
**VOCATION NEWS
FROM THE DOMINICAN SISTERS OF PEACE**

January 2020



**Dominican
Sisters of Peace**
Sisters and Associates
in Mission

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

A new year. A new beginning. Time to embark on new goals, new adventures, and to bring new perspectives to our lives. We hope you find some quiet, indoor time to pray, to play, to read, and to enjoy whatever hobbies interest you during this winter season.

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.

Peace and Blessings,

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



Mission Immersion 2020 in New Orleans

Our January 2020 Mission Immersion experience in New Orleans is now in the books. Read what one participant shared about her five-day prayerful service opportunity:

"It was a joy to meet so many of the Dominican Sisters of Peace and Associates who minister in New Orleans and to learn about all the amazing services they are providing for the marginalized, imprisoned and the young. I was blessed to be able to receive and contribute prayers, muscle, and smiles from and for the people of New Orleans through the wonderful ministries I participated in during the five days that I was there. I am so grateful that I was able to experience first hand how the Sisters and Associates show the love of Jesus through their powerful witness of service in New Orleans." -- Cathy Buchanan



From left to right: Sr. June Fitzgerald, Cathy Buchanan, Sr. Mai-Dung Nguyen



Working on a house for the St. Bernard Project.



Martin Luther King, Jr.

At a parish presentation in 2015, Dominican Sister of Peace Sr. Pat Dual reflected on Martin Luther King, Jr.'s legacy of seeking a Promised Land of equality and justice. She offered many salient comments that are still important today and bear fruit in sharing them now for your personal reflection.

She reflected on this question, "**Are we in the midst of a moment or a movement?**" which was posed in an article she read about police shootings of unarmed black

men. Sr. Pat pondered the question in her heart, feeling the Spirit encouraging her to celebrate and remember the gift of Dr. King's life, and the Dream that he articulated for the world, but that this was not enough.

She asserted that "it is important to realize in this moment in history that we are being called to more than just continuing with 'business as usual.' There is a need for movement and action. People of goodwill are called to move beyond offering momentary support for equality and justice. The People of God are called to continuing movement and action for justice--in the spirit of love and peace."

She noted that "there are many ways that the Body of Christ can be involved in actions for justice. The most important thing is to simply be involved."

She continued her reflection on both the progress made towards equality and justice and the challenges we still face today in overcoming the racial divide that exists in America. Acknowledging that conversations about injustice and race are difficult to have, she offered this encouragement in the words of St. Catherine of Siena, who said, "Speak the truth as if you had a million voices--it is **silence** that kills the world." So, speak we must when injustice occurs--this is the Dominican way, which calls us also to be peace, build peace, and preach peace.

In her closing comments, she offers hope for us to confront today's injustices, using the words of Dr. King in his last book, "Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community," who wrote:

"I must confess that the road ahead will not always be smooth. There will be rocky places of frustration, meandering points of bewilderment and inevitable setbacks here and there. But we must walk in the days ahead with an audacious faith in the future. Because the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice."

Returning to the question though that Sr. Pat posed at the beginning of her reflection, it bears asking again: **Are we in the midst of a moment or a movement?**

Lunar New Year

by Sr. Mai-Dung Nguyen, OP

This year, January 25 is the Lunar New Year Day and it is the year of the rat or mouse. For those who grew up in Eastern culture like Chinese or Vietnamese, the Lunar New Year celebration means so much to them. It is the most significant and most prolonged festival of the year. Everything about this celebration shows gratitude, unity, love, care, and dreams.



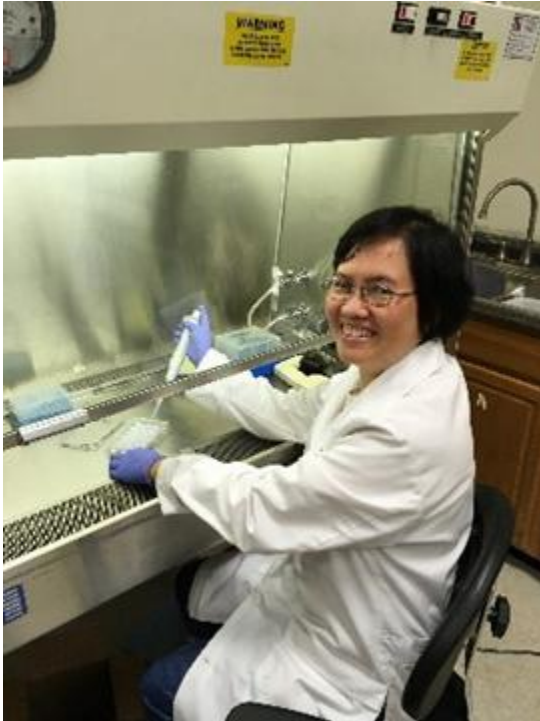
From the home countries, this celebration can last for a month with long preparations ahead of time, including house cleaning, extraordinary food cooking, and gift buying. Flowers and foods are sold over the markets and on the streets. On the New Year's Day, people wear new clothes, symbolizing a new journey starting everything fresh. Prayer rituals (Christian and Buddhist or other religions) during these days are a main activity too. During these days, telephones ring and many visitors come and go to send best wishes to each other, especially in the first three days. Young people and their families often go to relatives to give best wishes, gifts, and gratitude to grandparents, parents, aunts, or uncles. Children, single people, or newly wedded couples receive lucky money with many best wishes.

In the USA, even though the spirit of the celebration is less, we still celebrate the Lunar New Year. For example, the Vietnamese people in a city or a church come together to celebrate the New Year called "Tết" on different days with different activities, including dancing, fundraising, music, food, and more.

Ever since Vietnamese sisters joined our congregation, the congregation has adapted to this culture. We celebrate the Lunar New Year in different regions and Motherhouses on different weekends. We have Mass or prayer, Asian food, games, spiritual quotes with lucky money in red envelopes, or sometimes a dragon dance if we can invite dancers from a Vietnamese parish. We enrich each other through our cultural diversity.

The gifts we have are the gifts we share and appreciate. Thank God for everyone's special gifts and for our congregation's multicultural living community, which colors and enhances our lives. If you have had never attended an Asian Lunar New Year activity, you'll want to attend one.





Ask a Sister

by Sr. Mai-Dung Nguyen, OP

How is a Sister assigned to a ministry?

Our community respects the talents, gifts, and passions of each member. We help each other to discover what is best for that individual and what God's calling is for a Sister at that moment. We don't assign a ministry to any Sister. Sisters search for the ministry in which they want to be involved and discuss that with the community, friends, and our leadership team for input. However, because we do take a vow of obedience, final approval for a chosen ministry must come from the Prioress of the community before a Sister accepts her new ministry. Sometimes, the community invites a particular Sister to serve the community itself or encourages her to look at a different ministry--but ministry decisions are a mutual discernment process between a Sister and her community.

Dominican Saints

by Sister June Fitzgerald, OP

The Dominican Order has many Saints who can serve as inspirations and guides for us. One such Saint is **Catherine de Ricci**, for whom I have a special devotion. I first learned about St. Catherine as a novice when I read her biography. I hope that you too are inspired by her life as I was. Here is a short summary of her life:

Born in Florence on April 23, 1522, she was one of an old and respected family of bankers and merchants. From an early age, she exhibited a great devotion to Jesus. Her mother died when she was five, and at seven, she was placed in a convent school, where her aunt was Abbess of a Benedictine convent. When nine, she returned to her father's house and asked her stepmother to take her to various convents to see their observances. Her vocation was decided during a stay at Prato, where she made acquaintance with the Dominican Convent of San Vincenzo, founded in 1530 by nine ladies who had been devoted followers of Girolamo Savonarola, an Italian Dominican priest, known for burning books and the destruction of secular art, which he deemed immoral. At 14, she was professed, taking her deceased mother's name, Catherine.

As a novice, Catherine was at first misunderstood and humiliated by the community due to her "Ecstasy of the Passion." Her spiritual experience began during Holy Week in 1542 and continued for 12 years from Thursday noon to Friday at 4 P.M. She was devoted to the crucifix and received the stigmata. The community mistook her ecstasies for mental

retardation, but her remarkable spiritual gifts were eventually recognized, and she was elected novice-mistress. At 25 years of age, she became perpetual prioress. Among her other supernatural gifts were mystical visits with St. Philip Neri and St. Mary Magdalen de' Pazzi, neither of whom she had met.

As prioress for nearly 40 years, Catherine governed the community of 160 nuns with firmness and prudence, insisting on the exact observance of the Rule. Her motherly affection and warmth won the hearts of all who knew her. Crowds of laity and ecclesiastics came to visit her. She would tell the nuns with a cheerful smile: *See that no person leaves the convent without being consoled and comforted in one way or another.* Catherine was psychologically healthy, joyous and outgoing, a capable administrator, and a fluent letter writer. She promoted frequent confession and Communion, and had a spirit of joy, peace, and energetic action. She composed a *lauda* in honor of Savonarola and a Bible-based canticle of the Passion, *Amici mei*, used in the Dominican Liturgy of Good Friday.

St. Catherine de' Ricci died on February 2, 1590. She was beatified in 1732 by Clement XII, after many delays in the process, and canonized by Benedict XIV in 1746. She is considered the patron saint of those who are ill. Her feast day is celebrated on February 4.

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. Please also keep us, our congregation, and your fellow discerners in prayer.



The Vatican's Pope Video

We join the universal Church and Pope Francis as we pray that Christian followers of other religions, and all people of goodwill may promote together peace and justice in the world. You can listen to and watch this month's message [here](#).

Learn more about us via our website at www.oppeace.org or check us out on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [Facebook](#).

You can also contact our Vocation Ministers:

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