

## VOCATION NEWS FROM THE DOMINICAN SISTERS OF PEACE

September 2018

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Dominican  
Sisters *of Peace*  
Sisters and Associates  
in Mission

**Vocations Office**  
**2320 Airport Drive**  
**Columbus, OH 43219**

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Dear  :

Our **Come and See Retreat** this month in the rolling hills and countryside of St. Catharine, Kentucky was attended by nine women. Participants came from both the East coast and West coast and from the Midwest and Southern regions of the U.S. Starting with a Friday night hayride and concluding with a Sunday morning blessing, this three-day weekend was a spirit-filled experience of prayers, presentations, songs, stories, games, laughter and time for reflection about religious life. It was a delightful,

meaningful time of sharing our Dominican way of life and journeying in faith with one another. For a video of this event, please click [here](#).

Our next Come and See retreat will be **March 15-17, 2019** at our Motherhouse in Columbus, Ohio. We look forward to journeying with you at this next retreat.

Interested in knowing more about who our Vocation Ministers are? In our September, October, and November newsletters, we are going to feature one Sister who will share her story with you--how she experienced the call to religious life, what attracted her to the Dominican order and to the Dominican Sisters of Peace. Also, each Sister will write about what she likes about religious life, what challenges she has experienced as a religious Sister, and her thoughts on the future of religious life. You will see that we are women of great diversity in our ministries, experiences, and backgrounds. No two Dominicans are alike and God calls women to religious life from many backgrounds.

If you've ever wondered if your professional interests can fit into religious life, you'll want to read this article, "[Can your career fit into religious life?](#)" from the VISION Vocation Network.

May you find love, hope, and inspiration in your comings and goings. May God's peace surround you in your search to understand God's will for you.

*Sr. June Fitzgerald, OP; Sr. Mai-Dung Nguyen, OP; Sr. Bea Tiboldi, OP; Mary Ellen George, OPA*

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## Meet Sr. Mai-Dung Nguyen, OP Vocation Minister, Dominican Sisters of Peace



### **Tell us a little bit about your background.**

I was born and raised in Vietnam with one older and one younger brother. My family came to the United States in 1992 through the sponsorship of my older brother, who had escaped Vietnam by boat.

I attended public schools and colleges. I hold a Bachelor of Science degree in chemical engineering and masters and doctorate degrees, both in the mechanical engineering field, focusing on biomedical applications. I have worked in various research labs in engineering and scientific fields. In addition to working full-time in a

research field, I am involved as a part-time Vocation Minister for the Dominican Sisters of Peace. I also serve as a volunteer for confirmation preparation. Once per month, I am involved in the Open Hand Kitchen serving food to the hungry.

### **How does being an engineer and scientist fit into the Dominican Sisters mission of preaching?**

Because I believe that God is everywhere, my research work helps me to see God in everything and to appreciate God's wondrous deeds within a cell in biology, within the interactions of molecules in chemistry and biochemistry and within energy/forces in the engineering field. Being a Dominican Sister and a research scientist allows me to preach about the interconnectedness of all of God's creation. I can serve and praise God through my research with a heart full of gratitude and improve the quality of people's lives, which is one way of preaching. For me, preaching is done not only by using words, but also by the way we live and work and how we respond to people and situations on a daily basis. We preach by showing gratitude towards life and by appreciating everything that God has created.

### **How did you experience your religious call?**

In August 1999, at a Marian Days program in Carthage Missouri, I met some Kentucky Dominican Sisters at their booth and they gave me some articles to read. One article was by a new member sharing her experiences living with the Sisters in the house of discernment in Boston, Massachusetts. This house was opened for those who wanted to explore religious life with Sisters. Even though I was reluctant to consider religious life at that time, I emailed a Vocation Director. Listening to her challenging and encouraging words, I said to myself; "If I can spend many years studying, why not spend one or two years exploring religious life since I know so little about it. If I don't like it, I can leave, but what I will gain from this experience may benefit me, especially in strengthening my faith." So I decided to move forward in exploring the call to religious life. In 2010, I made perpetual vows with the Dominican Sisters of Peace and I can honestly say that religious life is much more than what I imagined and it is where I have found great joy and peace.

### **What challenges did you experience at the beginning of your religious life?**

One challenge was my English speaking skills and how to relate to and interact with people. I was a shy and passive person when I first entered religious life. I had concerns about fitting in, especially with my engineering-scientific interests, and I found it difficult in the beginning to understand theological concepts.

Coming from a strong Vietnamese culture to a predominantly white culture presented some challenges in trusting those I was living with. I was uncertain about how my experiences were being processed and whether others understood my life situation.

### **How did you overcome the challenges you experienced?**

By getting out of my comfort zone, being patient and open, and praying, I was able to overcome the challenges I encountered early in religious life. I found Sisters who were patient, who reached out to me and encouraged me, and who were willing to journey with me. By taking a risk to be open, I found myself being more at home with the Sisters in my community.

### **What has been most rewarding to you about being a Sister?**

Daily prayers with the community and praying on my own along with attending yearly retreats have been some of the rewards of being a Sister. Also, attending workshops and studying theology and spirituality has helped me to open my mind and heart to God and others. Living in community and sharing my struggles with a spiritual director and my Sisters has helped me to move forward and to be strong. I put everything in God's provident care. Finally, I find the four pillars of Dominican life, which are Prayer, Study, Community, and Ministry, to be the fruits of this life as a Sister.

### **What excites you about being a Vocation Minister?**

As a Vocation Minister, I am excited about sharing the peace, happiness, love, passion, and vision I have found in being a religious Sister. If you want to know more about this life and how religious life impacts every aspect of my life, I am happy to share my story with you and

your friends and families, and to help you give voice to your story and to where God is calling you.

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## PRAYER REQUESTS

Prayer is one of the foundations of our life and we invite you to share your prayer requests with us. Please send them to [vocations@oppeace.org](mailto:vocations@oppeace.org). Please also keep us, our congregation, and your fellow discerners in prayer.

Learn more about us via our website at [www.oppeace.org](http://www.oppeace.org) or on Facebook and Twitter

You can also contact our Vocation Ministers:

June Fitzgerald, OP -- [jfitzgerald@oppeace.org](mailto:jfitzgerald@oppeace.org)  
Mai-Dung Nguyen, OP -- [mdnguyen@oppeace.org](mailto:mdnguyen@oppeace.org)  
Bea Tiboldi, OP -- [btiboldi@oppeace.org](mailto:btiboldi@oppeace.org)

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## The Vatican's Pope Video

We join the universal Church and Pope Francis as we pray that young people in Africa may have access to education and work in their own countries You can listen to and watch via this video [here](#).

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of Peace.

Our daily posts offer you information on a wide range of topics about prayer and social justice issues, holidays and observances, inspirational quotes from Pope Francis and

Check us out on Facebook. You'll find us by searching for *Vocations: Dominican Sisters*

## God Calling?? Blogs

Every Thursday we post a reflection on a variety of topics for our God

Calling?? blog. You can read our blogs by viewing our [homepage](#), and clicking on "News and Blogs" on the far right side of the menu bar. In the pull-down menu, you



other noteworthy individuals, and stories about our sister's ministries. Don't hesitate to let us know what you think about a posting in the Comments section. We'd love to hear from you!

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will see our God Calling?? blog and other blog series that we encourage you to read so that you can become familiar with what's important to us and what we're thinking about.

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