

Winter 2023

The Southern Star

ISSUE #31

Newsletter for the Dominican Sisters of Wanganui



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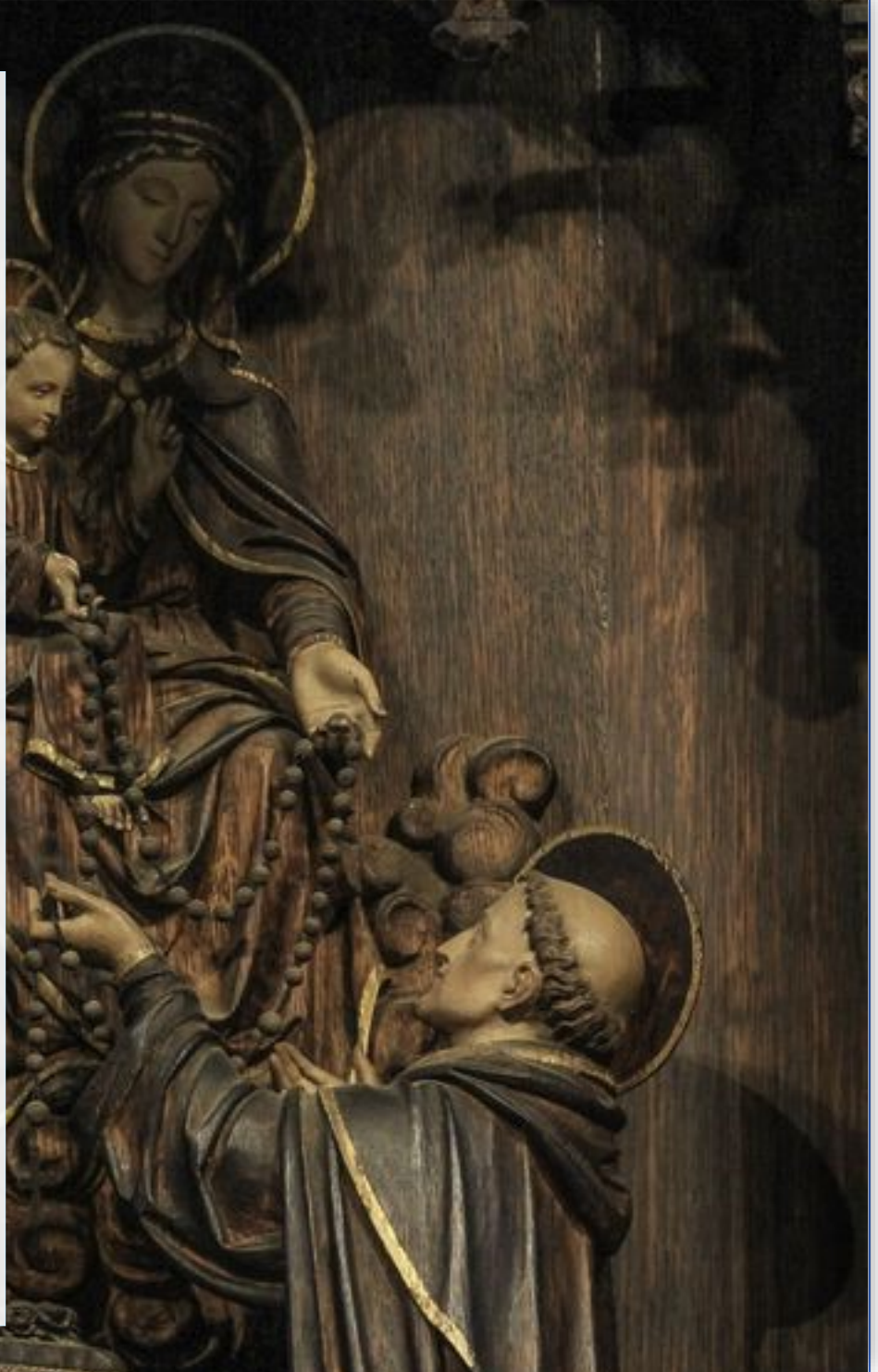
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“Mary’s Coronation was the crowning of her perseverance. ... Our Lady faced and endured greater trials and sorrows than we shall ever have to bear, and she obtains courage and perseverance for us in life’s darkest moments.”

- a Dominican Tertiary

LETTER FROM MOTHER PRIORESS

There is a beautiful phrase which is used about Enoch and Noe in Genesis: “Ambulavit coram Deo”; ‘He walked in God’s presence’. Our own patriarch St Dominic was likewise noted for this trait: wherever he walked, on preaching tours or on the business of the infant Order of Preachers, he would sing to the Holy Ghost and Our Lady, and at other times kept silence to enable him to, as he said, ‘think of our Saviour.’ His rule throughout his life was to speak only to God or about God.

In this issue you will read about silence as the road to love, the silence which allows us to walk in the presence of God like St Dominic. On the other hand, good music is also ‘the food of love’, as

St Dominic also knew when he made the roads of Europe ring with the *Ave Maris Stella* and *Veni Creator Spiritus*. Thus you will also find an article about a presentation recently given to the school parents (it was also taught as a music unit to the senior girls) on modern music and the principles needed to choose good music, that will complement, rather than combat, the work of silence in the soul.

The power of silence was also one reason why St Dominic’s first move, in founding his Order, was to establish a house of contemplative nuns. As our boarders well know, he received the heavenly ‘go-ahead’ for this project on the feast of St Mary Magdalene, July 22, which we celebrated this year

with special joy to mark the 10th anniversary of our boarding school, ‘Signadou’, named for the heavenly sign St Dominic received on this occasion.

Shortly before, we had enjoyed the visit of several SSPX Sisters from Sydney, exposing our pupils and the parish to other forms of religious life. It was also an occasion to establish a fruitful relationship with another congregation that shares our ideal of the contemplative and active life, and

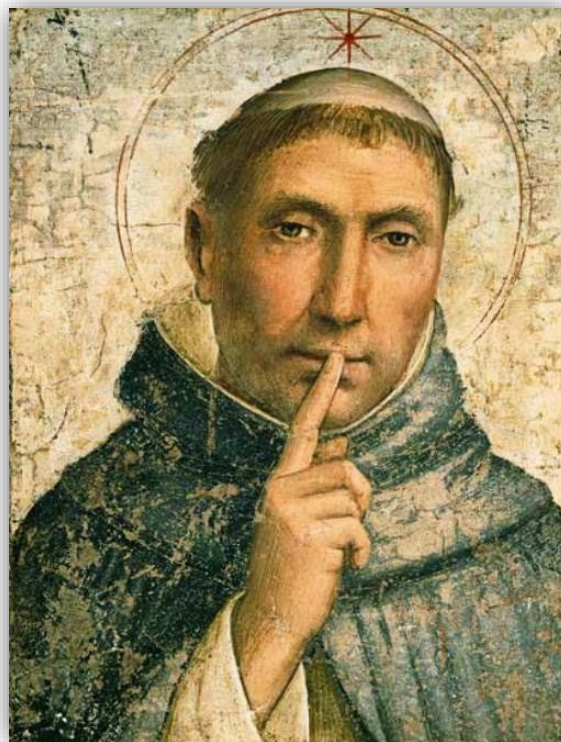
the many practical challenges that it brings. As Sister Mary Theophane said to the girls, “it’s not what we do, it’s who we are”! May we always work together and encourage one another to be ever more loyal and loving brides of Christ.

St Dominic’s feast day followed shortly afterwards, and we celebrated it as usual—with a larger bonfire than ever after first Vespers, much enjoyed by pupils, expupils and other guests. St Dominic’s preaching vocation was announced to

his mother by a dream in which she saw herself giving birth to a little dog with a torch in its mouth, which set fire to the whole world. May this fire of divine love burn brighter each year in our hearts!

With the assurance of our grateful prayers for you and your intentions,

Mother Mary Madeleine OP
Mother Prioress



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Through Silence – To Love

The Word Association Game always produces interesting results. Try it some time: ask a group of people what is the first word that comes into their heads upon hearing the word, ‘silence.’ Some might come up with ‘emptiness,’ ‘darkness,’ ‘death,’ while others might say contrastingly positive things, such as ‘peace,’ ‘calm,’ ‘rest.’ And this is not really surprising, since we experience many different kinds of silences in life. There is the silence of the grave, the silence of an exam room, an awkward silence in which nobody knows what to say, an aloof silence, a don’t-wake-the-baby silence, a don’t-disturb-me-I’m-busy silence, the ‘silent treatment’, the silence of a library, the silence of a church, the silence of sleep, a sympathetic silence, the silence of two friends enjoying each other’s company, a silence that is too deep for words; but the spiritual writers all agree with St Maximilian Kolbe, when he says, “Silence is necessary, and even absolutely necessary. If silence

is lacking, then grace is lacking.” What exactly do they mean, if there are so many different types of silence? And why is it so necessary?

First, we need to define silence. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, silence is “abstinence from speech or noise,” or “absence of sound, stillness.” At first glance, this seems very negative, and seems to speak to the silence associated with the grave, or of someone deliberately holding another at arm’s length. However, the same definition applies to the more positive kinds of silence, such as that of friends enjoying each other’s company. What accounts for the difference? The key to the riddle is that silence is always *for* something. It is a means to an end, and the end decides what kind of silence it is. This is of critical importance, because silence in and of itself does not necessarily lead to holiness. When St Maximilian Kolbe says that grace is lacking if silence is lacking, he does not mean that grace is

present if silence is present. The big thing is to use silence in the way that will open the door to grace. How is this to be done? Returning to the Oxford English Dictionary's definitions, a closer look at the four elements noted (speech, noise, sound, and stillness) will help to make this clearer.

Speech is one of God's great gifts to men. We can speak because we can think. But *why* do we speak? Why do we not just keep our thoughts to ourselves? There are many possible motivators, which can be grouped into four main categories: to help others, to help oneself, to gratify oneself, or to harm others. However, speaking, even with best of these motives, makes one thing impossible: listening. It is very difficult for an emitter to be a receiver simultaneously. So, this is one of the deep purposes of silence: it frees us to listen - to be aware of and receptive to others. Of course, absence of speech does not necessitate listening. People can refrain from speaking for want of conversational material or skills, lack of time, lack of desire in a moody taciturnity, or even from a deliberate will to hurt by 'giving the silent treatment'. Listening, on the other hand, is something that must be chosen, born out of a genuine concern for and interest in the speaker. Authentic listening is an act of love, involving an openness and receptivity to another. It empowers the other whilst placing us in the humble position of receiving. Many find listening well a challenge; our lower natures desire independence, control, power, while listening well requires the opposites. We can learn much, therefore, from refraining from speech in order to listen; it can help us learn to love.

Examining absence of sound reveals another layer of silence. While abstaining from speech allows us to listen, what does it allow us to listen *to*? Listening to others' speech, being open to their ideas and feelings and concerns, is obviously a very good thing. Other non-verbal sounds, such as good music, can be important in life, too. However, these things, and anything else that stimulates the exterior senses (sight, hearing, taste, touch, smell), for that matter, can impair our ability to listen to what is happening in our interior, in our spirit. We are made of body

and soul, of matter and spirit, and what stimulates the material side of us can distract from the spiritual side. Of course, this is not to say that the senses are bad – they are necessary, because they are the gateways through which we gain knowledge. However, if they are continually stimulated, as they are, more than ever, in our click-and-scroll culture, it is difficult to give our attention to our spiritual actions, actions that lower life forms, animals and plants, cannot do: thinking and choosing, or knowing and loving, with our intellect and will. This knowledge and love, while expressed to a certain degree, even a high degree, in conversation with true friends, is also expressed in interior conversations – either with ourselves, or with God. Excluding sound, and other external stimuli, allows us to listen to these conversations with real receptivity. We can develop our own thoughts and be aware of God's inspirations; we can become better acquainted with ourselves and with Him if we are actively listening. So, abstaining from sound takes the purpose of abstaining from speech a step further: it can free us to be receptive to interior conversation.

The absence of noise was another essential of silence cited by the dictionary and is of great relevance in our prolonged 'Age of Noise' (as Aldous Huxley labelled the 20th century). The narrow meaning of noise is 'unpleasant sound,' but it can refer to much more than that which is audible; visual art, clothing and even a piece of writing can be labelled 'noisy,' which is to say that it is somehow disordered. Noise is really a side-effect of misdirected energy; either too much is being used for the task (e.g. a slammed door), or it is misplaced (e.g. sounds and colours that clash). While most of us value the absence of unpleasant sound, as it tends to make us feel anxious and irritated, what is difficult for us is that we often confuse other types of noise with life. Noise is, after all, evidence that something is alive – dead things are noiseless – and so we can think, ever so subconsciously, that a certain kind of noise is somehow a good thing. Noise, misdirected energy, is all around us – the hustle and bustle of an airport, the hurried shuffling of papers in busy offices, the no-time-to-waste stride echoing down hallways everywhere, the car roaring down the street *sans* muffler – all of these, noisy as they are, can



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make one feel so *alive*. This indicates that there is, in most of us, a natural tendency to activism, to the idea that *doing* is the important thing, that our efficiency and competency in completing tasks are what matter in life. However, there is something higher than doing: being. What we *are* matters so much more: our intentions, our attitudes to others, our desires; in a word, our loves. These will be expressed in actions, to be sure, which then develop into habits, virtues (if the habits are good ones) and character, but they are more than these. If our loves are all in God and for God, we truly will help His kingdom come. Unfortunately, modern society teaches and encourages us in so many ways to define ourselves by what we can do, not what we are; it places a premium on speed and maximum productivity, rather than on character, on virtue, and so we rush and hurry from one task to another. Reducing exterior noise – reducing receiving and making it – frees us to be receptive to interior conversations so that we see ourselves as we really are. Self-knowledge is indispensable in the spiritual

life; according to St Athanasius, “no one can know God without knowing himself.” St Teresa of Avila concurs: “*Self-knowledge* is so important that I do not care how high you are raised up to the heavens, I never want you to cease cultivating it,” and in St Catherine of Siena’s *Dialogue* we read, “In the knowledge which the soul obtains of herself, she knows more of God, and knowing the goodness of God in herself, the sweet mirror of God, she knows her own dignity and indignity.” The big question in seeing who we are is, what do we love most? What is most important to us, really? Is it God and His holy, loving Will, or is something else competing with Him? Power, comfort, security, esteem, pleasure, success, our ‘rights’ (to name a few of His more common rivals)? Silencing exterior noise can help us to become at least aware of this conflict.

This conflict itself is another kind of noise: interior noise. It may arise from opposition of conscience and inclination; it may be a conflict between what we wish ourselves to be, and what we see we really are; it may be a struggle to accept what God wants

for us, which is often expressed in the circumstances in which we find ourselves. This kind of noise can only really be heard when speech, sound and exterior noise, the things that interior noise often finds an outlet and takes refuge in, have been quieted; and it can only really be addressed by receptivity, complete openness, to reality, to truth, to love. The listening made possible by reducing speech, sound and exterior noise is meant to prepare for this total receptivity, which is only possible when self has ceased to complain about others, circumstances, and its own weaknesses; when we have recognised and accepted what we are in relation to God (“I am He Who is, and you are she who is not”, as we read in St Catherine’s *Dialogue*); and when we are ready to do whatever His Will, His Love, is asking of us. And it is when we are finally free from interior noise that we are *still*. Not with the stillness of the dead, but with an alert, alive stillness that is waiting with tranquil vigilance to hear and respond to what Another has to say. It is a stillness in which one’s energies are not asleep or switched off, but rather ordered and focused, ready for use as God’s loving Will directs. It is thus a stillness that is the farthest thing from narcoleptic lassitude; a thing not to be confused with well-earned but nonetheless somewhat self-complacent repose in ‘downtime’; a thing opposed to stiffness. It presupposes strength and generosity, coming with an effort to listen, to be honest with ourselves, to be accepting of what we are and what God asks, and to place all our powers at His disposal, primed for action, should He ask this of us.

For there is a final test to see if the stillness to which silence has brought us is the beautiful, grace-receptive kind or not - if it is seeking Another, or self - and that is our response to being recalled to the world of speech and sound and exterior noise (interior noise we need never return to, of course); not for our gratification, but on God’s errand. If we complain, annoyed by the sounds, resenting those who upset our quiet, the stillness is not what it should be. We have somehow gotten to love silence for its own sake, rather than His; we are seeking repose for ourselves in the peace and quiet, rather than seeking Him. This

stillness can be shaken; whereas the stillness born of interior peace is enduring. It lasts, even in the midst of activity, if it is true. Those blessed with it can accomplish much, but with that atmosphere of peace, the ‘tranquillity of order,’ pervading all. It was this stillness that was advocated by St Catherine of Siena, a very active yet contemplative saint, who famously advised others to “build a cell within your heart, and never put a foot outside it.”

Is it possible, or even relevant, to life in the 21st century to aim for this living, loving stillness? It is not only possible and relevant, but necessary, if we are to know ourselves as we are, if we are to be able to hear God and be receptive to His grace, to be responsive to His directions and invitations...if we are to begin to know what “God is Love” (1 John 4:8) really means.



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Winter: News from St Dominic's Convent

Music Presentation

The question is: does that repetitive, drum-kit-heavy sound sequence coming over the shopping mall loudspeakers qualify as music? Perhaps this would be a good debate topic for next year. Meanwhile, last July one of our Sisters presented a PowerPoint on this question to some of the parents of our senior girls. As a sort of finishing touch to our music curriculum, which investigates all elements of Western music (from organum to opera and everything before, between, and after), it was felt that a scientific dissection of contemporary music would enable our students to accurately evaluate the sounds coming out of the shopping mall loudspeakers (or the doctor's waiting room, or the red car that just zoomed past). The presentation opened with a mini refresher course on how beauty is defined and why exposure to the truly beautiful is necessary by invoking the timeless authority of Aristotle. 'By music, a man becomes accustomed to feeling the right emotions; music has thus the power to form character.' Aristotle's words provided a comfortingly steadying start to the night, since the inherently emotion-arousing nature of music was certainly showcased while Sister presented audio and video clips of popular genres such as Ragtime, Jazz, Blues, Pop, Rap and Heavy Metal, explaining their characteristics and just what sort of pull these sounds are programmed to have. It was more than just interesting listening, though. Sister also took us to the backstage area of the contemporary music stage, revealing the unabashedly commercial drive (not to mention the bluntly-stated artistic philosophy) behind the 'best-sellers' on the contemporary music scene. It was heartening to know that this unit on contemporary music would enable our students to accurately evaluate the omnipresent popular ... music?



FROM THE BEATLES' LIPS

"Rock music has got the same message as before. It is anti-religious, anti-nationalistic and anti-morality. But now I understand what you have to do. You have to put the message across with a little honey on it." – John Lennon



POWER OF MUSIC

Music's link with the emotions can thus influence us to:

1. Evaluate good things as good, if associated with positive emotions.
2. Evaluate bad things as bad, if associated with negative emotions.
3. Evaluate good things as bad, if associated with negative emotions.
4. Evaluate bad things as good, if associated with positive emotions.

Music also informs us – it shapes us; just as 'you are what you eat', you are what you listen to.

Like food, it is something that gives pleasure.

Like food, it must be taken in with discretion.

Like food, we have to know what is 'healthy' and 'unhealthy' to make good choices.

The nature and purpose of the music will help guide these choices.

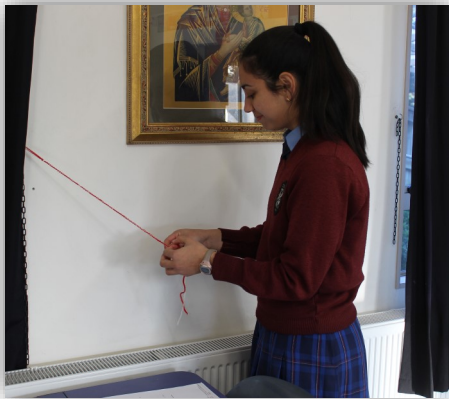
A Visit from the Sisters of the Society of Saint Pius X

Early in July habits of a different kind were sighted by school girls and parishioners: three Sisters of the Society of Saint Pius X had arrived for a short visit – the first of their congregation – to Saint Anthony’s parish. Their stay included a talk to the parish not merely about what they do, but, rather more importantly, who they are as consecrated religious. The Sisters also impressed the girls of Saint Dominic’s College with a presentation on their congregation, coinciding well with their distribution of the recently published book on the life of Mother Marie Gabriel, their foundress. In turn, they were welcomed by the pupils during a morning assembly with the customary singing of Mo Maria, a hymn written to Our Lady in Maori by the first Catholic bishop of New Zealand, Jean-Baptiste Pompallier. The rest of the Sisters’ stay included visits to the Primary and Girls’ School classes, and even a little bit of time to become better acquainted with their Dominican counterparts!



The Cord of Saint Philomena: An Apostolic Work

It is well known that Saint Philomena, the “little Wonder Worker” is the patroness of the Children of Mary, so nominated by Pope Pius IX in 1862. In Whanganui, the sodality of the Children of Mary honour the popular virgin martyr by not only wearing her cord, but also by propagating devotion to her by means of making and distributing these cords. Each year the sisters are informed of the approaching feast of St Philomena, August 11th, by the appearance of red and white wool in abundance, and the dextrous hands of girls fiddling with long strings of it as they weave the



saint’s cord in the spare moments between class or during wet-weather lunch breaks. Each member of the sodality is required to make a certain number of cords; these are then distributed to members of the parish and beyond. Usually worn inside one’s attire as a girdle, the cord of Saint Philomena is considered especially efficacious in



preserving and obtaining the virtue of holy purity.

While the Children of Mary work “wonders” in their apostolate of spreading devotion to Saint Philomena, may she also work wonders for souls, procuring for them this precious virtue so endangered in our age.



Winter: News from St Dominic's Convent



Signadou Anniversary

On July 22, the feast of St. Mary Magdalene, boarders, boarding house helpers, and sisters gathered to celebrate the **tenth anniversary** of Signadou Boarding House. Enjoyment of refreshments, including, appropriately, madeleine cakes, was interspersed with entertainment from the boarders. The attendees were treated to piano pieces, singing, and Scottish dancing!

“Signadou” means “sign from God,” and refers to the *signadou* which St. Dominic received when he was prayerfully trying to determine how to care for the young women he had converted from the Albigensian heresy. On the feast of St. Mary Magdalene, he saw a burning globe alight over Prouille, the village where the first Dominican convent of sisters was afterwards born.



The Signadou theme song sung at the close of the festivities appropriately links these first Dominican nuns with the Signadou boarders of today, seeking a refuge from the decline of faith and morals in the modern world. “Eight hundred years from then, we too/ Sought for a Signadou...And at the Wanganui’s mouth/We saw a new star in the south.”





THE O.P. CORNER
Dominican Old Pupils' Corner

*For all of
 our readers, too!*



The Man of Your Choice

For those of our Old Pupils “with a Mind for Marriage” - we would like to share the treasure of Father Daniel A. Lord’s out-of-print, yet still relevant, pamphlet —hoping that it will provide useful counsel for them:

“ ‘The man of your choice,’ says he! I’ll be lucky if I turn out to be the girl of some man’s choice.”

“Who’s the man of my choice? The man who is nice enough to ask me.”

“Yes, I’ve got a choice in men; I want the one who happens to be around.”

“Doesn’t he know that the girls now out-number the men and that the girls are in vigorous competition for any man who’ll have them?”

“So I make a wrong choice and marry the wrong man. It’s better to have wed and lost than never to have wed at all.”

Thus speak the admittedly sophisticated maidens of the current year. But thus they have spoken for many a long year. And because they have, marriages are rocky and homes are rickety, and children wonder why their

parents don’t get along in along in some kind of affection and peace.

The wise girl shops for a husband with much more care than she shops for a spring outfit. And she rejects a fair number along the way, many of whom she never gives a chance to propose. Her hobby is not collecting proposals. Her hobby is sizing up a future hubby. And she waits until she has the right one in view, and then (but that’s another story) systematically “gets her man”.

Before and After?

One of the older musical comedies had a disillusioned song of matrimony, the chorus of which began thus:

“Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!

Pardon the laughter.

That was before, but this is after.

No wise man would disparage marriage’

And yet it is exceeding strange,

That when you marry,

Unless you're wary,
You're sure to find a dreadful change."

"That's it," you interject; "that's precisely it. How can you know from the way a man acts before marriage how he's going to act after he has corralled you with a wedding ring? Some pretty smooth suitors have turned out to be some pretty rough husbands, haven't they?"

True, yet there are signs. The smart girl is one who may not be superstitious about signs and omens, but she is very watchful of the small signs that indicate the character of a man.

You know all the old chestnuts:

"As the twig is bent, so the tree inclines."

"The boy is father to the man."

Like all chestnuts, the most surprising thing about them is that they are true.

You can judge a man's future by the present character and attitudes of the boy.

If the twig is badly twisted, you can expect a knotty tree.

You Should Choose

However, whatever you age, most of you can get married and should. Since you can make a choice, you certainly would be an idiot if you picked your husband sight unseen or at least eyes unseeing; or let yourself be picked by someone to whose character and qualifications you have made yourself deliberately blind.

Don't imagine that love is the blinding bolt from the skies. Love is usually a quite gradual growth. You don't fall in love; you gently slip down an inclined plane. You don't trip and crash; you gently sway in a man's direction. You are not swept off your feet by Lochinvar who tosses you before him across the neck of his horse; you are far more likely to be jolted about in some pretty ancient convertibles. You need not be struck blind, not if you make it a point to keep your eyes open and don't check your common sense at the door with your wraps.

But all that, too, is another story.

Right now quite simply I want to tell you to know about men. You mustn't think that I am giving away masculine secrets or being a traitor to my sex. An unhappy marriage happens to involve two people; and if you marry badly, the man has also married wretchedly. If your marriage is not a success, your husband's is a notable failure.

You might be happy with any of a dozen men and unhappy with any of another dozen. Any one of a hundred presentable men might find you a delightful and altogether satisfactory wife; the next hundred queuing up

before a ballpark might be poison to you and you to them.

So if I help you size up your right husband, if I give you a few pointers on choosing a man, I am helping the man quite as much as I am you, the girl. A happy wife makes a happy husband. A wretched wife makes a miserable husband. A contented husband and wife make a contented home with happy children. A tricked husband and a disillusioned wife are guardians of a zoo or snake pit filled with neurotic and frustrated little human animals.



Sally by Edmund Blair Leighton, 1895; <https://19thcenturybritpaint.blogspot.com/2013/10/edmund-blair-leighton.html>

Too Smooth

Quite rightly, the first thing you notice in a man, you girls, is manners. Before you notice his looks, except in the case of the most startlingly handsome males, you notice how he acts and the way he talks and how he behaves when he is with people.

That is right enough.

You are going to have to live with a man and his manners all your life. Manners are not etiquette, though they can include etiquette. They go much deeper than knowing how to order from a French menu, using the right fork at a formal dinner, and leaving open the lower button on a waistcoat. Manner are just what the word

implies: his manner of speaking; his manner of meeting people; his manner of treating girls; his manner of walking and dancing and playing; his manner of treating God; his manner of acting toward his fellow-men.

Bad manner...surly manners...ill manners...clumsy manners...no manner at all...the manner of an ox...stupid manners...artificial manners...manner he just put on for the occasion...surface manners...

We've a hundred ways of describing the way a man conducts himself in the company of others, and each one of them is clear just by the way we use the combination of words.

So a protective instinct makes a smart girl pay a lot of attention to the manners of a man. I suggest that instead of singing of arms and the man, the poet might have been wiser if he had sung of man and his manners.

How does he shake hands? Firm, the agonizing vice, the tail of the defunct salmon?

Is his voice under control? Loud, broken, raspy, full of grammatical mistakes that in company would make you ashamed, slipping into ugly words, boisterous, crude? Or the voice of an educated or at least a self-controlled gentleman?

The tell-tale signs: Does he step aside to let a lady move first? Does he eat like someone who enjoys food but doesn't wolf it? Is his laughter pleasant? Has he the trick of pushing people? How is he with inferiors or people who cannot defend themselves or talk back? Is he nice with children? Is he pleasant with old people? Can he hide his feelings when they would, if displayed, hurt others?

This is not a booklet on manners, just a reminder that life with an ill-mannered person must be pretty terrible indeed. It would be sleeping, as the old joke unfunnily has it, in a bed full of cracker crumbs. Bad manners and cracker crumbs won't kill you, but they will cause you some mighty uncomfortable hours.

Yet manners can be too smooth. Yes, indeed; they can have a tell-tale smoothness about them.

Expert in Love

The man you are looking for is really an unfinished product. Sometimes girls are deeply impressed and inclined briefly to become infatuated with men much older than themselves. Now I am one who knows from what he has seen of marriage that some girls well and happily marry men much their seniors. Yet in general, nature meant things a little differently:

A girl marries a man within her own age range, normally two to eight years her senior. She is more mature than he both physically and mentally. She was meant to help him find himself, establish his career, form his character, shape his success in life. She can in this capacity have all the form of a co-creator of her own husband's greatness. She has not married a great man; she has married a man whom she has helped become great. And that's an inspiring career for any young woman.

However, she has to be sure that he has the qualities she can help him shape into greatness. You cannot make a wonderful husband out of a lout or a lad. You cannot make a shiftless boy a successful adult. You are not going to work wonders with qualities he doesn't have. So somewhere between the finished product and the little man who just isn't there lies the man most women should look for.

Not the too smooth line.

If he makes love too suavely, he has been making love in too many practised experiments. You may be just as well satisfied if he is a bit clumsy, not crude but unskilled and unpractised. You can be just as happy if his speeches of affection are not as yet high poetry; high poetry takes a lot of writing and rewriting. You can look with the caution of an old trout on the too smooth line tipped with the too glittering bait. He probably has caught many poor fish with that deft cast.

An Easy Test

How can you tell if a man is going to be selfish?

Well, there is one simple test which I can give you; it is

concerned with his attitude toward love-making.

You've been going together briefly, the two of you, and you have come to like him enough to regard him with a speculative and almost hopeful glance. Is he the right one? Is this the man you have been looking for?

He begins to grow affectionate and you feel for him the warmth of a budding love. But you have your firm standards and you know what is right and what is wrong. He seems to be slipping past the line you have drawn for yourself, out of a high regard for your own virtue and God's law; and gently you indicate that the line is not to be crossed.

He is hurt.

He is indignant.

He insists.

He argues you down.

He makes love more ardently, wearing away, as he hopes, your defences.

He pouts and pleads, tells you how cruel you are and how you have hurt him, how you thwart his natural instincts, and how you can trust him now and always.

You remind him that there are standards and you prefer to keep them. You in turn are hurt, don't want to be unkind, but yet cannot forfeit your own principles.

And you find yourself with an irritable, angry, or perhaps cleverly pleading, or violently and arrogantly insistent male on your hands.

You have all the signs you need for reading character.

If he is selfish about that now, he will be selfish about a lot of things later on. If now that he is, or pretends to be, in love with you he insists that his desires come before your decencies, you have your index of character. If he is aggressive and ill-tempered or pouting or slick, those are

characteristics you will live with all your life.

Like them? No, you don't. And you'll like them a lot less as the years lessen his love. A man who makes love over a woman's protests is a selfish man. Avoid that kind of selfish man if you have any legitimate regard for yourself.

That Disposition

Ah, I can hear you whispering behind your hand, isn't he going to say anything about Good Looks, spelt with capitals?

That too will come.

Patience! If you can find one who is tall, dark, and handsome, he may also have qualities that make him a good husband. If you meet that Viking blond with the build of a beach guard and the smile of a young Crosby, that fact may challenge you to look for the further qualities which make him a fit companion for an apartment or bungalow. We'll take that up later.

Right now, let me remind you of a far, far more important element of a successful husband: His Disposition!



Off by Edmund Blair Leighton, 1899; Depiction of the aftermath of a failed marriage proposal;
<https://fineartamerica.com/featured/off-edmund-blair-leighton.html>

Say this over several times, please: "I shall be very careful to study the disposition of the man I marry." No, you'd better put it more correctly than that: "Before I allow myself to fall in love, I shall be sure that the man has the kind of disposition that I shall enjoy living with."

For you do not live solely with a husband. You live with a husband and his disposition. And you often may feel with the passing of years that you are living solely with his disposition.

Disposition is one of those words that describes itself. You speak of a person's disposition, and you know exactly what you are talking about and so does your listener. Good disposition...bad disposition...delightful disposition...surly disposition...sunny disposition...churlish disposition...bright and happy disposition...crabby disposition...generous disposition...stingy disposition...disposition of an angel...disposition of a bear with a bad bee sting.

More Important than Wealth

Not too long since, two extravagant children of the times married in one of the gold-plated weddings that only Hollywood can sponsor. She was extraordinarily beautiful and a film skyrocket. He was the heir to vast wealth. Their marriage lasted, oh, a matter of weeks. They evidently had the dispositions of midnight cats on a back fence. They fought from the moment they left the altar, and when they didn't fight, they sulked and acted like the spoiled brats and infantile half-wits they really

were. They had all the good looks and money in the world; all they lacked was a pair of pleasant dispositions; and that was the lack that whacked the daylight out of their marriage.

Good looks? Pleasant if present.

Wealth? It can sometimes help.

Disposition? You mean a good disposition? It's just about as important as anything could possibly be in marriage. Heaven has been kind to the girl who marries the man with the pleasant, equable disposition. Heaven help the girl who marries the man with the touchy, irritable, moody, selfish, pessimistic, greedy disposition. She has her hair shirt in the form of her husband. His disposition is her lifelong penance.

To be continued in next issue

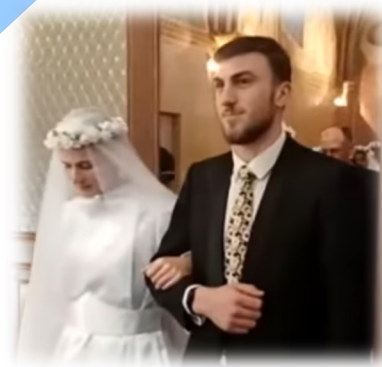
Photo Nook

...a place for past-pupils to share notable events in your lives...

16th June 2023

Sister Maria Cristina
dell'Eucarestia
(formerly Sarah Bennett)
received the habit of the
Consoling Sisters of the
Sacred Heart of Jesus in
Narni, Italy on the Feast
of the Sacred Heart.

Deo Gratias!



As a regular section of the **O.P. Corner**, we invite you to share with us and your fellow alumni, in the **Photo Nook**, notable events in *your lives* that have taken place recently. Please send photos with captions (eg. date, event, etc.)

Photo Chronicle—Winter

Life in St Dominic's Convent and the Girls' College



{Counter-Clockwise from the top left}
On the Eve of the Feast of the Sacred Heart, in a private ceremony our newest postulant receives the postulant's veil and capelet; through the generosity of Fr Elias & others, we had three new netball courts painted for our girls to practise & play on— they gave an earnest "Thank You" to their benefactors for this great blessing; The feast of St Dominic finds us again at sung First Vespers in the church with the tertiaries, school girls and faithful for the beginning of our festivities for this great feast; On the feast itself of St Dominic, we held our annual 'Teachers vs Students' netball match, which was very close and exciting to watch; In the end, the girls won 21-18; Towards the end of August, the Jog-a-thon school fundraiser had all out on the track to earn money for their school (and points for their school houses by each lap that they completed).



Feast of the Epiphany

6th January 2024

Ceremony of perpetual vows and
reception of the holy habit of the
Dominican Order



*Please assist us to continue in our
Contemplative & Active Apostolates*

Please consider helping us out—whether with gifts of cash or regular monthly donations. The stipend we receive is minimal, so we are truly grateful for every little effort and sacrifice that helps us to continue living our traditional Dominican way of life.

Thank you to those who have already pledged regular donations—these gifts, no matter how small, do make a difference!

May Our Lady of the Rosary reward your generosity and kindness to the Spouses of Her Divine Son. The Sisters pray specially for you during our weekly Chapter.

Queen of the Most Holy Rosary, pray for us!

AUSTRALIA

Westpac Account Name: Dominican Sisters of Wanganui
Westpac Account BSB Number: 033-636
Account Number: 334285

NEW ZEALAND

Westpac Account Name: Dominican Sisters of Wanganui
Westpac Account Number: 03-0791-0728558-00

Please note that the banks in NZ no longer accept cheques. Apologies for the inconvenience.

All donations now qualify for a 33% TAX REBATE from the IRD.

Please quote our NZ Charities Services Number: CC37884

UNITED STATES

Account Name: Dominican Sisters of Wanganui
Wells Fargo Bank, A/C # 2 015 569 425, Routing # 1210 42882
Cheques can be made out to "The Dominican Sisters of Wanganui" and sent to:
Dominican Sisters, Attn: Loren Vaccarezza, 2240 Paragon Drive, San Jose, CA 95131
All donations to our U.S. account now qualify for a tax deductible receipt!

OR VIA PAYPAL

Visit our website at <https://www.opsisters.org.nz/fundraising>