
The Dominican Sisters of Wanganui, New Zealand



The sisters approach the altar to make their profession.



They make their professions in the hands of the Mother Prioress.



Sr. Rose receives her ring from the hands of the cherubic Fr. Michael Lavin.

WEDDINGS AND BETROTRALS

The Feast of Epiphany this year brought a very special joy to the whole Church, and to the Dominican Order in particular. On this day, two more souls were made the eternal spouses of Our Lord Jesus Christ and three souls entered into their betrothals with the Divine Spouse.

A retreat, preached by Father Jacques Emily, prepared the sisters for the approaching ceremony by deeply enveloping them in the truths surrounding the sublimity of religious life - namely, that their perfection is to be attained by union with God, their Spouse, and this union will take place through charity. Daily conferences, including essential ones on the three religious vows, and benediction of the most Blessed Sacrament gave the sisters a most recollected entrance to the forthcoming profession and reception.

On 6th January, Sister Mary Catherine, O.P. and Sister Mary Rose, O.P. pronounced their final, perpetual profession in a public ceremony attended by family, friends and clerics gathered for this occasion from all over the world. Fr. J. Emily officiated at the ceremony, assisted by Fr. Michael Lavin and Fr. Rainer Becher. At the Offertory of the Mass, the two sisters approached the altar with lighted candles and proceeded individually to pronounce their perpetual profession in the hands of their superior. As the sisters then knelt before the altar, the antiphon was intoned: *Veni, sponsa Christi...* - *Come Spouse of Christ, receive the crown which the*



The Dominican Coat of Arms

Lord hath prepared for thee for all eternity.

The celebrant went on to give the solemn blessing of the finally professed, followed by a most notable part of the ceremony - the blessing and giving of the ring:

Receive the ring of bridal fidelity to God in the name of the Most Holy Trinity, that, wearing it, thou mayest be armed with the strength that cometh from divine protection, and that it may benefit thee unto everlasting salvation. Through Christ our Lord...

After having received the rings of their profession, the two finally professed sisters prostrated themselves in the form of a cross whilst the solemn prayers were chanted over them and the profoundly stirring responsory, *Amo Christum*, was sung:

I love Christ, into Whose nuptial room I shall enter: Whose Mother is a Virgin, Whose Father doth not know woman; and Whose voice singeth sweet to me: Whom when I love I remain chaste, Whom when I touch I am pure, and Whom when I take I remain a virgin. With His ring He hath

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wedded me, and He hath adorned me with most precious jewels...

As the brilliant ceremony was brought to a close, the voices of the schola and choir united once more to praise the newly professed in the antiphon *Ista est*:

She is the wise virgin, whom the Lord hath found vigilant, who hath taken oil together with her lamp, and when the Lord hath come, she was admitted with Him to the wedding...

The two finally professed sisters, now wedded eternally to their Divine Spouse, were to share their immense happiness this day with three new sisters. The three postulants, heralding from all over the world - the United States, Argentina, and Australia, requested the holy habit of the Dominican Order this same morning. Once clothed in the Holy Habit of St. Dominic, they entered into the Church whilst voices were raised in the glorious *Salve Regina*. Forthwith they yielded their tresses of hair to the scissors - as a sacrifice of love to their future Spouse. Once veiled, they were blessed by the priest and each received their Crucifix and Rosary - two weapons by which they will strive to conquer the world for Christ and His Blessed Mother.

As is customary in the Dominican ceremony, the new novices are offered a choice to be crowned either by a crown of roses or a crown of thorns. In imitation of their Crucified Beloved, and also of their Dominican Patroness, St. Catherine - the three novices each chose and were given the crown of thorns, as the choir chanted the *Jesu corona virginum...*

Receive dear sister the crown of thorns in



The three new novices are crowned with a crown of thorns from the hands Fr. Jaques Emily.

memory of the crown of Our Lord, and through this know that it is not fitting that those members be delicate, who are under the thorn crowned head, which is Christ, and if you wear the crown of thorns of tribulation in this life you will be rewarded by your Spouse with a crown of glory for evermore in the life to come.

Once blessed by the priest, the new novices were then given their names in Religion. The three sisters were each given illustrious Dominican saints as their new namesakes - Sr. Mary Raymond was given the patronage of St. Raymond of Pennafort, a renowned Dominican Preacher and confessor; Sr. Maria Lucia received the patronage of the Dominican

mystic and stigmatist, Bl. Lucy of Narni; and Sr. Mary Jacinta was named for the celebrated St. Hyacinth, whose life of



The Dominican kiss of peace is exchanged during the Te Deum.

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The Entire Community after the ceremony.

preaching the Gospel was filled with innumerable conversions and miracles.

As the new novices happily joined the other sisters, they rejoiced together for having heeded the invitation of Christ, *Hearken, O daughter, and see, and incline thy ear...and the King shall greatly desire thy beauty. For He is the Lord thy God, and Him thou shall adore...* The glorious Mass of Epiphany was finally closed by the Te Deum and the sisters' Dominican ceremony of the kiss of peace. The whole Church rejoiced to receive the professions of these sisters and to give the veils to the novices - it was a great day, indeed, wherein all was forgotten but the love and glory of God. Please pray for these sisters and for the entire community of Dominicans in Wanganui, New Zealand. Ω

THE DOMINICAN SISTERS OF WANGANUI

We are a traditional Congregation of Dominican Sisters formed after the lapse into modernism of the New Zealand Dominican Sisters. We aim to live the total Dominican life: praying the entire Divine Office in Latin and living the traditional convent life with habit, silence, recreation, traditional refectory and teaching apostolate. All this is built on our devotion to the traditional Latin Mass in both our own Dominican rite and the beloved Tridentine rite as we find it here at St Anthony's parish Wanganui.

We were founded by a New Zealand Dominican sister who had to leave her congregation because of its modernism. She has been joined by younger sisters, and, with the advice and help of the Dominican Sisters of Fanjeaux and of the Society of St Pius X, we have been able to build up our community here. We have received young women from New Zealand, Australia, and South Africa.

Our convent is in Wanganui, a coastal town of 43,000 inhabitants at the mouth of the Wanganui River on the West Coast of the North Island of New Zealand. We live in St Anthony's Traditional (Latin Mass) Parish where we teach in the schools of the

Society of St Pius X.

Our main work is praying the Divine Office which we sing or chant according to the Dominican rite with its beautiful ceremonial. By means of the Divine Office we extend the influence of our daily Mass through the whole of life. Our second work is our life in community where we endeavour to sanctify ourselves and each other. Our third work is the maintenance of traditional schools here in the parish. We help to run St Anthony's Primary School and the two separate schools (for boys and girls respectively) which make up St Dominic's College.

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