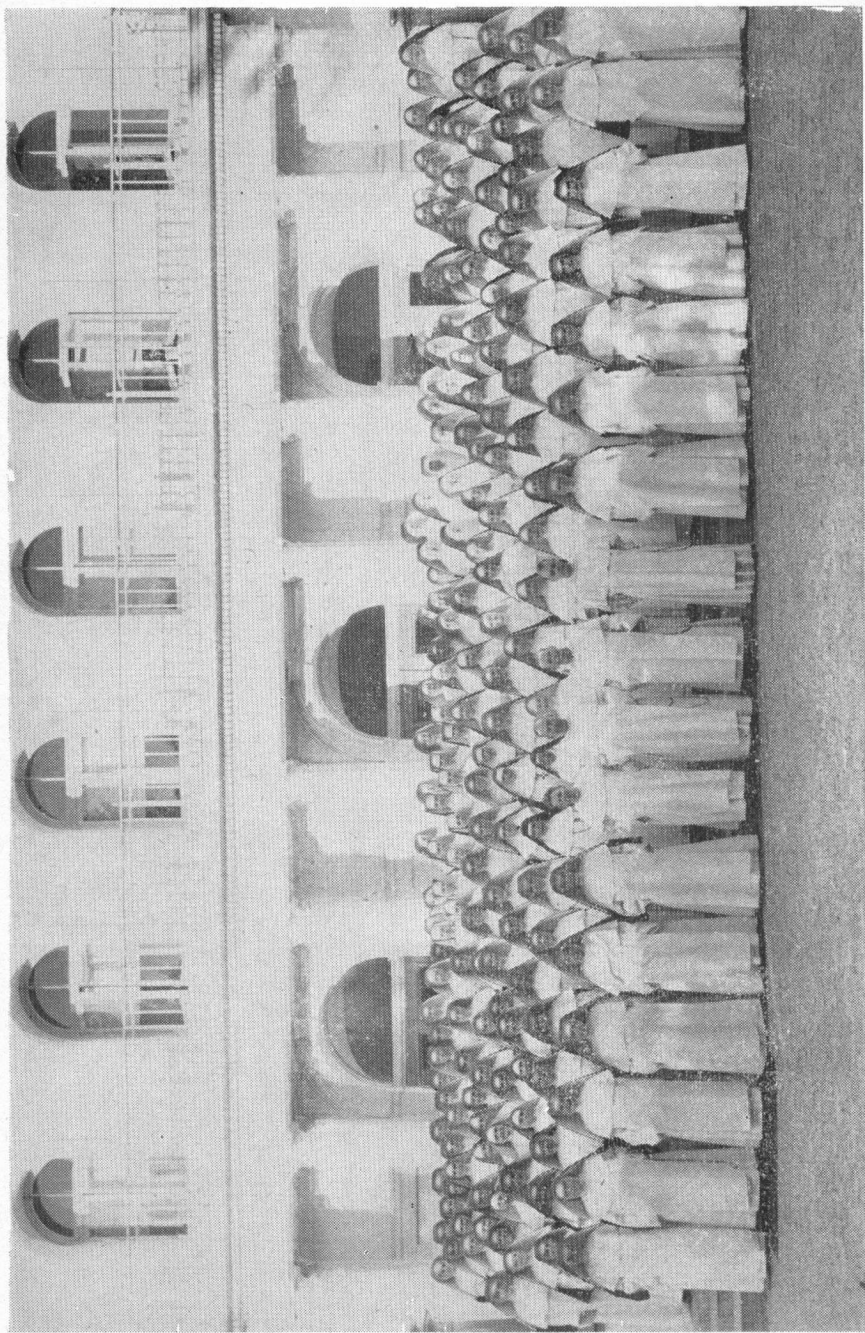


SAINT MARY OF THE SPRINGS, COLUMBUS, OHIO



DOMINICAN CONVENT OF SAN RAFAEL, SAN RAFAEL, CALIFORNIA

INSTITUTE OF DOMINICAN SPIRITUALITY

In the spring of 1951, the Fathers of St. Joseph's Province began to form plans for a series of courses on the religious life, for Dominican Sisters. At that time, Very Reverend T. S. McDermott, O.P., S.T.M., Provincial, wrote to the Mothers-General of the several Dominican Communities, outlining these plans and inviting the comments of the Mothers and their Councils. The responses to the Provincial's letter were uniformly enthusiastic and the Mothers, generally, promised the interested support of the Sisters.

By the summer of 1952, the plans had matured, but such details as time and place for the courses had not yet been worked out. In the National Congress of Religious, held in August 1952, Father Paul Philippe, O.P., of the Angelicum, read to the Sisters' section of the Congress a paper, entitled, "The Necessity of Special Training for Novice Mistresses and Superiors." The paper envisioned the establishment of summer schools in which the type of courses under consideration by the Fathers of St. Joseph's Province would be given for all Sisters. Father Philippe, after outlining the general need for such schools, pointed out the desirability of each great religious family organizing such a school for its own Sisters. And, he noted that the formation of summer schools of this type had the warm support of the Sacred Congregation of Religious. In the very animated discussion which followed this paper, it was evident that the large group of Sisters present—among whom were many Mothers-General and other Superiors—were very much in favor of such schools.

Later in the Congress, at a meeting of the members of the Dominican family present in the Congress, much discussion was devoted to founding a school in which the instruction urged by Father Philippe could be offered to Dominican Sisters. All seemed to be in complete agreement on the main point: the school should be established, and the sooner the better. The chief source of disagreement was the time; the dates convenient for some were inconvenient for others, and so on. When a show of hands was asked for and obtained on the point, June was chosen as the month which the majority had seemed to favor as most convenient. Discussion arose about the name of the school and the choice of Student-Sisters for it. The Sisters, as a group, were opposed to opening a school only for Novice-Mistresses and Superiors, as Father Philippe had seemed to suggest,

and it was agreed that a name like "Institute of Dominican Spirituality For Sisters" would be best. It would be open to all Dominican Sisters of the United States named for it by their respective Mothers-General.

Partly as a result of this meeting, certainly in answer to the wishes of the various Sisters' Communities expressed there, the Provincials of the three United States Provinces joined in inaugurating the Institute of Dominican Spirituality, in the summer of 1953. A place most available to the largest number was sought, and Mother M. Bernadine of St. Mary's, Columbus, Ohio, kindly offered to house the Institute for the first session. Only this session was envisioned at first. Later, when it became evident that the Sisters of the West would find the journey to Columbus too long and expensive, it was decided to hold a special session of the Institute in California. Mother M. Margaret, of San Rafael, invited the Institute to the Motherhouse there, and it was so decided.

The first sessions of this Dominican project, held this past summer, were most successful, and the future of the Institute seems very promising. Some one hundred Sisters, representing twenty-two Dominican Communities attended the eastern session held at Columbus, June 12-26th. Among these were included a large number of Novice-Mistresses and Postulant-Mistresses, and some local Superiors. At the western session, held at San Rafael, California, August 10-24, there were some one hundred and eighty Sisters, representing seven Dominican Communities. (Included in this group were the Mother General and her Companion, of the Congregation of St. Catherine, Manila, Philippine Islands.)

The purpose of the Institute is to offer Dominican Sisters an opportunity to deepen their knowledge of the spiritual life in general, and to receive intensive instruction in Dominican spirituality and tradition. Only Dominican Sisters are admitted, and the courses are taught exclusively by Dominican Fathers of the three American Provinces. Each session is two weeks long, with four lectures each day, and the entire course runs for three summers. Besides the daily lectures, three or four seminars are conducted in each session. The curriculum includes these courses: The Spiritual Life (3 summers); General History of Spirituality (2 summers); Dominican Religious Life (2 summers); Dominican History (1 summer); Dominican Liturgy (1 summer); The Dominican Superior (3 summers); The Dominican Novice-Mistress (3 summers). Seminars include the following: The Interior Life and the Apostolate; Adaptation of Dominican Life to Modern Needs; The Dominican Sister and the

Parish; Dominican Regular Observances; Theological Training For Sisters; Preparation of the Young for the Apostolate; Vocational Propaganda; St. Augustine's Rule and Dominican Life.

Presently, plans are going ahead for the next sessions of the Institute. The second year courses for Sisters who began the cycle this past summer, plus the first year courses for a new class, will be offered in 1954. The Institute will be held at St. Mary's, Columbus, June 10 to 23, and at San Rafael, August 9 to 21. Inquiries should be addressed to the respective Mothers-General.