

## ARGUMENT

*The Son of Man came eating and drinking . . .*

– Luke 7:34

Food is a fitting subject for Dominicans to consider. Accounts of the life of our founder St. Dominic are replete with foodstuffs, and God worked a number of alimentary miracles through him. The narratives are delightful and vivifying to consider. There is the story of the brethren sitting down at table in the convent of St. Sixtus, Rome, despite their having no food, and, thanks to St. Dominic's prayers, receiving miraculous supplies of white loaves and wine from the hands of angelic attendants (*Lives of the Brethren* [1955], 74–76).

Then there is the report of St. Dominic, having already offered an edifying spiritual conference to a convent of Dominican nuns, calling for a cup brimful with wine. Blessing it, he, the friars with him, and each of the nuns proceeded to drink deeply. The cup could neither be spilled nor drained, however; it remained full for all. "Drink up, my daughters!" St. Dominic exclaimed. No matter how much they consumed, they did not grow inebriated, but experienced spiritual delights only (Tugwell, *Early Dominicans*, 391–92). Such miracles signal the presence of God at work, by grace, in St. Dominic. They also suggest that food functions as a divine instrument, a point of contact between man and the Almighty. By charity, we can orient our love of created things toward God. It is possible to love food and drink for God's sake.

This issue of *Dominicana* takes as its theme the deep ties between food and the Catholic faith. Out of love for sinful humanity, the Son of Man came to drink the cup prepared for Him, the cup of salvation (Mt 20:22; Ps 116:13). He also came to feed, and to be fed upon. The Eucharist emerges as a point of particular emphasis in the pages of this issue. Br. Ignatius Weiss contemplates the *O Sacred Banquet*, Eucharistic verses composed

by St. Thomas Aquinas, while Br. Bartholomew Calvano explores a rich banqueting image found in the writings of St. Catherine of Siena. Br. Stephen Ruhl offers an original translation from a work by the French Dominican Fr. Pierre-Thomas Dehau, which concerns the Lord as both the Word and Bread of Life. Br. Isidore Rice contributes a personal reflection on the role of natural and supernatural bread in his life of faith.

Br. Paul Clarke places a pan-full of his food memories on the stovetop, reflecting on the deep meaning and identity we derive from our remembrances of particular meals. Meanwhile, Br. James Ritch uses Catholic social teaching to examine the matter of genetically modified crops. Br. John Paul Kern and Br. Josemaría Guzmán-Domínguez discuss a Catholic approach to food more generally, given the contours and challenges faced in our food-obsessed culture. The editors sit down for a dinner interview with the “Cooking Priest,” Fr. Leo Patalinghug, to discuss his unique ministry.

This issue also features an original short story by Br. Isaiah Beiter, a biography of our Dominican brother Fr. Kurt Pritzl by Br. Barnabas McHenry, and reviews of two recently published books, each of which examines tensions between the sacred and the secular in today’s world.

“Everything which we think of profoundly we cook, as it were, in our minds,” observes St. Gregory the Great (Homily 22, from *Forty Gospel Homilies*). Our hope is that the pieces contained in this issue function like ingredients, helping you prepare, and enjoy, a feast for the mind and the soul alike—a feast that creates a deeper hunger for the heavenly banquet.

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