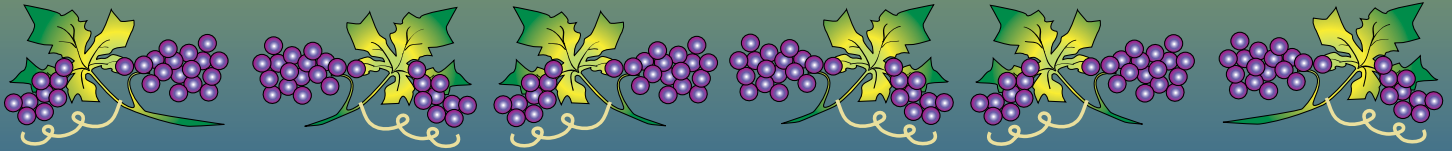


CONSECRATA

A newsletter for member communities, friends and supporters of the Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious



SPECIAL EDITION

A JEWEL IN ROME: *Spotlight on the Domus Sanctae Mariae Guadalupe*

Following the 1994 Synod for Consecrated Life, Pope John Paul II expressed his longing for Councils of Major Superiors throughout the world to establish houses of studies for women religious in Rome. Angelo Cardinal Sodano shared the Holy Father's desire with the Executive Committee of the Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious when he met with them in 1997. Within a week of that meeting, the Domus Sanctae Mariae Guadalupe began to be a reality. Affirming the enthusiastic response of the sisters in the United States, Cardinal Sodano himself made arrangements for the use of a Vatican building in the center of Rome for this undertaking.



In September 1998 four sisters arrived to pioneer the first American house of studies for women religious in Rome. After a great deal of work and organization, the house was officially inaugurated on April 25, 1999. In his homily that day, Cardinal Sodano said, "May this house of studies offer all the religious who come here the opportunity to be better prepared to bring Christ to the world and to explain to those who try to understand why we believe and are consecrated ... religious life, as you know so well, dear sisters, is not essentially what you do, but what you are. A more profound understanding of the truths of the faith should guide you both to a deeper awareness of the presence of God and a more complete response." During the Holy Mass, the Cardinal blessed the chapel and consecrated the altar and used a chalice given by the Holy Father as a sign of his benevolence towards the newly established Domus.

The Domus is a true spiritual residence where sisters can live the common life together while fulfilling the specific mission entrusted to them by their respective major superiors. In addition to providing a residence for sisters studying in a Pontifical University or Institute and for those working for the Church in Rome, CMSWR offers at the Domus an annual three-week-long Rome Summer Renewal Program and short sabbatical programs with special themes. These programs provide sisters the chance to know and experience the



Continued on the next page...

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Church by participating in conferences given by local professors and prelates, visits to historical and spiritual sites in Rome and environs, and religious and ecclesial events.

In a very real way, the Domus Sanctae Mariae Guadalupe enfleshes the spiritual vision of CMSWR. They envisioned that, by living and studying in the heart of Mother Church, sisters from member communities would come to know and experience the Church in a profound and dynamic way. Their close proximity to the Vicar of Christ would help form them as strong ecclesial women at the service of the Church. By living and studying together at the Domus, lasting friendships, genuine communion, and strong collaboration would develop across member communities. All of this contributes to the ultimate goal of enriching and fortifying religious life and the Church in America.



Cardinal Sodano consecrating the altar of the Domus in 1999

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A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRPERSON

Mother Agnes Mary Donovan, SV

+

Dear Friends,

This special issue of *Consecrata* showcases the joys of the Domus Guadalupe House of Studies over the years, from its conception to the present, and the many opportunities it continues to offer sisters to experience the heart of the Church while in the heart of the Church. “The Domus” has been a launching place for many exceptional graces on behalf of individual sisters and for the Church, as I can attest from many blessed stays at the service of the Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious (CMSWR) and other Church affairs. A recent, cherished memory was the gift and “God-incidence” of attending a concert in the ancient home of St. Agnes (which is presently the Italian Roman seminary) on her patronal feast day—and mine.

The very bones of the saints cry out encouragement to us as we traverse the same corridors they walked, offer our loyalty to the Holy Father, and rejoice at the gifts of nature and grace placed at the service of our Mother Church by men and women from places that fire the imagination.... It seems one can encounter every language and nationality simply from a visit to St. Peter’s Basilica. As Americans we are accustomed to diversity, but there is something about a diversity that spans the centuries and the millennia that provides a richer appreciation of the truths of our Faith.

One is also humbled by the generosity and humility of the servants of the Church—priests, religious and laity from every corner of the world—that one encounters in the halls of the offices of the Holy See. Their zeal for Christ shines through eyes undimmed by years of service, and

is revealed by the spring in the step of someone newly assigned to work on behalf of a dicastery. For sister-students, living at the Domus is an exposure to the life of the Church that is a gift that goes beyond the great intellectual treasures to be mined from the many universities and pontifical academies of study that Rome affords.



For all who have supported the Domus Guadalupe House of Studies—thank you!! The gratitude of the sisters from across the United States who have benefitted by this House of Studies, either by short stays in Rome or a several-year course of studies, is best expressed in our grateful prayers for you, our benefactors.

Enjoy this issue, and relish with us the graces unleashed by the Domus Guadalupe House of Studies. Allow the articles which follow to whisk you in spirit to the heart of the Church: from inspiring words of Cardinal Sodano’s homily on the occasion of the inauguration of the Domus, His Eminence Timothy Cardinal Dolan’s humorous recollections and tribute to the relationship between the Domus and the North American College, through Sr. Yvonne Mary’s re-telling of the visit of a possible future saint, and much more...

May Our Lady of Guadalupe continue to bless us all.

Mother Agnes Mary Donovan, SV
Chairperson of CMSWR



IN THE PRESENCE OF A SAINT

Cardinal Van Thuan at the Domus

By Sister Yvonne Mary Loucks, RSM

As I write this little vignette of Cardinal Van Thuan at the Domus, I am stirred at the privilege of having been in the presence of such a holy man. The Cardinal had recently come to Rome after being banished from his own homeland of Vietnam, never to return there. Saints find each other, and St. John Paul II was very close to him and protected him. The Cardinal lived at San Calisto, an extra-territorial property of the Vatican in Trastevere.

The Vietnamese Dominican Sisters of Houston, as well as many other sisters, came to know him during his sojourn in Rome. The Dominican Sisters invited him to come to the Domus for a Vietnamese meal at a time when their Provincial Superior, Sister Theresa Ha, was with us. The food took days to prepare, and the table was set very elegantly.

When the Cardinal sat down, he began immediately to tell us stories of his imprisonment. He recounted that six days after being appointed Coadjutor Archbishop of Saigon on April 24, 1975, Saigon fell to the North Vietnamese Army. Immediately he was arrested for his Catholic faith as well as his family connections to Ngô Đình Diệm, the assassinated president of South Vietnam. The communist government detained him in a reeducation camp for 13 years, nine in solitary confinement. Being a very pastoral priest, this confinement and apparent inactivity was the worst form of torture and suffering that he underwent.

The Cardinal told us of many conversion stories that happened among the communist guards and fellow prisoners. He befriended many of them and was able to teach and evangelize in a setting that was otherwise hopeless. I remember one story he told us of a guard that converted secretly and befriended him. Later, that same guard sat on the review board for future seminarians. In Vietnam, the government determined who would be ordained, and they would only accept candidates who would uphold the principles of communism. A young man secretly formed by Cardinal Van Thuan was being questioned by the very guard that had also converted secretly under the Cardinal in prison. The guard asked the seminarian if he had any connection with Cardinal Van Thuan. Being in a terrible dilemma, he finally realized that he could not deny the Cardinal, even if it meant sacrificing his dream of ordination. Much to his surprise, he was



Cardinal Van Thuan telling stories of his imprisonment



Cardinal Van Thuan enjoying a Vietnamese meal at the Domus

accepted, and went into the seminary. Later the guard met him on the street and revealed his true Catholic identity. He said to the young man, “If you had denied him, I would not have accepted you.”

He was filled with stories of conversion and holiness, and we were privileged to be in his presence and listen to a saint in our midst that day. He died in Rome in 2002 at the age of 74. At his funeral, St. John Paul II called him “a shining example of Christian loyalty to the point of martyrdom.” On May 4, 2017, Pope Francis declared Cardinal Van Thuan “Venerable.”

A LETTER FROM CARDINAL DOLAN



OFFICE OF THE CARDINAL
1011 FIRST AVENUE
NEW YORK, NY 10022

June 2, 2017
Month of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Mother Judith, O.C.D.
Superior General
Carmelite Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart
of Los Angeles
920 East Alhambra, CA 91801-2799

Dear Mother Judith:

It can't be eighteen years since the wonderful *Domus Sanctae Mariae Guadalupe* opened in the Eternal City! Thanks for another reminder of how old I'm getting!

Well do I remember the dream of a residence in Rome that could do for women religious in the United States what the *Casa Santa Maria* of the North American College does for priests: a happy home, with Jesus and Mary at the heart, where sisters could reside in a climate of camaraderie, prayer, and study as graduate students at one of Rome's acclaimed theological universities.

We owe a lot to Mother Quentin Sheridan, R.S.M., and to Cardinal Edmund Szoka (at the time governor of Vatican City State) who helped find and ready this beautiful casa in the middle of historic Rome.

This providential residence has allowed dozens of consecrated women to gain their degrees and return home for a more enhanced apostolic service. Where better to do it! As Saint John Paul II often remarked, "Don't just come to study *in* Rome ... *study Rome!*"

Yes, I remember that opening Mass on December 12, 1999, the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. I must be honest and admit that I recall even more vividly the dinner afterwards: fried chicken, biscuits, mashed potatoes and milk gravy, and apple pie - - all tough to find in Italy! No wonder I return often.

Mother Quentin observed back then that the alliance that was sure to develop between the sisters at the *Domus* and the priests and future priests of the North American College would also serve the Church back home well, especially in the encouragement of vocations. And so it has happened!

My gratitude to Jesus through Mary for the Domus! My thanks to all of you for making that dream a reality!

With prayerful best wishes, I am,

Faithfully in Christ,

Timothy Michael Cardinal Dolan
Archbishop of New York

SPOTLIGHT ON A DOMUS STUDENT

Sister Maria Goretti Vu, OP

Sister Maria Goretti Vu, OP, a member of the Dominican Sisters of Mary Immaculate Province in Houston, Texas, recently returned from living at the Domus Sanctae Mariae Guadalupe and studying part-time at the Pontifical University of Saint Thomas Aquinas (the Angelicum). Situated at the bottom of the Viminal Hill (the smallest of the famous Seven Hills of Rome) between the Quirinal and Esquiline Hills, the Angelicum is a center of excellence in formation and study for the Dominican Order and one of the seven pontifical universities in Rome. The Angelicum offers a number of academic programs and is the only pontifical university offering courses in English.



Sister Maria Goretti Vu, OP in St. Peter's Square

For Sister Maria Goretti, a spirituality certificate student, the opportunity to learn more about the charism of her Dominican life while studying at such a well-respected school was a gift. "The program is fantastic. I love it. I love every class that I attend and wish that I can study more but my capacity is full. But I do enjoy walking to school every day and listening to the lecture, doing the work. It's like a retreat through the whole year. A year and a half actually," said Sister Maria Goretti.

Granted permission by her superiors to take a sabbatical after two terms as the provincial superior for her community, Sister Maria Goretti was rejuvenated both physically and spiritually by her time in Rome. "Being a

provincial you are busy with administration and you need to regroup, that's all. In that atmosphere, I think it's very good... I got the time to regroup. I connected with God and with my own being. That is the most important thing. And the studying, all the studying, helped me with that."

Sister Maria Goretti Vu is grateful for her time at the Domus and the opportunity to live in Rome. Likened to being in the womb of a mother, being in Rome gave Sister Maria Goretti a different perspective on the Church. "People everywhere flood into Rome and you hear and you listen to their stories and you really share the moment of joy, pain, and suffering with the Church; all the members. You feel her heart beating with her ups and downs in her children. I think that is the most beautiful present. It's amazing in that we, [the residents of the Domus], are also carrying the past to now and my hope is that more sisters in the future can experience what I have experienced."



Sisters enjoying gelato and fellowship in Rome



Celebrating the Year of Mercy in St. Peter's Basilica

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS



World Youth Day

When World Youth Day took place in Rome in 2000, nearly 100 sisters from member communities resided at the Domus. They offered a tremendous witness to consecrated life: organizing a catechetical site, preparing young people for receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Holy Eucharist, and praying for participants before the Blessed Sacrament.

Cardinal Cacciavillan

Agostino Cardinal Cacciavillan has been a friend of CMSWR since its early days, when he served as Apostolic Nuncio in the United States. In 1998, he was appointed President of the Administration of the Patrimony of the Apostolic See. Since the Domus belongs to the Vatican, Archbishop Cacciavillan became our landlord!



Pope John Paul II

As millions thronged to Rome in the wake of Pope John Paul II's death, the sisters at the Domus joined them in mourning the late Holy Father. Being in the heart of the Church allowed them to pray before his body and participate in his funeral Mass.

LIFE AT THE DOMUS



Christmas Season

Sisters in residence enjoy a meal with the Jesuit and Barnabite Fathers during the Christmas season.

Sisters in the Kitchen

Sisters at the Domus take part in all aspects of community life, including cooking meals.



St. Joseph Table

For the Feast of San Giuseppe, Pietro teaches the sisters how to make a traditional St. Joseph Table.



Napkin Folding

In addition to preparing meals, sisters prepare table settings and decorate for special occasions. Here, they practice napkin folding!



Jubilee for Consecrated Life

Living in Rome affords Domus residents the opportunity to participate in the life of the Church in a special way. During the Jubilee Year in 2000, sisters attended the Jubilee for Consecrated Life.



Vatican Radio

Here, sisters in the summer renewal program visit the offices of Vatican Radio.



Summer Renewal Program

Every summer the Domus offers a three week renewal program for sisters from our members' communities. In addition to visiting holy sites and Vatican offices, the sisters have the opportunity to participate in a mass at St. Peter's Basilica.



Holy Doors

The Domus offers special pilgrimage programs, often associated with events in the life of the Church. These sisters enter a holy door while on pilgrimage during the Jubilee of Mercy in 2016.



Community Programs

Sisters of the Handmaids of the Heart of Jesus spend time in prayer while visiting the holy sites of Rome. The Domus sometimes hosts sisters from individual communities for special programs.

Domus Alumnae

Thank you friends and donors, for making it possible!

Over the years, sisters have studied at the Pontifical Universities of the Holy Cross (Santa Croce), St. Thomas Aquinas (Angelicum), and St. Anthony (Antonianum), Pontifical Gregorian University, Pontifical Atheneum of St. Anselm (Sant'Anselmo), Institute of the Theology of the Consecrated Life (Claretianum), Pontifical Institute of Sacred Music, Pontifical Institute of Spirituality (Teresianum), Pontifical Institute Regina Mundi, Salesian Pontifical University, and Sapienza University of Rome.

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Sister Marie Schnabel, FSMG

Sister Rosario, OP

Sister Scholastica Yun, OP

Sister Theresa Kieu, OP

CONSISTENCY TO MISSION: *Helping Sisters Serve the Church*

Sister Marie Bernadette Thompson, OP recently interviewed Richard Grant, the current president of the Dan Murphy Foundation.



Who was Dan Murphy? What does the witness of his life teach us about the good Catholic life, fatherhood, really being a witness in the world, and leaving a legacy?

Dan Murphy was a self-made man, born in Eastern Pennsylvania in 1856. As a young man, he left right after the Civil War and came west. He worked for the railroad and had some experience in the oil fields of Oklahoma, continued west and ultimately became the freight agent for the Santa Fe Railroad. From there he developed his business. He was a man who had a sense of where things were going and obviously a very good business head.

His philanthropy from the very beginning was generous to Catholic Charities and particularly here in Los Angeles. He was the benefactor [of] many Catholic high schools in working class areas. They have since become the inner city areas and a main focus of the foundation's activity is appropriately to support these schools founded with [his] munificence. From the standpoint of Christian stewardship he was always very generous with the needs of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles by helping establish a house of the Little Sisters of the Poor, and finding the property for the Sisters of the Good Shepherd to establish their home for battered women.

He had one daughter, Bernardine Murphy Donohue. She set up the foundation in memory of her father to continue the charitable works he had begun. We continue to this day to try to serve the needs of the poor, particularly here in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles.

You have been involved in the Domus' history from the beginning. What was your first impression of the Domus project, the reason why this project really stood out to you and was worthy of your time?

In the foundation, there has always been a great loyalty to

the Holy Father. It was in that way that the Domus came to our attention. It was Sir Daniel [Donohue] and Countess Bernardine who had a real interest in it. They understood the importance of Rome to the Church as a center of learning and a repository of the traditions of our Faith. To have a place in Rome where women religious could actually spend time to develop their talents in their studies, to further their knowledge of the Church and its traditions, this was very important to Sir Daniel and his wife. I think the idea of having a place that was sponsored by the Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious was very appealing to Sir Daniel.

How important are Catholics who do philanthropy to the life of the Church?

Throughout history it has been important to have people of means to support the activities of the Church.... If you look at any philanthropic activity, it is [through] consistency to your mission that over time you can really make a difference in things. More than amounts of big money, it is really being true to your mission. In this case, we have a mission that has been very clearly set for us.

Is there anything else you would like to share with our readers?

It has been a privilege to be a part of helping this effort in Rome at the Domus. I have been back twice to see its progress. It is impressive to see the sisters and how much it is appreciated. We have sisters here in the Archdiocese who have been a part of that, for instance, Mother Judith of the Carmelite Sisters of the Most Sacred Heart. The inspiration, the reward if you will, for having the privilege of being involved in all this is actually being able to see where the Domus has taken religious orders throughout the United States and has helped religious vocations in the process.

FROM THE PAGES OF HISTORY

Historical facts contributed by Sister Yvonne Mary, RSM, Sister Maria Socorro, MCMI, Mother Judith, OCD, Father Ricardo, SJ, and the Barnabite Fathers



Largo Argentina

The Domus is located in the very heart of ancient Rome. Largo Argentina, a few steps away from the Domus Guadalupe, besides being a major transportation center for taxis, buses, and trams, also contains a small sunken park-like area with ancient Roman ruins. It is believed to be the place where Julius Caesar was assassinated on the Ides of March.

The Domus Building

The address of the Domus is Piazza Benedetto Cairoli 117, 00186 Rome. The Piazza in front of the Domus is named after Benedetto Cairoli, a patriot and politician. The building in which the Domus is located and the church adjacent to it, San Carlo ai Catinari, were both built by the Barnabite Fathers. The church was dedicated to St. Charles Borromeo, and the first stone was laid on September 29, 1611. After the Roman Republic was established in 1849, a group known as the *Garibaldini* took over the building. The convent was returned to the Vatican in 1929, at which point the Vatican once again called upon the Barnabite Fathers to care for the building.





Pius XII

During World War II, many Jews were kept safe within Vatican walls. Because the building that houses the Domus was an extra-territorial Vatican property, many Jews also resided at the Domus until they could be safely transported out of Europe. In gratitude for the efforts of Pope Pius XII to help those suffering from the devastation of World War II, an exceptionally beautiful mosaic of the Holy Father was created and placed on the wall entering the building. It is a daily reminder of the suffering of all of those kept in hiding and of the heroic work of Pope Pius XII, who tirelessly promoted their safe-keeping and rescue from the Nazi occupation of Rome.

Polish Jesuits

In the late 1950s a group of Polish Jesuits came to Rome to find documents related to the history of the Polish Church, both in the Vatican archives as well as the archives of various religious orders and private collections. In 1973, the Polish Jesuits moved to the building which now houses the Domus. Here they established the Institute of Ecclesiastical Studies. When the building was renovated, the Polish Jesuit Fathers relocated the Institute to the first and ground floors of the building. This allowed the CMSWR house of studies to be established on the second, third, and fourth floors of the building. Father Ricardo, SJ, a long-time resident of the building, has been the “guardian angel” of the Domus sisters from the beginning, sharing his practical advice and expert know-how when technical problems arise.



Ancient Image of Our Lady on the Staircase

When the building was being renovated by APSA (Administration of the Patrimony of the Apostolic See), workmen drilling to insert a pipe stopped because they discovered an ancient fresco of Our Blessed Mother with the Infant Jesus plastered within the walls of the stairwell. The image had been covered with thin bricks. It is believed the image of Our Lady was covered over to protect it from the anticlerical group who had taken over the building in the mid-1800s. According to Father Ricardo, the date of the fresco coincides with the Barnabite Fathers' Church of San Carlo ai Catinari, now over 400 years old.

Our gratitude to the donors of the Domus!

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in the Eternal City?*

Your support can ensure the education of sisters!

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was inspired by St. John Paul II's desire
for religious to "know" the Church by
studying in Rome.

The house of studies provides a home
to sisters studying to earn pontifical
degrees or attending a summer
program of study.



Please use the remittance
envelope to make a donation
or go online to cmswr.org



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“Thanks to this house we have the opportunity to live our testimony of faith in even more complete communion with the Holy Father, breathing the unique and unrepeatable aura of Rome.

Our religious sisters are delighted and well aware that when they return to their communities, after having enriched their religious formation at the pontifical universities of the Eternal City, they will be able to communicate the sense of this invaluable gift: that is, of such a rich and profound experience of faith and life.”

—Mother Mary Bernard Nettle, *lsp*, on the occasion of the dedication of the Domus

