

ARGUMENT

Of making many books there is no end,” says Qoheleth, and the perpetual proliferation of periodicals is a case in point. Why add another to the newsstands of the world? Ninety-five years ago, our predecessors at the Dominican House of Studies undertook an ambitious, not to say reckless, new project: the publication of a journal produced by the student brothers in formation aimed at communicating the truths of the faith that they had mined through laborious study and polished to crystalline luster with patient contemplation. The dedicatory remarks with which they simultaneously declared their purpose and challenged themselves to rise to greater heights are worth reproducing here in full:

Recognizing that journalism has become an important factor in the propagation of Christian truth, and inspired by the traditions of an Order ever zealous for the written word, whose members have not infrequently immortalized their names in the pages of Catholic literature, the Novices of the Dominican House of Studies, Washington, D.C., urged on by the wishes of their Reverend Superiors, in order to fit themselves for this particular and important branch of apostolic labor, have decided to issue a Quarterly.

In doing so, however, they are well aware how futile would be even their best efforts if not aided by the all powerful force of prayer; accordingly before attempting to lay even the foundation stones of this new enterprise, they humbly dedicate their labors to JESUS, MARY, JOSEPH and DOMINIC, beseeching at the same time the aid and protection of these heavenly patrons.

Ten years later, a promising student brother named Br. Walter Farrell, O.P. (who would go on to found *The Thomist* in 1939) wrote a brief introductory note celebrating the growth of the journal, in which he judiciously noted that, having quoted these same lines, “the dedication and petition for assistance given above were more than the spontaneous outburst of humility; they were the fruit of a real necessity.”

Nor were these humble prayers without effect. Writing in 1941 on the occasion of *Dominicana*’s twenty-fifth anniversary, the editors joyfully re-dedicated the journal to the protection of those same four illustrious patrons, giving thanks for the many blessings bestowed upon the fledgling efforts of so many Dominican students.

With great regret, the House of Studies said farewell to *Dominicana* in 1968, after fifty-three years of publication. This year, the student brothers at the House of Studies decided to restore the journal, publishing a first issue in the Spring of 2011. The volume you are currently reading is the fruition of our communal desire to engage our contemporaries with the same intellectual rigor, energy, and creativity that our predecessors displayed, adapting their approaches to the needs and exigencies of our times.

Dominicana is a journal of ideas, not as purely abstract entities, but as realities lived and encountered in the light of contemplation. The content of the journal wells out of the heart of our charism, which is as much a mode of seeing as it is a mode of being; to be formed as a Dominican is to learn to see God by seeing the world point toward Him, and to share the fruit of that vision with those whom we meet. Thus *Dominicana* is one aspect of our effort to live the motto of our Order: *contemplari et contemplata aliis tradere*—to contemplate and to hand on to others the fruits of contemplation.

That being said, neither the editors nor the contributors claim professional expertise or theological mastery at our crafts. As students, we wrestle with ideas rather like Jacob strove with the angel at Jabbok, hoping that the long struggle will bring us some new vision of the face of God, however haltingly we may express it. An editorial board of priests has graciously agreed to review the articles contained herein, scouring them for relativism, laxism, rigorism,

proportionalism, rubricism, and the other manifold woes that afflict theological writing. All errors remain our own.

If you enjoy what you find in these pages, we invite you to subscribe, either online at www.dominicanablog.com/journal or by check (payable to “Dominican Studentate”) mailed to: *Dominicana* editor, 487 Michigan Ave NE, Washington, D.C. 20017. For individuals, subscriptions are \$8/yr for online access or \$15/yr for the print journal. Pories and convents may subscribe to the print journal for \$20/yr, and institutions may subscribe for \$25/yr. *Dominicana* publishes semi-annually, in the Winter and the Summer.

Dominicana is, as always, published *permissu superiorum*. We would especially like to thank Fr. Joseph Alobaidi, Master of Students, and his assistants, Fr. Andrew Hofer and Fr. John Baptist Ku for their enthusiasm and support as the student brothers undertake this great endeavor. We also thank the members of our editorial board for taking the time to review and comment on the articles.

“Of making many books there is no end,” says Qoheleth. But what lover can keep silent about his love? Through the gracious intercession of our patrons, may we imitate the Bride in the Song of Songs, endlessly searching the highways and byways of the world for the Beloved, handing on to others the glimpses we catch of him along the way.

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