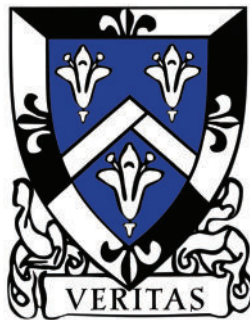


DOMINICANA

Journal of the Dominican Students of the St. Joseph Province

The Roots of Joseph's Sanctity
An Apology for Folk Music
Deception in Discernment
Why Confess to a Priest?
Friar's Bookshelf
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Vol. LIV

Spring 2011

No. 1

Spring is a time of change. This spring marks the end of *Dominican Review* and the re-introduction of *Dominicana*. *Dominicana* was the original studentate publication of the the Province of St. Joseph, begun in 1916. It contained news about the Province and articles of interest. It also showcased the literary talents of the studentate. By renaming *Dominican Review*, we hope to reconnect with our past by drawing inspiration from our tradition and presenting it in a compelling way to our readers in 2011.

The name of our publication is not the only change you will notice. We have moved to a smaller, neater, booklet format to facilitate reading and we have worked to diversify our content. In this issue, Br. Ezra Sullivan discusses St. Joseph as the model of fatherhood. Br. Innocent Smith shows how the secular can deepen our understanding and appreciation for the sacred in his apologia for folk music. Br. Gabriel Torretta and Br. Ignatius Schweitzer tackle two difficult questions. Br. Gabriel addresses the difficulty of discernment while Br. Ignatius explains why we confess our sins to a priest. In addition to these articles, we also report on recent news of the Province and include book reviews from some of the brothers in a feature called, “Friar’s Bookshelf.”

I hope you enjoy *Dominicana*. I would like to thank my brothers for all the work that they put into this issue. A special thanks belongs to Br. Innocent Smith, assistant editor. Without his work, this issue could never have gone to print. I would also like to thank our pastors and readers for their input and invite them to continue writing us their suggestions. I wish you all a Happy Easter. Christ is risen!
— Br. Justin Marie Brophy, o.p.

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THE ROOTS OF JOSEPH'S SANCTITY: FATHERHOOD OF THE HEART

Br. Ezra Sullivan, o.p.

When Jesus was twelve, Mary and Joseph took their son and left the packed mud of their little house and made their way back to the Temple, with its gold, marble, and fine wood. Modern Judaism has the custom of the Bar-Mitzvah, when a Jewish boy becomes a man, a son of the commandments. We can see parallels between it and what happened with Jesus in the Temple. In the Bar-Mitzvah ceremony, a young man reads aloud a portion of the week's Torah readings (from the five books of Moses) and he could even give a d'var Torah, which is an explanation of the readings, similar to what Catholics would call a homily. It is primarily the father's responsibility to help prepare his son for the Bar-Mitzvah by teaching him to understand the traditions of Israel. The Wisdom literature has many models for how a father ought to call his son to true wisdom and keep the law of God. Joseph must have done this for Jesus, teaching him to read and interpret the Torah; in other words, Joseph taught Jesus how to preach. We can see the carpenter's influence on his son when we consider Jesus' parables involving things they would have seen around the village: flowers, trees, fisherman, widows, masters of



DEATH OF ST. JOSEPH (DETAIL)
FR. THOMAS MCGLYNN, O.P.
DOMINICAN HOUSE OF STUDIES

vineyards, and so on. Joseph must have taught Jesus well, humanly speaking, for when Jesus went through the traditional examination of his elders, for “all who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers” (Luke 2:47).

After Mary and Joseph find Jesus in the Temple, with Mary crying out in wonder, “Behold, your father and I have been looking for you anxiously,” the Gospel records that he went “down with them,” that is, Mary and Joseph, “and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them” (Luke 2:48, 51). Frederico Suarez notes that “Jesus did not deny the title ‘father,’ which Mary had given to Joseph”; he probably used it himself, for “biological fatherhood is not the only kind of fatherhood there is.” During his years in Nazareth, Jesus would have been instructed in his adoptive father’s trade of carpentry. While Mary wove their clothes and baked their bread, the men would have made wheels, yokes, plows, bushels, door frames, and many other items. They worked with their hands, using the tools which have barely been improved upon in two thousand years: saws, axes, planes, squares, hammers and nails; while they did so, they would have talked about the Law and the history of the Jews and the Lord’s creation.

St. Augustine said that Joseph “better fulfilled the fatherhood of the heart than ever anyone has the fatherhood of the flesh.” In speaking about God the Father, Jesus taught that the truest kind of fatherhood is spiritual fatherhood, one which is established in charity and brings forth life everlasting. Here we come to glimpse the true greatness of the carpenter. It takes a lot of grace to be a good husband and father at any time, but it takes an extraordinary grace to be a husband to the Mother of God and a father of the Messiah. One of the key principles in the spiritual life is that, when God calls a person to a task, He gives him the grace to fulfill it. Now God specially called Joseph to be the husband of Mary, the fairest flower of the human race; and God also called Joseph to be the foster-father of the Son of God. Although Jesus knew everything as God, he chose to learn things as man, and so it was necessary for Joseph to have an abundance of patience, wisdom, knowledge, fortitude, and the other virtues to pass on to Jesus and to care for the Blessed Virgin. Joseph’s highest dignity, therefore, lies in the fact that he was the

chaste spouse of Mary and the foster-father of Jesus. He was sanctified though, with, and in his holy family.

AN APOLOGY FOR FOLK MUSIC

Br. Innocent Smith, o.p.

A recent newspaper article about the 20th-century folk music collector Alan Lomax described how during his travels throughout the world, from the “American South to remote outposts of the Caribbean and across the ocean to the British Isles and the fishing villages of Italy and the mountains of Spanish Basque country,” he often found the most beautiful music in the poorest areas. These poor people, who could hardly afford food or clothing or what others might call decent musical instruments, were able to produce tremendously uplifting or soul wrenching music, sometimes with home-strung musical instruments, or sometimes merely with their voices. This music helped them to pass the time or to celebrate or to mourn, expressing their human passions in songs of love, joy, or sorrow. I once met a man in Ireland who described something similar: during his childhood, whenever there was a wedding near his home in Cavan at which there were no fiddles or flutes to be had due to the



“THE HUNGRY 5” OF THE DOMINICAN
HOUSE OF STUDIES, C. 1920

local poverty, his maiden aunt would be brought along to provide music for the dancers by means of her own voice, lilting the jigs and reels with deedledums and ditheriedadles that marked the time for the feet of the dancers.

Throughout history and even today, folk music of various varieties has been able to enrich the lives of people throughout the world at a minimum of expenditure. Simply by knowing how to sing a number of songs, you can enjoy yourself and entertain others in an active way, rather than simply receiving the entertainment offered by television or other passive forms of recreation. With the help of songs you can decrease the monotony of a long journey or laborious work, or express your feelings on a certain occasion in elevated or beautiful language. Most importantly, you can increase the joy of other peoples' lives by sharing with them the gift of music that you have received, allowing them to sing the songs with you and then possess them themselves. The singing of folksongs puts you in contact with all of the generations before you in your culture who have sung these songs, and puts allows you to play a role in the transmission of this aspect of your culture to those who come after you.

It is not only folk music that involves this aspect of the transmission of culture. For hundreds of years the sacred music of the Church, Gregorian chant, was preserved and passed down by aural instruction, sometimes with the aid of the texts of the chants or at most with little squiggles called neumes, but at other times just by the sound of the voice. What technicians call "art music" also has a strong element of tradition inherent in its practice due to the importance of teachers of technique and interpretation. One of the great attributes of folk music, however, is the flexibility and spontaneity with which it may be performed; it often does not require instruments or particular contexts or environments to be performed, and can be adapted to meet the circumstances of the time and place without scrupulosity about "authenticity," for the variant texts and melodies we find in critical studies of folk music were in their own time innovations or adaptations, whether self-conscious or not. Folk music allows us to participate in the passing on of our cultural legacy in an active way that respects our tradition but does not paralyze us or prevent our creative contribution to that tradition.

How can one enter into this tradition? First of all, see if anyone in your family or locale has access to a living stream of traditional culture. Perhaps your grandfather was brought up singing at the campfire (my own taught me a wonderful version of the ballad “Samuel Hall”, instructive in particular for its rhythm and the gruffness of voice with which he sang it). You may be able to find expression of this living tradition in other ways, such as singing circles or music festivals or pubs that have folk music. If there is no easy way to find living people to teach you the music, you might take advantage of CD recordings, as long as you don’t make the mistake of giving up your quest to participate in this culture for the sake of just listening to the professionals do it best! If you try to teach your children music, for instance, it is not enough to simply put a tape on and hope for the best—if you want them to sing, do it yourself, show them how to do it and do it with them. In this way your activity will become more than just another task to be fulfilled after walking the dog and washing the dishes, but something that brings the family together in unity of mind and voice.

Although it may be tempting at times to react to the current cultural climate by indulging exclusively in religious observances—to sing only hymns or read only the Bible—authentic folk music helps to fertilize us so as to receive the Gospel and allow it to take root in our lives.

DECEPTION IN DISCERNMENT

Br. Gabriel Torretta, o.p.

If you’ve ever thought about a priestly or religious vocation, perhaps this prayer has passed your lips: “God, if it’s your will that I do this, just give me a sign!” The prayer is easy, natural, and ubiquitous among those ‘discerning.’ But this little prayer may also be the single easiest way to short-circuit a vocation and leave a man dead on the waters of life.

The problem with this prayer is that it pits God’s will against mine, as two discrete entities, one of which must give way to the other. Will looks like a zero-sum game: if I win, God loses, and if I lose, God wins. The danger is that when I compete with God, whoever wins, I lose.

Moreover, the prayer assumes that God's will is an inscrutable mystery that I must implore Him to reveal. My will bears no sure relation to God's, and I have no way of knowing if my desires are really holy or just selfish. My desire and my will are like a mercury thermometer with all the numbers rubbed off; I could be edging toward spiritual hypothermia or burning with zeal, but I'll never know unless God puts the numbers back on. As a result, I have to ask God to give me extraordinary signs so that I can know what to do and how to do it.

But asking for signs from God is a dangerous endeavor. More often than not, "God give me a sign" really means "God, do what I tell you," or "Give me the kind of sign I want you to give." Jesus himself addresses this problem in the Gospels; after a series of remarkable miracles and authoritative teachings, the disbelieving scribes and Pharisees tell Jesus, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You," to which Jesus responds, "An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and yet no sign will be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet" (Mt 12:38-39; cf. Mk 8:11-12, Lk 11:29). The question betrays the blindness of the questioners, because Jesus' entire life is the sign they claim to be looking for. The Pharisees refuse to observe the reality unfolding before them and instead ask for a sign on their own terms. The honest men among the Pharisees may have asked the question in earnest, hoping that God would help them decide whether or not to follow Jesus. But their purported ardor for God's will blinded them to the marvelous ways God was actually working

in their lives.

This is the blindness of moralism. The moralist 'discerns' as if to wrest the secret of God's will out of His hands by brute force; dashing from one spiritual program to another and from one vocation event to the next, he pours out



VOCATIONS WEEKEND AT DHS

novenas, rosaries, and mass intentions, begging God to reveal the mystery of his vocation. All the while the moralist ignores the actual signs God has been pouring into his heart. For God's will is not radically opposed to my will; rather, God's will works through mine, moving it by grace to respond to Him with a total gift of love. Jesus spoke of this to the great Dominican mystic St. Catherine of Siena after a period of spiritual darkness: "Your will is a sign to you that I am there, since I would not be within you by grace if you had an evil will" (Letter T221/G152). Formed by a life lived with God, my will can be the signpost by which God directs me where He wants me to go.

Vocation is not a shell game in which I have to outwit God and find the perfect life He has hidden among all the options in the world. Vocation is a call of love to love. God moves our hearts to love Him, to answer the one, universal call to holiness. The Christian's task is to respond to that love concretely with the complete gift of himself. To give himself utterly, he needs the honesty, generosity, wisdom, and prudence that come from God, for which he must pray. Then, when his heart burns with a specific desire to love God with *this* woman, or *this* religious order, or in *this* diocese, then he decides and commits himself irrevocably into God's hands. This is the mystery of vocation. This is the mystery of love.

WHY CONFESS TO A PRIEST?

Br. Ignatius John Schweitzer, o.p.

A man once perched on top of his roof during a flood, waiting for God to save him. A van had long since offered him a ride to safety, as did too a boat and even a helicopter. But no, his trust was in God, he did not need their help. The man drowned. After his death, he cried out to God, "I was counting on you! Why didn't you help me?" God replied that He had helped. He had sent the van, the boat, and the helicopter, so why had *he* refused God's help?

As the floodwaters rise up to *our* necks because of our sins, will we refuse God's help in the Sacrament of Confession? Will we presume to wait for God's extraordinary intervention when He has provided the means to forgiveness before our very eyes in the ministry

of the priest? God announces clearly and loudly his plan of saving us through the Sacrament of Penance—it is as if Jesus himself is in the boat, calling out and offering to rescue ravaged man from the rising flood. The boat is the Church, the barque of Peter, through which God reconciles sinners to Himself and one another. To refuse God’s help in the Sacraments is a much more risky venture than the man’s refusal of the van, boat, and helicopter.

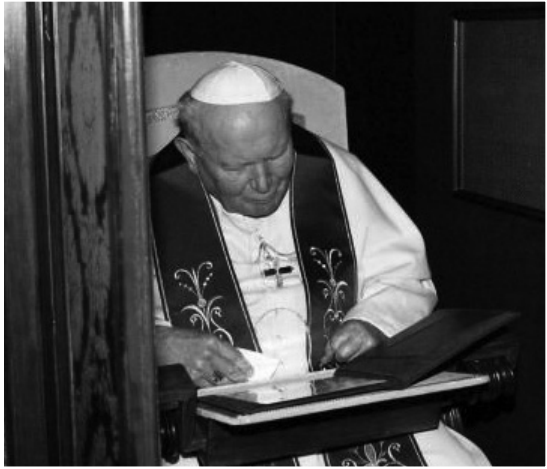
God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—could have chosen to save us from sin in a number of ways. What is important however is not the ways in which God *could have* chosen to redeem us but rather the way He has in fact chosen and established as the means for our salvation. The Father sent the Son who became man, lived in our world, suffered, died on the Cross, and rose again for the forgiveness of sin. But can this forgiveness, won two thousand years ago, reach us here and now? On the evening of the Resurrection, the Lord Jesus appeared to the Apostles. He showed them the saving and life-giving wounds of his hands and side. He said to his Apostles, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.” What did he send them to do? The Gospel of John continues, “When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of anyone, they are forgiven; if you withhold forgiveness, it is withheld’” (Jn 20:19-23).

It is to the Apostles, the first bishops, that Jesus bestows this ministry of reconciliation through the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus announces the Father’s plan to forgive sins through their ministry. This sacramental ministry has been extended to all priests, and passed on throughout the ages, for the benefit of every time and place. This is the way that God has established. Christ announced it and those he sends continue to announce it in His Church.

The Sacrament of Confession is the way God has established as the best and normal means of receiving reconciliation with Himself and His Church for grave sins committed after Baptism. God may choose to save someone apart from receiving the Sacraments, but when and how this takes place is less certain than what God has revealed in his holy Word. There is a surety and confidence of forgiveness here that cannot be had otherwise.

Through the sacramental action of the priest, Christ himself acts.

When the priest raises his hand in absolution, it is as if the Savior himself is stretching forth his wounded hand to heal and cleanse us of our sins. The audible words and visible gesture of absolution makes perceptible what God is accomplishing in the hidden depths of the soul through the Sacrament.



BL. JOHN PAUL II HEARING CONFESSION.

We catch a glimpse of God's love at work in us. The bodiliness of the Sacrament, in the words and gestures of the priest and penitent, brings one into sacramental contact with Christ's saving Cross. This is a profound encounter with the Lord Jesus that one could not have otherwise than through confession to a priest.

Confessing grave sins brings the restoration of divine friendship, and even the confession of less serious venial sins brings sacramental grace and special contact with Christ's saving death and resurrection. We can understand, then, why the Church so encourages frequent confession and indeed requires the faithful to confess their serious sins to a priest at least once a year. So wonderful are the effects of this Sacrament that the Church cowers at the thought of anyone going without it for too long.

So as we find the floodwaters of sin reaching high to our neck or simply need a fresh encounter with God's mercy, the Lord Jesus beckons us to the confessional. Why wait like the imperiled man on the roof for an exceptional intervention of God when He draws so close to us even now through the priest? Why wait with the agonizing uncertainty of a guilty conscience when Christ's words to his priests can lead to our benefit and salvation? "If you forgive the sins of anyone, *they are forgiven.*"

FRIAR'S BOOKSHELF

Pope Benedict XVI. *Jesus of Nazareth: Holy Week: From the Entrance Into Jerusalem To The Resurrection*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2011. 384 pp. \$24.95.

A friend of mine is famous for his “drop everything” book recommendations. Truly engrossing titles are preceded by the imperative, “drop everything and get it!” The long-awaited second volume on Jesus of Nazareth, by Pope Benedict XVI (may he live forever), unequivocally warrants this exhortation. It should be on the shelf of every Catholic’s library. At once approachable yet scholarly (it’s hardly bedtime reading), the Holy Father combines, in lucid prose, both brilliant insight and conformity to Catholic tradition in his exposition of the deeds and utterances of Jesus “from the entrance into Jerusalem to the Resurrection.” Unafraid to make effective use of the historical-critical method informed by hard sciences, the Pope also recognizes that such an approach, all by its lonesome self, fails to yield a full picture of Jesus. As one reads the Pope’s book, one reaches the undeniable conclusion that he has the whole of Scripture and Tradition right at his fingertips. This kind of facility with and appropriation of Divine Truth is the fruit of a life of assiduous study and intimacy with Jesus Himself. The Pope has



ST. DOMINIC AND THE DEVIL
PIETRO DELLA VECCHIA, C. 1630

achieved a remarkable synthesis of profound spiritual insight and serious scholarship. Make haste, therefore, to the bookstore! Drop everything and begin reading at once. —Br. Sebastian White, o.p.

St. Thomas Aquinas, o.p. *Catena Aurea: Commentary on the Four Gospels, Collected Out of the Works of the Fathers*. Translated and Edited under the auspices of Cardinal John Henry Newman. Four-Volume Set. London: Baronius Press Ltd, 2009. xxi, viii, xv, vii, 2832 pp. \$139.95

Since all knowledge begins with the senses, we should start with this: the newly typeset edition of St. Thomas' *Catena Aurea* is absolutely beautiful. Leather-bound and sturdy, with ribbons and gilded page edges, this four-volume set will last the test of time and look good doing it. The binding is tight, the books stay open, and the page numbering matches with the 1841 edition, all of which is consistent with the quality we would expect from Baronius Press. But the contents of the *Catena* are even more sublime than its binding.

In the "Golden Chain," St. Thomas has collected and ordered the best of the Gospel commentaries of the Church Fathers into a unified whole. Each passage of scripture, set in larger type, is followed, phrase by phrase, by the interpretations and reflections of the Fathers. Like the *Summa Theologiae*, the *Catena* is a synthesis of all that came before, to which the wisdom of St. Thomas brings order and form. The comments he has selected invite us to deeper prayer and contemplation, and can be a wonderful resource for *lectio divina*. Further, the insights of the Church's greatest thinkers are both accessible and "preachable," making the \$140 set a worthwhile investment even for a poor friar. But regardless of one's state of life, the *Catena Aurea* is sure to be one of the most-used reference sources of those who purchase it. In its opening pages, St. Augustine teaches us that "the mode in which Holy Scripture is put together, is one accessible to all, but thoroughly entered into by few" (pg. 7). With the help of grace, the insights of the Fathers, and the ordering wisdom of St. Thomas, the *Catena Aurea* can make our efforts to be numbered among those few just a little easier. —Bro. Philip Neri Reese, o.p.

Abby Johnson. *Unplanned*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2011. 288 pp. \$22.99.

A must read for all involved in the pro-life movement, *Unplanned* by Abby Johnson opens the door for pro-lifers to see inside Planned Parenthood. Abby was the director of the Planned Parenthood clinic in Bryan-College Station, TX and was even a Planned Parenthood employee of the year. Upon witnessing an ultrasound guided abortion, she had a profound conversion. This experience was so shocking that within two weeks she had secretly gone to the pro-life office across the street and asked for their help in finding a new job. This book is the story of her conversion and is a monumental witness of the power of grace to convert hearts.

Unplanned is unique among all the other pro-life literature. It conveys to the reader what really happens inside Planned Parenthood clinics. Abby illustrates the real desire on the part of some Planned Parenthood employees to help women. She describes their compassion, misguided as it is, for those who really are in difficult situations. In this she tries to articulate the mindset of abortion advocates so that pro-lifers might be more compassionate toward them. All the while, she also shows how Planned Parenthood as an organization has abortion at the top of its agenda. This is truly a step forward for the pro-life movement. —Bro. Peter Martyr Joseph Yungwirth, o.p.

CLOISTER NEWS

Brothers Jerome Augustine Zeiler, o.p., Jordan Joseph Schmidt, o.p., Augustine Marie Reisenauer, o.p., Michael Dominic O'Connor, o.p. and Justin Marie Brophy, o.p. were ordained to the diaconate at the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception on January 8, 2011 by Bishop Martin D. Holley.

On February 16, 2011, brothers Raphael Forbing, o.p., Charles Shonk, o.p., Vincent Ferrer Bagan, o.p., Cajetan Cuddy, o.p., Clement Dickie, o.p., Philip Neri Reese, o.p., and John Baptist Hoang, o.p. were installed in the Ministry of Acolyte at the Dominican House of Studies in Washington, D.C. by Fr. John Langlois, o.p., Vicar Provincial. These brothers now serve at the altar in rotation with

the other student brothers at the House of Studies.

From March 5–9, several student brothers accompanied assistant student master Fr. Andrew Hofer, o.p. to St. Joseph Parish in York, PA, where the brothers participated in a parish mission titled “St. Joseph: Father of All the Faithful.”

Rev. Br. Justin Brophy, o.p. preached at the annual St. Patrick’s Mass at St. Peter’s on Capitol Hill on March 12, 2011.

Each weekend of Lent, student brothers put on a Lenten lecture series at Dominican churches in Washington (Priory of the Immaculate Conception), Baltimore (Sts. Philip and James Church), Charlottesville (St. Thomas Aquinas Church), and New York (St. Joseph in the Village, Notre Dame Parish, Columbia University). The talks were:

Br. Sebastian White, o.p., “Wondrous That Tree: The Cross in Poetry”;

Br. Boniface Endorf, o.p., “The Grotesque Iconography of Flannery O’Connor”;

Br. Cajetan Cuddy, o.p., “The (Other) Good Thief”;

Br. Gabriel Torretta, o.p., “Painting, Crucified”;

Br. Innocent Smith, o.p., “Death Amidst Life: Lenten Gregorian Chant”; and

Fr. Joseph Alobaidi, o.p., “What Happened on the Cross?”

Videos of these talks may be seen on www.vimeo.com/preachers (or, for Fr. Alobaidi’s, at www.vimeo.com/21040020).

The Pontifical Faculty of the Immaculate Conception hosted a fundraising gala on March 26, 2011. Student brothers prepared and served food, gave tours of the academic wing, and entertained the guests. Beer brewed by student brothers was one of the most successful items in the silent auction.

Br. Albert Duggan, o.p., published an article titled “Distinguishing the Doctrine of Double Effect from its Application” in the April–June 2011 issue of the American Journal of Bioethics: Neuroscience.

We look forward to the ordination of four of our brothers to the priesthood on May 27, 2011: Hyacinth Marie Cordell, o.p., Ignatius John Schweitzer, o.p., Ezra Sullivan, o.p., and Austin Dominic Litke, o.p. Please keep these brothers in your prayers.

