

NEWS from the CDN



September 2006

Collaborative Dominican Novitiate, 4928 Washington Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63108



Pat, Roselli, Rose, Thanh, Elise, Sara

Becoming Dominican is a life long communal venture.

- CDN Philosophy



We thanked Co-Director Katie McGrail, OP for her yeowoman's efforts in orienting us to life in the CDN during our first 35 days in St. Louis.



On September 17, we welcomed Co-Director Pat Hanvey, OP back following hip replacement surgery.

Greetings from the CDN!

Dear Sisters, Associates, Family, and Friends:

On August 13, the six of us arrived from points east, north, and west to commence our sojourn together, here in St. Louis, Mo.—in a bend of the Mississippi River, halfway on its journey to the Gulf of Mexico, where it is joined by the Missouri creating the third largest watershed on Earth. To this place of great waters—formerly inhabited by Missouri, Osage, Delaware, and Shawnee peoples and now home to a majority-minority population—we come, representing diverse ethnicities, races, generations, and nationalities united in our common quest to explore religious life as Dominicans in the 21st century.

We were sent by four congregations—Adrian, Caldwell, Columbus, and San Rafael—and gratefully acknowledge all the women who mentored, taught, supported, and loved us along the way. We are comforted and encouraged by the continuing prayers, cards, letters, e-mails, and care packages!

Our sojourn here begins as Dominicans around the world commence a ten-year Jubilee, from 2006 to 2016, celebrating 800 years since Dominic founded the monastery for women at Prouilhe in southern France, and then the Order of Preachers. We stand on the shoulders of all who came before us and bring the fullness of who we are in our diversity into

Dominican Sisters and Associates USA, as well as the larger global Dominican family. Like raindrops falling on the Minnesota headwaters of the Mississippi River, wending their 2,300-mile-long way to the sea, we will both enter into and add to what it means to be Dominican today—at a pivotal time in Earth's history when so much hangs in the balance.

Elise *Thanh*
Rose A.
Pat *Roselli*
Sara



Bricks with logos representing the Novices' Congregations and the CDN - San Rafael, Caldwell, CDN, Adrian, Columbus

In the Beginning . . .

The beginning of this year's CDN community was marked with an opening ritual on Tuesday, August 15, The Feast of the Assumption. During the ritual, each of us Novices presented a

portion of soil from our Motherhouse community to be used as the foundation for a new plant. Sister Katie blended the assorted soil on behalf of herself and Sister Pat. A variety of green

plants was planted in the commingled soil by each of us to symbolize the creation of our new community. The Congregation Formation Representative (CFR) from

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In the Beginning . . . (continued)

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each community added water to the soil to represent her previous and ongoing commitment to each novice.

The ritual continued with a blessing for each Novice as we were officially handed over to Sisters Katie and Pat for direction during this Novitiate year. We concluded the ritual, bearing in mind our individual calls and journeys, with the singing of John Bell's hymn, *The Summons*.

The green plant has found a home in the Novitiate Chapel and just as the greens continue to grow, as they are nourished by the rich soil from diverse regions, so too do we continue to grow as a community of women on a journey of discernment, faith, and life together.



Sister Barbara Cowan, OP, CFR from Caldwell, waters the CDN plant.



Sister Carol Ann Spencer, OP, CFR from Columbus, presents Sister Pat to Sister Katie




Prayer & Study



CDN Novices with Dominican First-Year Student Brothers

Our primary focus this year is on prayer/contemplation and community. We gather daily at the Novitiate for morning, evening, and/or night prayers, and on Tuesdays we join our Dominican brothers for Morning Prayer and Mass at the Dominican Priory, a mile or so up the road. One of the Dominican friars comes here on Thursday mornings to preside at Mass in our chapel. We take turns leading our daily prayers, drawing from Dominican Praise and/or sharing the diversity of

our own prayer practices and experiences.

Our life in community is expanded by the Inter-Community Novitiate (see article on p. 4), which also offers opportunities for communal study. In addition, we each attend a class of our choice in theology at Aquinas Institute as well as a weekly class in the History of US Women Religious offered to us and other women novices in St. Louis by Sister Regina Siegfried, ASC. 

This Year's Novices



Sister Rose

Sister Rose O. Ahaneku of the Divine Presence is a first-year novice from the Dominican Sisters of Caldwell, N.J. A native of Nigeria, Rose earned a B.S. in Finance and Banking and a

post graduate diploma in Project Management. She worked for 17 years for two oil companies, Oyo State Governor's office, a broadcasting corporation, and a Justice and Peace Commission. Rose was a missionary in Rome for three years and a founding member of a U.N. nonprofit organization on aging in Africa. Rose has been living in the U.S. since 2003, earning a B.A. in Theology from Caldwell College and volunteering at the U.N. Her goal this canonical year is to deepen her relationship with God.

Sister Sara Bingham is a first-year novice from the Dominican Sisters of Adrian, Michigan. Sara was born and raised in Michigan's Upper Peninsula.



Sister Sara

She studied Broadcast Communication at Central Michigan University. Sara spent time working at a National Public Radio affiliate in Mount Pleasant, Mich., and as news director at WLEN Radio in Adrian. Sara came to know the Adrian Dominicans through her work. Regular visits to the Motherhouse soon drew her not only to the Congregation but also to Siena Heights University as Director of Communications, a post she held until entering the community. Sara is interested in finding ways to use her skills to give voice to the voiceless as a Dominican Sister.

Sister Patricia A. Dual is a first-year novice from the Dominican Sisters St. Mary of the Springs in Columbus, Ohio. Born and raised in Norfolk, Virginia, Pat is the mother of two adult sons, Chorya and Christopher Dual. She earned a B.A. in Religion from St. Leo University. Prior to entering, Pat spent 31 years working for Sentara Health System, primarily in their finance department. She also spent many years serving as a volunteer or a coordinator in various parish ministries, as well as in community hospice programs. Pat came to know the Columbus Dominicans while serving on the Diocesan Pastoral Council for the Diocese of Richmond. In the future, Pat is interested in working in parish ministry.



Sister Pat

Sister Elise D. García is a second-year novice from the Dominican Sisters of Adrian, Michigan. Born in Brooklyn, N.Y., Elise grew up abroad—in Mexico, Uruguay, and Egypt—and has spent the past 25 years working with nonprofit organizations, including NETWORK, Common Cause, and Mary's Pence. Prior to entering, she co-founded Santuario Sisterfarm, an ecological sanctuary in the Texas Hill Country dedicated to cultivating biodiversity and cultural diversity. Elise is



Sister Elise

profoundly interested in the insights of the mystics and the New Cosmology, and their implications for religious life today.



Sister Thanh

Sister Cecily Thanh Nguyen is a first-year novice from the Dominican Sisters of Adrian, Michigan. Thanh came to the U.S. from Vietnam with her family in 1992, settling in San Jose, California.

She earned a Master of Arts degree in Social Work from San Jose State University in 1999. Prior to entering, Thanh worked with a nonprofit agency as a family and child counselor for six years, primarily with Vietnamese families. She first met the Adrian Dominicans through another Vietnamese member of the Congregation and was impressed by the mission and vision. Her interest this year is to go deeply into her relationship with God and to bring God's love to others.

Sister Roselli Tria is a first-year novice from the Dominican Sisters of San Rafael, California. Roselli was born in Manila, Philippines, and came to California at the age of 19.



Sister Roselli

After graduating with a bachelor's degree in Electrical Engineering, she began an 18-year career with Underwriters Laboratories, Inc., in Santa Clara, California, during which time she lived in Tokyo, Japan, for six and a half years. Roselli also holds a Master of Arts degree in Spirituality from Santa Clara University. Prior to joining the Dominicans, Roselli spent a year as a Franciscan Covenant Volunteer living in a lay community and working at San Damiano Retreat Center in Danville, California. She is very grateful to the Franciscan Friars for helping her recognize her religious vocation.

St. Louis Inter-Community Novitiate

This year's St. Louis Inter-Community Novitiate (ICN) is composed of an extraordinarily diverse group of women and men, personifying the future of religious life in our country and our world. The group includes 16 novices representing six communities, six countries, several generations, and a wealth of experience!

The yearlong ICN program includes opportunities for novices to participate in a variety of informational classes, workshops, and processes to help us discern and prepare for vowed life. Topics include psycho-spiritual development, cultural exploration, theological reflection, exploration of various forms of prayer,

and conversations around the vows. The program also provides ample opportunity for us to learn more about

and share the charism of our communities, fostering integration and ownership of one's own charism and an appreciation of the charism of others. As a part of the ICN, we also will explore the counter-cultural dimension of religious life in the context of our world.

During our weekly gatherings we are blessed with ample time to truly get to know each other on an individual level. As we explore one another's stories we are continually reminded that although we are diverse in so many ways, we come together as women and men who have all experienced a call from our Creator and are committed to exploring that call.



Novices of the 2006 - 2007 St. Louis Inter-Community Novitiate



Welcoming Fr. Márcio Alexandre Couto, OP, Assistant for Intellectual Life, and Prior Michael Monshau, OP to the CDN



Keeping warm at an outdoor concert



Reflecting at the Botanical Garden



Dancing at the Cathedral Festival



Enjoying Saturday night dinner on the back deck



Transforming the basement into community space (just the beginning . . .)



Shopping at the Soulard Farmers' Market

Moments in The Life