



ST. DOMINIC'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

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“ This is an exciting and daunting adventure. There’s such a wonderful history in this parish, but it feels as if there’s a new page before us. And in some ways, it’s allowing God to write this page through us.”

Fr. Michael Hurley, OP



“The guys are here!” proclaimed Fr. Michael with much excitement at the 5:30pm mass 1 September 2013

PROFILE: THE 2013 DOMINICAN TEAM AT ST. DOMINIC'S

The late afternoon sun filters into that room at the very end of the Parish Office hallway; the freshly painted yellow walls pop, the fan above gently whirrs, the carpets are soft underfoot. This is the new Pastor's office. This is Fr. Michael Hurley, OP's office. On this Feast Day of the Assumption, Frs. Michael Hurley, OP, Emmanuel Taylor, OP, and Isaiah Mary Molano, OP, gathered. The three represent the newest team at St. Dominic's. On this Feast Day 14, 11, and 8 years ago, Frs. Michael, Isaiah Mary, and Emmanuel, respectively, entered the Dominican Order as novices. On this Feast Day 2013, this Dominican tradition continued as two novices transitioned into a new life at St. Dominic's Priory as the new team settled into conversation.

On Familiarity with One Another

Fr. Isaiah Mary: We all overlapped at St. Albert's [Dominican seminary in Berkeley] for at least a year or two.

Fr. Emmanuel: Fr. Michael was our Dean [elected student point person charged with interacting with the Student Master on administrative matters].

Fr.IM: Yeah, he was in charge of us. Even back then.

Fr.E: The story I have of you as Dean is the one with the Master of the Order.

Fr. Michael: The Master of the Order is the Master of the whole world! The Pope of the Dominicans! He

came to St. Albert's for a visit before an ordination and requested to attend a BBQ intended for students only.

Fr.E: Yeah, the Master kept asking the students, “Who's the Dean? Are you the Dean?” Everyone else was like, “No I'm not the Dean,” and then scuttling off. But when he asked Fr. Michael, “Are you the Dean?”

Fr. Michael responded, “Why . . . yes . . . yes I am.”

Fr.IM: Since our ordinations, we've kept up with each other through the provincial bulletins. We see what's going on at Benecia [where Fr. Michael was pastor], here at St. Dominic's [where Fr. Emmanuel has been since 2012], at Stanford [where Fr. Isaiah Mary was]. We are proud of each other's accomplishments over the years, and this is that camaraderie.

Fr.M: Yes, I follow Father Isaiah Mary's Facebook page and his preaching. I don't think he friended me though.

On Showing St. Dominic's Parish the Dominican Identity

Fr.M: We want to be intentional about preaching here at St. Dominic's. I'm hoping that the preaching isn't about me talking about something, then Fr. Emmanuel talking about something else. Of course, the liturgy sets some limits, but we want to show we are somehow connected. We meet on Tuesdays for the



Clockwise from top right: The three Dominicans in conversation; Fr. Emmanuel Taylor, OP; Fr. Isaiab Molano, OP; Fr. Michael Hurley, OP

weekend, and we talk about what the Gospels are saying. For instance, today is the Assumption.

Fr. Emmanuel preached this morning and I haven't yet. But during breakfast, Fr. Steve [*Maekarwa*] and I were chatting, and Fr. Emmanuel joined us, and we spent 20 minutes talking about what the Blessed Virgin means, and these ideas will come out in the preaching tonight. So at any one point in time, although it may just be one of us preaching, it's really the whole community that is preaching. And it's also not just what we are saying in the pulpit that reflects our Dominican identity, but also, it's how we interact with one another. It's important for the parish to see how we interact on a fraternal level and that what fuels everything we do comes from a normal, healthy, and connected place. We are a bunch of average 30-something guys often teasing one another and enjoying each other's company.

Fr.M: Any given Saturday, every Sacrament but Confirmation and Ordination happens here at St. Dominic's: We've got Baptism, Marriage, Anointing of the Sick, Reconciliation, Holy Communion. It isn't necessarily that one individual does it all, although I've had a "fiver" before, but we do it together as a

community. Each one of us represents the whole as a part. We were all reformed in a certain way, we went to school together, the mentality comes from the same source, in a sense, we have the same family history. We each represent the totality of the Order and the parish.

On the Significance of Having Three Priests from Generation X

Fr.M: It means we have the ability to metabolize large quantities of alcohol!

Fr.IM: Large quantities of adobo.

Fr.M: Each generation has a different point of view and that can be a challenge point. We are all Generation Xers.

Fr.IM: We are the generation of Pope John Paul II.

Fr.M: We see the new evangelization as our ministry.

Fr.IM: Each generation has its own language, and the term evangelization means different things to different generations. . . .

Fr.M: We all understand evangelization not to be the Protestant door-to-door idea. We want to equip parishioners to evangelize, to show the world the best version of ourselves.

Fr. IM: And we, as a team, we have the same understanding, and we can translate that to a certain dynamism.

Fr. E: I also see ourselves intentionally stepping out more, going into the public with some of my brothers, doing evangelization in our habits, showing up at a YAG (Young Adult Group) party for instance.

Fr. M: As Fr. Xavier would say, it's about peers giving peers permission to believe, and we are all peers!

Fr. M: It's also important for the parish to see younger priests, to know that the vocation is relevant and that God still calls.

Fr. M: This is an exciting and daunting adventure. There's such a wonderful history in this parish, but it feels as if there's a new page before us. And in some ways, it's allowing God to write this page through us.

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On Sunday, 29 September 2013, Fr. Michael Hurley, OP, was installed as the 27th pastor of St. Dominic's Catholic Church. Here, he shares a few other stories.

What is your vocation story?

My Freshman year at Thomas Aquinas College was the first year that a Dominican had become Chaplain there. He was Fr. Bart de la Torre, OP, and getting to know him personally was the impetus for first discerning my vocation. I had no prior inkling. Here was this incredibly smart Dominican who worked on the Leonine Commission, a church commission set up to re-edit the critical edition of Thomas Aquinas's works! At school, we had a very robust prayer life. And classes were always small discussion groups. You were

with the same people 24/7, 365 days a year. It is from school that I got a sense of community, a sense of academic discovery, that searching for the truth comes in a communal context. I felt such happiness and purpose, and

I asked myself how I could continue this. Community, study, prayer, and ministry, these are the four pillars of the Dominican Order. I could see

myself living that life, and it was enough of a fit that I wanted to explore the next step. In my Senior year, Fr. Bart gave a talk on becoming a Dominican, and when

I expressed my desire to just be open to becoming a Dominican, Fr. Bart responded that every man and woman should at least consider a vocation because it helps articulate one's own sense of the call. And so then one step led to another. First, there was Fr. Bart's talk. Next, the Dominican vocation director Fr. Martin Walsh came on campus and gave me the book "Lives of the Brothers," which is about the first generation of Dominicans after the death of St. Dominic, and the book captivated me. Then it was seeing a picture of St. Albert's, the Dominican seminary in Berkeley where I would have my formation if

I went ahead with it, on the internet. I had gone by St. Albert's multiple times as my godparents lived down the street from there, but I had always thought it a Buddhist monastery. It was almost

as if, in that moment when I saw the photograph, God was saying, "You've been by that place many times, and it was your home, and you didn't know it, and now I'm calling you." It felt very personal. There was never a moment when I said to myself that this was



“We have individual personalities but there are things we say in common and that's our Dominican identity.”

--Fr. Emmanuel Taylor, OP



not what I wanted to do. At the same time, there was never a moment when I said that this was definitely it. It was an organic process, and I just said yes at each stage.

Do you have a spot within St. Dominic's that you have a special fondness for?

Our Lady's Chapel; I love celebrating daily morning mass there, and Adoration takes place there as well. Another spot that has a special place in my heart is right between the choir stalls on the front steps. It was there that I was ordained and where my life was forever changed. It was where I was married, so to speak. The third spot is the pulpit. I remember the first time getting up there as a deacon (January 2006, 7th year of seminary school). The experience literally took my breath away for a second. You may be elevated but you also feel closer to the congregation as it shortens the distance visually. You feel like you're in the midst of the people. It's a very powerful place for me to preach in. You can see when people are paying attention, you can read body language, you can make eye contact. The homily may seem like a monologue, but for me, it's a dialogue because you see how people respond. Which is why when you hear me preach, you often hear me ask for rhetorical amens. And because it's a dialogue, I don't read from a text. I write down notes beforehand and keep an outline in my head. I'm always nervous before each homily, nervous in the anticipation of it. But you trust the Holy Spirit, that the Lord will enable the people to hear what He wants them to hear. Preaching is a passion, and if I could preach every week, I would. A different way for me to preach weekly is via the Pastor's Corner in the Parish



Right: An example of Fr. Michael's handwritten preaching notations

Bulletin. The feedback I have received so far about this has been tremendous. *[The Pastor's Corner can be found in hardcopy or online at http://www.stdominics.org/documents/pastors_corner. Each week's reflection includes a photo of Fr. Hurley in a different spot within the Church.]*

What were the reactions upon receiving the assignment back to St. Dominic's?

There was a sense of comfort, naturally, having been here before. I also thought it was daunting to step into Fr. Xavier's shoes. A sports analogy if I may. Growing up, it was always Joe Montana leading the 49ers. It's like, who can replace Joe, right? The goodness that Fr. Xavier has called forth from the people here makes this such a special place. For me, leadership looks like this: You activate the gifts, you call forth the best in others, it is not about doing everything, but rather, enabling others to do what they do best and encouraging them.

You are a Russian lit fan. What are your top 5?

No. 1: Brothers Karamazov.

No. 2: Death of Ivan Ilyich.

No. 3: Crime and Punishment.

Now, I read this book over either

a 24-hour or maybe 48-hour period whilst in the novitiate. I don't drink coffee, coke, or caffeine, and I went to this picnic with the

nuns, and there was nothing to drink except for these little cans of coffee-like liquid. I kid you not. I drank the entire 6-pack because I was so thirsty. And it still didn't quench my thirst. I was so wired that I read through the night.

Let's keep this to a top 3 listing. †