying the Rosary has brought them graces of a more personal nature, such as healing and the fulfillment of long desired prayer intentions.

The benefits of what Pope St. John Paul II called “an exquisitely contemplative prayer” were enumerated in a special way by a 15th century Dominican friar. According to the tradition, Alanus de Rupe received the following 15 promises to those who pray the Rosary devoutly from the Blessed Virgin Mary herself through a private revelation. We hope that they encourage you in meditating on the mysteries of Christ by praying the Holy Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

1. Those who faithfully serve me by the recitation of the Rosary shall receive signal graces.

2. I promise my special protection and the greatest graces to all those who shall recite the Rosary.

3. The Rosary shall be a powerful armor against hell. It will destroy vice, decrease sin, and defeat heresies.

4. The recitation of the Rosary will cause virtue and good works to flourish. It will obtain for souls the abundant mercy of God. It will withdraw the hearts of men from the love of the world and its vanities, and will lift them to the desire of eternal things. Oh, that souls would sanctify themselves by this means.

5. The soul which recommends itself to me by the recitation of the Rosary shall not perish.

6. Those who recite my Rosary devoutly, applying themselves to the consideration of its sacred mysteries, shall never be conquered by misfortune. In His justice, God will not chastise them; nor shall they perish by an unprovided death, i.e., be unprepared for heaven. Sinners shall convert. The just shall persevere in grace and become worthy of eternal life.

7. Those who have a true devotion to the Rosary shall not die without the sacraments of the Church.

8. Those who faithfully recite the Rosary shall have, during their life and at their death, the light of God and the plenitude of His graces. At the moment of death, they shall participate in the merits of the saints in paradise.

9. I shall deliver from purgatory those who have been devoted to the Rosary.

10. The faithful children of the Rosary shall merit a high degree of glory in heaven.

11. By the recitation of the Rosary you shall obtain all that you ask of me.

12. Those who propagate the holy Rosary shall be aided by me in their necessities.

13. I have obtained from my Divine Son that all the advocates of the Rosary shall have for intercessors the entire celestial court during their life and at the hour of their death.

14. All who recite the Rosary are my beloved children and the brothers and sisters of my only Son, Jesus Christ.

15. Devotion for my Rosary is a great sign of predestination.

Help the Dominican Friars preach the Gospel in season and out.

By becoming a recurring monthly donor, you will receive unlimited online access to Dominican content, remembrance in a special daily Mass at the Dominican House of Studies, a CD of the latest release from the Hillbilly Thomists (\$35 or more per month), and a handmade St. Dominic relic rosary depicting the joyful, luminous, sorrowful, and glorious mysteries (\$50 or more per month).

To enroll, visit dominicanfriars.org/monthly, dial (212) 744-2410, or use the envelope enclosed in this newsletter.





A PILGRIMAGE TO NORTH AMERICA'S OLDEST SHRINE BRINGS HEALING

By Fr. Thomas Petri, O.P.

I was diagnosed with Crohn's Disease in the summer of 1998 when I was about to enter my junior year of college seminary. I was a student at the Pontifical College Josephinum in Columbus, Ohio, and I had spent that summer in Mexico. I was already having symptoms of Crohn's in Mexico, but it was the first time I had ever traveled out of the country for an extended period, so I simply assumed I was having traveler's issues. It wasn't until I returned home to Kentucky that I woke up one day in such pain that I couldn't even move.

I went to the emergency room, where they thought that I had appendicitis, which is a common misdiagnosis for Crohn's. When they went in to take my appendix out, they discovered I had Crohn's disease.

My large intestine was swollen three or four times the size of what it should be. Crohn's is an auto-immune disease, part of a whole family of auto-immune diseases from rheumatoid arthritis to lupus. With Crohn's disease, the immune system turns on the digestive system of the body. There's no known cure, and we don't know what causes it.

Statue of St. Anne holding the child Mary at the Basilica of Anne de Beaupré. Photo by Dennis Jarvis

For many years, I had to be on steroids and specialized anti-inflammatories, but, thankfully, I've never had to have surgery. Some patients with Crohn's need to have surgery to have certain sections of their large intestine cut out, but this is not a cure. Eventually the immune system will just turn on the suture point where the two ends of the removed section have been connected. I count myself blessed that I've never had nutritional problems to the extent that I've needed surgery or other more invasive management.

In the summer of 2012, I had been an ordained priest three years in the Dominican Province of Saint Joseph. It was then that a fellow Dominican Friar and I made a pilgrimage to the Saint Anne de Beaupré Shrine, in Quebec, Canada.

Saint Anne is the mother of Mary, and Saint Anne de Beaupré is essentially a Marian shrine: we know of Saint Anne because of her relationship to the Blessed Mother. The shrine is the oldest Catholic pilgrimage site in North America and is known for miraculous healings.

At the time of my pilgrimage, word had gotten to me that I was being considered for increased responsibilities in the Province. I knew there was a very good chance that I would be asked to apply and possibly to be named Dean of the Pontifical Faculty of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC.

My brother friar and I celebrated a Mass at Saint Anne de Beaupré. The basilica has a pillar on top of which is a statue of Saint Anne holding the child Mary. It's a beautiful statue. Both of them are crowned and you can kneel before it and read a prayer for healing or for another special intention.

We prayed a holy hour there, and I knelt at the pillar before Saint Anne and the Blessed Mother. I specifically said to the Lord, "Lord, you know that I can only handle so much, and I don't think that I can handle Crohn's disease along with a lot of responsibilities. I can't do both." I was very frank with the Lord. I asked the Blessed Mother and Saint Anne to



Exterior of the Basilica of Anne de Beaupré.
Photo by Paul Gorbould

intercede, and I said again to the Lord, "Please choose one or the other: Crohn's disease or these increased responsibilities."

At the time of the pilgrimage, I had been undergoing treatments for Crohn's. Afterward, I found myself not needing them. It's been over eight years now since I made that pilgrimage and I have not been on any medication or needed any medical treatments for Crohn's disease since then. I'm in complete unmedicated remission. I have had three colonoscopies in which my gastroenterologist, who is one of the best Crohn's disease researchers in the country, has noted that the disease is clearly no longer active, although there are clearly scars where the disease was once active.

In the meantime, I have been able to carry out my duties as Dean [and now President] of the Pontifical Faculty of the Immaculate Conception without any problems from Crohn's. 2022 will be the tenth anniversary of my healing, and I hope to return to Saint Anne de Beaupré and offer a Mass of thanksgiving.

If the Lord sees fit, when I don't have as many responsibilities, to bring the Crohn's back, I will, of course, accept that cross. But in a candid moment of prayer, and with the intercession of the Blessed Mother and Saint Anne, I was able to say to the Lord, 'I can only do one of these things, so please take one away,' and He did.

"I specifically said to the Lord, 'Lord, you know that I can only handle so much, and I don't think that I can handle Crohn's disease along with a lot of responsibilities.'"



THREE DAVIS SIBLINGS ENTER PRIESTHOOD AND RELIGIOUS LIFE

Fr. Frassati Davis, O.P. (center), was ordained to the priesthood with four fellow Dominican friars on May 22. His younger brother, Fr. Tony Davis, beat him to the altar by a hair, being ordained a priest in the Archdiocese of Denver the week prior. Their sister, Sr. Kara Davis, D.C., is in initial formation as a Daughter of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul in Chicago.

Fr. Frassati attributes the fact that three of the four Davis siblings are in the religious life or priesthood to the grace of Baptism, in which all believers are given vocations. "My siblings and I are just an example of discerning in an intense and particular way what that vocation is," he says.



DONOR PROFILE **FRED PULA** **(1926-2021)**

By *BlackFriars* staff

The Dominican Friars would like to commemorate Dr. Fred Pula, author, educator, and training and communications specialist who worked at several manufacturing companies in western Massachusetts over the course of his career.

Fred was a devout Catholic, worshipping at Sacred Heart Church in South Natick, Massachusetts, and a lifelong learner, holding a doctorate of education from Boston University.

His wife, Marilyn Miller Pula, who also held a doctorate of education from Boston University, passed away in 2019. Together, they travelled to over 80 countries and made use of their prodigious talents by serving in many community organizations, professional associations, and youth athletics.

The Pulas made their generous first gift to the Dominican Friars in 2018 after receiving an appeal in the mail asking for support for vocations to the priesthood. Following Marilyn's death, Fred made the decision to include the Dominican Friars in his will.

As a St. Dominic Legacy Society member enrolled in the Deserving Poor Boy's Purgatorian Society, Fred will be remembered daily in a special Mass offered by the Dominican Friars. Marilyn also remains in our prayers.



LETTER FROM THE PRIOR PROVINCIAL

I am writing this on Pentecost morning, filled with the joy of the Holy Spirit. On Wednesday and Thursday, I participated in the outdoor baccalaureate Mass and commencement exercises at Providence College. One of the graduates, Trevor Wakefield (pictured) will exchange his graduation gown for the habit of the Dominican Order when he begins his novice year on August 8!

On Saturday, I concelebrated the ordination Mass at the Dominican House of Studies that raised five of our brothers to priesthood. At each of these events, the words of Jesus in today's Pentecost gospel occurred to me:

I have much more to tell you, but you cannot bear it now. But when he comes, the Spirit of truth, he will guide you to all truth. (Jn 16:12-13)

Each graduate with their diploma as well as Fr. Isaiah Beiter, O.P., Fr. Frassati Davis, O.P., Fr. Josemaría Guzman-Dominguez, O.P.,



Providence College graduate Trevor Wakefield will enter the Dominican novitiate in August.



Our newly ordained priests at the Dominican House of Studies

Fr. Reginald Hoefler, O.P., and Fr. Simon Teller, O.P. face an unknown future. However, Jesus promises His presence, guidance and courage in the person of the Holy Spirit. He helps each of us face the events that mark our pilgrimage to the Father's house that Jesus has prepared for us for all eternity (Jn 14:3).

As we transition from the Easter season to the weeks of ordinary time, I invite you to pause and give thanks for the guidance of the Holy Spirit from the day of our baptism to today. With hearts open in gratitude, then ask the Holy Spirit for the gifts all graduates, our new "Fathers", and each of us will need to face the challenging road ahead.

Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful. And enkindle in them the fire of your love.

St. Joseph, patron of our province, and our Holy Father, St. Dominic, pray for us.

Very Rev. Kenneth R. Letoile, O.P.

Very Rev. Kenneth R. Letoile, O.P.
Prior Provincial

ST. MARGARET OF CASTELLO

CANONIZED AFTER 700 YEAR WAIT

By *BlackFriars* staff

On April 24, Margaret of Castello (1287-1320) was canonized by Pope Francis after 700 years of being honored unofficially as a saint and miracle worker.

Born blind, disfigured, and short of stature, Margaret was rejected by her prominent parents, who walled her up in a cell adjacent to a chapel on their estate at age six before abandoning her altogether to the streets of Castello at 20. Margaret forgave her parents, became a third order Dominican (equivalent at the time to a Dominican Sister), and devoted her life to serving the poor and imprisoned and catechizing children. (*The Life of Blessed Margaret of Castello*, Fr. William R. Bonniwell, O.P.)

“Margaret is a perfect example for our times of a Good Samaritan who was herself rejected and wounded and yet chose to cultivate kindness in her encounters with the wounded and forsaken,” writes Fr. Stephen Alcott, O.P., acting director of the St. Margaret of Castello Shrine and Guild at St. Patrick’s parish in Columbus, Ohio.

According to Fr. Stephen, St. Margaret has become important to the pro-life movement as a “patroness for the unwanted’, including unborn children in danger of abortion.” The Sisters of Life venerate St. Margaret as “a beautiful icon of the dignity of every human life, no matter what its challenges.” They particularly recommend her intercession to women seeking healing after abortions.



This statue of St. Margaret of Castello adorns her shrine at St. Patrick’s Church in Columbus, Ohio. Photo by Rachel Magree

“Saint Margaret’s love and forgiveness toward her parents who rejected and abandoned her can bring a special grace for women struggling to restore a relationship of love with their lost children who are now entrusted to God’s mercy,” writes Fr. Stephen.

Miracles have been attributed to St. Margaret’s intercession since the day of her burial and, with her sainthood, her cult has been opened to the universal Church. “We can hope that little Margaret will become ever more widely known and loved, and that she who was considered one of the least on earth will prove to be one of the greatest of friends in Heaven,” Fr. Stephen says.

To learn more about St. Margaret of Castello, visit littlemargaret.org. Quotations are taken from “*The Cult of Saint Margaret of Citta di Castello in the United States*” by Fr. Stephen Alcott, O.P., published at op.org.

Executive Director	Father Gabriel Gillen, O.P.
Planned Giving Director	Rossano Rovello
Marketing Director	Barry Clark
Editor	Matthew Kirby

Dominican Friars Foundation

141 East 65th Street
New York, NY 10065
Phone: (212) 744-2410

Visit dominicanfriars.org/live for daily streaming Masses.



www.dominicanfriars.org



facebook.com/dominicanfriars



instagram.com/dominicanfriars



twitter.com/dominicanfriars