



# DOMINICAN *Central*

NEWS from the PROVINCE OF ST. ALBERT THE GREAT

WINTER 2004

## From the Provincial

DEAR FRIENDS OF  
THE FRIARS,



As Dominican friars of the Province of St. Albert the Great, we have committed ourselves to the authentic preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to the clear and persuasive presentation of our Catholic faith, and to the providing of pastoral care through our genuine commitment to justice and peace.

Of course, such service to the church does not simply happen. It calls for discernment, preparation, and the acquisition of theological understanding and skill over the course of a lifetime. To this end, the friars of the province are truly blessed to have Aquinas Institute of Theology as our own nationally recognized center of preaching, theological education, and ministerial formation.

From the earliest days of the Dominican Order we have been educators, a tradition our province has maintained by establishing the school of theology that has become Aquinas Institute today. Sponsored by our province and now also supported by our Dominican sisters, other religious, and the laity, our school has provided philosophic and theological formation to generations of Dominican friars who have served the church in a dazzling array of capacities. In more recent years, this Dominican education has been shared with numerous religious women, especially our Dominican sisters, and

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## Future leaders find a home at Aquinas

**T**HE LEADERSHIP of ministry in the Catholic Church has changed. The church has too few priests and sisters to do the work alone. The people emerging to help are laywomen and men, and they are emerging in dramatic numbers.

In 1995, about 10,000 men and women were preparing for careers in lay ministry. By 2002, that number had tripled to 30,000. Contrast that to the 3,000 men enrolled in seminaries in the same year, and the new reality is inescapably obvious.

Aquinas Institute of Theology in St. Louis, a graduate school of theology sponsored by the Province of St. Albert the Great, educates women and men for lay ministry while it educates Dominican brothers for ordination. The school embraces its role as a model of collaboration in the Catholic Church.

About 300 students are studying at Aquinas Institute. They will become priests, nuns, spiritual directors, hospital chaplains, parish administrators, youth ministers, and educators. We'd like to share with you a few stories from our students and alumni.

### Meet Rosie Perez

Perez is a student in our Master of Arts in Health Care Mission program, which prepares hospital executives to sustain the healing ministry of Jesus Christ.

She is a registered nurse who spent years working in trauma care. She saw



lives lost because patients did not receive preventive health care.

Perez, a Mexican-American from Houston, decided to serve men and women on the fringes of society by helping them navigate the health care system. She became the director of community outreach for Christus St. Joseph Hospital in Houston. The mobile clinic she runs reaches 15,000 people a year.

Perez pursues her degree through a combination of online study and occasional weekend trips to St. Louis, where she studies with other members of the health care mission learning community and receives ongoing spiritual formation.

"Now I can articulate what it means to be a Catholic health care institution," she says. "Before, I was standing on sand."

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Fr. Harry Byrne, O.P. at Mass with Aquinas alumni

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## Doctoral graduates put preaching expertise into print

**A**T THE HEART of the mission of Aquinas Institute of Theology is the promotion of great preaching. That accomplishment is achieved through the development of preachers who will be responsibly prepared, solidly educated, and highly skilled. To that end, students are taught the fundamentals of preaching in all the degree programs of the institute, not only in terms of theory but with plenty of practical application through class feedback and audio visual critique. The Doctor of Ministry Degree Program in Preaching builds on this step by accentuating its commitment to turning good preachers into *master* preachers.

Several alumni of the doctoral preaching program have not only excelled as preachers but have also written extensively about the techniques for effective preaching. A steady number of graduates have consistently had their doctoral theses published or are currently in the process of having them published. Here are a few of the exciting works out of the Doctor of Ministry Program at Aquinas.

Fr. Daniel E. Harris, C.M. is a Vincentian priest. He is currently Associate Professor of Homiletics at St. John's Seminary—Archdiocese of Los Angeles. His thesis project entitled *We Speak the Word of the Lord: A Practical Plan for More Effective Preaching* was published in 2001 by ACTA Publications in Chicago.

Duncan Macleod MacPherson graduated from Aquinas last year. He is currently a visiting lecturer in theology and homiletics in England. His work, *The Pilgrim Preacher*, will be published by Melisende of London.

Fr. Stephen Vincent DeLeers is an author and consultant in homiletics. He is also the Director of Continuing Formation for the Clergy Office for the Diocese of Milwau-

kee. A graduate of Aquinas, Fr. DeLeers' work entitled *Written Text Becomes Living Word: The Vision and Practice of Sunday Preaching* will be published by The Liturgical Press in September 2004.



Ann Garrido is currently Assistant Professor of Pastoral Theology and the Director of Field Education Placement and Parish Relations at Aquinas. Her work, *Mustard Seed Preaching*, will be published by Liturgy Training



Publications.

Fr. Andrew Carl Wisdom, O.P. will have his thesis, *Preaching to a Multi-Generational Assembly*, published by The Liturgical Press (Collegetown, Minnesota) in April. Fr. Wisdom is the Promoter of Vocations and the Director of the Society for Vocational Support.

### *From the Provincial (continued from page 1)*

with lay men and women who are preparing for vocations in ministry.

What has made Aquinas Institute such a special place from the beginning has been its fidelity to the interplay between faith and reason, a relationship that goes back to Saint Thomas Aquinas, our school's patron. At Aquinas, students are trained to use their God-given human faculties and the intellectual resources found in the study of logic, philosophy, history, and anthropology to better grasp and understand the Catholic faith they have received. With this deep faith and the skills that their academic training provides, our students who are studying both for the priesthood and for lay ministry continue the work of preaching, theological education, and social justice ministry that remains at the heart of the mission of the Central Province friars.

In Saint Dominic,  
Michael Mascari, O.P.  
*Prior Provincial*

## THANKS!

As a teacher for more than 32 years, Br. Carlos Griego, O.P. can testify to the difference your support makes in our educational efforts.

1. Adopt a preacher in seminary education
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5. Remember us in your will



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## MISSION STATEMENT

**THE DOMINICAN FRIARS  
OF THE PROVINCE OF ST. ALBERT THE GREAT  
COMMUNICATE THE WORD OF GOD THROUGH  
PREACHING, THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION,  
AND THE PROMOTION OF JUSTICE AND PEACE.**

**THIS MISSION IN THE BODY OF CHRIST DEMANDS  
A VOWED COMMUNITY LIFE, LITURGICAL PRAYER,  
AND LIFELONG STUDY.**

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Now, I am standing on concrete. I talk about mission with conviction.”



### Meet Dave Wenzel

Wenzel began his career as an accountant. He worked for six years as a CPA for Price Waterhouse and then earned his master’s degree in business administration from

Harvard University. He worked in corporate finance for eight years with Ralston Purina and eventually became chief financial officer for a Ralston spin off, Agribands.

His “personal time passion” had become philosophy and theology, so he enrolled at Aquinas Institute to develop an “informed, mature theology.”

“I was not committed at the time to making a career of it,” he says. Little did he know what awaited him. Wenzel earned a Master of Arts degree with a concentration in systematic theology. Today, he is the executive director of Catholic Social Services for the Diocese of Belleville in Illinois.

Wenzel describes his time at Aquinas as his first experience in a truly vibrant faith community and says the school gave him the tools to make Catholic Social Services a “true vehicle of the faithful community’s call to serve the children and families among us who are in need.”

### Meet Tom Cummins

Cummins worked for more than 32 years in the chemical industry in engineering, manufacturing, and executive management. His retirement gave him the opportunity to satisfy his “life-long curiosity about matters theological and spiritual.”

He enrolled at Aquinas Institute intending to take a few courses, but he soon found himself pursuing a Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies with a concentration in preaching.

He preached during an internship as a prison minister, which was an opportunity that Cummins describes as “beyond my most hopeful imaginings.” The internship led to his ministry. He provides spiritual care to men in solitary lockdown at a maximum-security prison and men who will be executed within 30 days, a group he says possesses “a profound faith in the face of a most humiliating penalty.”

“After more than three years of this ministry, my experience of encountering Christ behind all the stone and steel has filled me with a quiet and deeply rooted joy,”



Cummins says. “Without my Aquinas experience, I would not have had the confidence to approach the cell doors.”

### Meet Deidre McAleer

Deidre McAleer was a chef working in Chicago and Ireland when she realized “God was calling me to something else.” So McAleer returned to the United States to



study religion.

While still an undergraduate, McAleer visited Aquinas Institute and “was amazed by the feeling of community and faith.” She enrolled after earning her bachelor’s degree and began to pursue a Master of Divinity degree. “The range of courses and the opportunities for field education were vital in my formation,” she says. “The opportunities for field ministry helped me to define what I wanted.”

McAleer wanted to work with children and families, and she wanted to do it in Ireland. After she graduated in May, she boarded a plane for Northern Ireland. Today, she is a parish pastoral assistant for St. Malachy and St. Matthew parishes in Belfast. She teaches pre-sacramental catechesis classes

for parents and works with children in the elementary schools affiliated with the parishes.

McAleer also hopes to begin an ecumenical project in Belfast. “I can’t say where I will be five years from now,” she says. “I’d like to think I’ll be here, but I will remain open to the promptings of the Spirit.”

*“My experience of encountering Christ behind all the stone and steel has filled me with a quiet and deeply rooted joy. Without my Aquinas experience, I would not have had the confidence to approach the cell doors.”*

### Congratulations . . .

... to **BR. REID PERKINS-BUZO, O.P.**, who received a Master’s Degree in Fine Arts from Northwestern University in Chicago.

... to **FR. ROBERT KELLY, O.P.**, who recently defended his thesis, “Seven Gifts of the Holy Spirit in Isaiah 11:2-3,” and received a D.Min from the University of St. Thomas, in St. Paul, Minnesota.

... to **FR. PAUL H. COLLOTON, O.P.**, who worked as a consultant for the newly released Faith Formation Program from Loyola Press, called “Finding God: Our Response to God’s Gifts.”

... to **FR. THOMAS O’MEARA, O.P.**, invited by the University of Tübingen (Germany) to give an address on the founding of the Catholic faculty.





## Admissions Board accepts first candidates for 2004 Novitiate

ON THE WEEKEND of January 23, the admissions board met at St. Pius V Priory in Chicago and approved the applications of three men for the Dominican Novitiate Class of 2004. The admissions process involves face-to-face interviews with the novicemaster and other members of the board composed of friars of the Province. A decision is then made by the full board and conveyed to the candidates by the Vicar Provincial representing the Provincial.

While the yearlong discernment that culminates in this moment differs according to the age, experience, and maturity of each candidate, the emotions one feels upon being formally accepted into the Order vary little. Candidates classically describe it as an experience of profound thanksgiving for the faithfulness of God and a deep appreciation of the trust the Province and Order has put in them.

The next step for those accepted occurs at St. Thomas Aquinas Priory in River Forest, Illinois on July 21. These men will then begin a three-week prenovitiate followed by a yearlong novitiate at St. Dominic Parish in Denver. The prenovitiate serves as a formal introduction and orientation to the Order, particularly with regard to Dominican community, sung liturgical prayer, and vowed religious life as well as a refresher on core teachings of the Catholic faith in liturgy and morality. The novitiate that follows is a yearlong, complete immersion into religious life with the possibility of Simple Vows at the end of the year. Novices primarily spend the year developing their personal and



Fr. Spahn, O.P. (Prior) and Fr. Morrone, O.P. (Novicemaster) welcome Steve Vileo, Jason Calvi, and Ken Sama.

communal prayer, studying scripture and religious life, integrating the meaning of the vows, exploring the history of the Dominican Order, and learning about the Constitutions that govern our lives as Dominican Friars. Novices are also expected to be participating members in the life of the community and spend approximately eight hours each week in ministry in the Denver area.

Last month's admissions board is the first of three this year. The next two will be held in April and June. Two men are currently preparing to come before the April board. We ask your prayers that God will continue to bless us richly with generous, mature vocations and that we might be worthy of those who entrust their path to holiness and call to serve God's people to the Order of Preachers.

—Fr. Andrew Carl Wisdom, O.P.  
wisdomop@yahoo.com

### FROM THE PROMOTER OF VOCATIONS



Br. Timothy (third from left) at Vespers

## “Now that I am here . . .”

LIKE THE householder who “brings out of his storehouse what is new and what is old” (Matt. 13:52), the novice engaged in formation is occupied with the ongoing integration of past, present, and future.

Viewing one's time in the novitiate within the context of a wider, personal salvation history affords a sense of direction that is best understood in terms of a maturing relationship with God. Prior to my entering the Novitiate, discernment entailed a good deal of looking forward—earnestly trying to anticipate what it would be like to serve God as a Dominican.

Now that I am here, it has become clear that one of the

keys to preparing for the future ministry of the Word is to cultivate a thorough familiarity with God's involvement in every stage of my life thus far. Accordingly, I am discovering anew the extent to which past experiences of grace and mercy retain a perennial relevance to my life of faith.

This growing acquaintance with the solicitous goodness of God disposes me to allow the amazing blessings offered in the present moment. One such blessing is the fact that the privilege of serving God in this capacity is a shared experience. The various elements of Dominican life—prayer, class, ministry, recreation—are lived in the company of brothers who mediate the gift of God's love. Together we encourage others to consent to God's generosity, and in this way the Good Shepherd prepares all of us for the final acceptance of His supreme gift of eternal life.

—Br. Timothy Combs, O.P.

## Our political role and responsibility

**A** MAN NAMED Gerald Barzan once said, “You don’t have to fool all the people all of the time; you just have to fool enough to get elected.”

This quote seems especially appropriate during this primary and caucus season, when the candidates keep trying to “one up” each other with any number of accusations and interpretations of opponents’ records. This is not new, however. A recent story on National Public Radio focused on the campaign against John Tyler (president from 1841-1845). It seems that some of the lies told about him have even made it into recent American history books!

Election years may frustrate us and may result in cries for the renewal of our election system, but the fact is we have to deal with what we have. The challenge for all American voters, whether Democrat, Republican, or Independent, is to become honest critics of the candidates who are placed before us. I do not think there has ever been a perfect candidate for public office, and there may never be

one. We must keep open minds regarding all of the issues and candidates.

The fact is, issues are complicated. Candidates are complicated. One must not rush to judgment based on one thing someone says or does.

The primary and caucus season may seem long, but it is an opportunity for all of us to truly study the candidates and the issues. Let’s all keep open minds and allow the Dominican ideal of study be part of our lives during this time.

We all have a part to play in the election process. We must take our role seriously and study the candidates and the issues. Let us play our role and do what we can to play it well. And let’s not be fooled.

—Fr. Dennis Woerter, O.P.  
denop@juno.com

*Let’s all keep open  
minds and allow the  
Dominican ideal of  
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lives during this time.*

## Aquinas Summer Preaching Institute

**T**HE SUMMER PREACHING INSTITUTE of Aquinas Institute of Theology in St. Louis is designed for men and women charged with the ministry of the Word. The institute is a three-year cycle of intensive two-week courses, with morning classes exploring the theological foundations of preaching and afternoon workshops devoted to the development of preaching skills.

Week one of this summer’s Preaching Institute will be held June 13-18, 2004, and week two will be held June 20-25. In week one, Fr. Kevin O’Neil, C.Ss.R., Associate Professor of Moral Theology at Washington Theological Union in Washington, D.C., will teach “Preaching on Moral Issues.” Participants will develop a method for preaching on moral issues based on a Catholic understanding of ethics and the moral life. O’Neil is the co-author of *The Essential Moral Handbook* and recently directed a six-year project on “Theological Teaching for the Church’s Ministries.”

In week two, Sr. Barbara Reid, O.P., Professor of New Testament Studies at Catholic Theological Union in

Chicago, will teach “Biblical Hermeneutics and Preaching,” applying the principles of Bible study to the interpretation of contemporary life for preaching. Reid is the author of the three-volume series *Parables for Preachers*, with extensive interests in the study of the Gospel of Luke.

Afternoon workshops will be taught by Fr. Gregory Heille, O.P., Associate Professor of Homiletics at Aquinas Institute of Theology and Central Province Promoter of Preaching; Sr. Honora Werner, O.P., Associate Professor of Homiletics at St. Mary’s Seminary in Baltimore; Fr. Jude Siciliano, O.P., Southern Province Promoter of Preaching; and Rev. Martha Brunell, Pastor of Friedens United Church of Christ in St. Louis.

Complete information about the institute, its teachers, courses, tuition, and room and board can be found online at the “Programs of Study” section of the Aquinas Institute of Theology’s webpage at [www.ai.edu](http://www.ai.edu). Registration is due by May 1.

—Fr. Greg Heille, O.P.  
heilleg@slu.edu

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## Aquinas responds to the changing needs of the church



Fr. Charles Bouchard, O.P., president of Aquinas Institute, helps prepare a new generation of lay women and men for ministerial leadership.

**A**QUINAS Institute of Theology was founded in 1925 as a seminary for the friars of the Province of St. Albert the Great. Today, Aquinas Institute continues to prepare priests and vowed religious, but it has also responded to changing needs of the church by preparing a new generation of lay women and men for future ministerial leadership.

To gauge the pulse of Aquinas, I recently asked Fr. Charles Bouchard, O.P., president of Aquinas Institute, to share with us on the subject:

*Q. I know that the Central Province's support of Aquinas is considerable in both financial and human resources. Why is this a good investment?*

A. For the first 40 years of its history, as the "House of Studies" in River Forest, we only educated men for priesthood. Priesthood education is still an important part of what we do, but Aquinas is also a resource for Dominican theology, spirituality, and preaching and a major center for lay ministry education. Through Aquinas, the Central Province shares the Dominican charism with hundreds of students who then bring it to the church in ways we never could.

*Q: Aquinas has more than doubled its enrollment in the past few years. How did that happen?*

A: First of all, we worked hard at it! We have two full-time people in our admissions office, and they spend a great deal of time on the phone, on e-mail, and on the road identifying prospects and helping them decide if ministry—and Aquinas—is for them.

The second thing is the Holy Spirit—who is awakening a call to ministry in people of all ages. Fr. Tom O'Meara, O.P. once talked about an "explosion of ministry" and said that the Holy Spirit is intent on making a change. I think we're riding on the wave of that change.

*Q: What has been the greatest challenge of your ministry as president?*

A: The greatest challenge is unpredictability. Aquinas is one of the largest Catholic theology schools in the country, but it is still small, and we are on very "rough waters" as the church grows and changes. Growth in the numbers of Catholics, decline in the numbers of priests, demographic changes, and fluctuations in the economy make it very hard to plan for the future.

Communicating our mission is a close second. Everyone knows what a "seminary" is, but most Catholics do not understand what "lay ministry" is. They are always surprised to learn that there are 10 lay students preparing for ministry for every seminarian. This is even a problem among the brothers of the Central Province. Because we know Aquinas so well, we take it for granted. But in many areas—preaching, itinerant (internet-based) education, and collaboration among women and men, Aquinas is making very important contributions and has earned a national reputation.

*Q: What is the most exciting thing for the future?*

A: We have about 19,000 parishes in this country, and they all need pastors and other ministers. But we also have 238 Catholic colleges and universities, 700 Catholic hospitals, 8,000 elementary and secondary schools, and 2,200 social services agencies. These institutions are ministries, too, and they also need a new generation of leaders who will guide them into the future. One of our most innovative programs provides theological and spiritual formation for senior leaders in Catholic health care—we're teaching them how to "think theologically" about health care so it remains a vital ministry of the church. The same needs to be done for education and social service.

*Q: What is your "vision" for Aquinas Institute in 10 years?*

A: People often ask me that and I usually tell them that I want Aquinas to be the best Catholic school for preaching in the world. (In fact, we probably already are, but we can get better!) I am convinced that excellent preaching is the key to parish renewal—if you've got good preaching then service, liturgy, and faith formation will follow.

To learn more about Aquinas Institute of Theology, visit them on the internet at: [www.ai.edu](http://www.ai.edu).

—Lucy Sanchez  
Editor

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# Building the reign of God: The O.P. voice at the United Nations

**O**N THE EVENING NEWS, political and security resolutions of the United Nations appear to dominate member nations' agendas while its 178 member nations are reduced to the 15 permanent member security nations. What business do religious orders, particularly the Dominicans, have in a bureaucracy that is the hotbed of such resolutions?

Behind the issues is a whole culture of influence and information that does not make the headlines. Alongside the commissions, organizations, and committees of the United Nations, men and women share their values and strive to influence the main decision makers. They form partnerships with one another. Religious groups and organizations called NGOs (Non Governmental Organizations) are an integral component of the United Nations.

The Dominican Leadership Conference (DLC) is among several religious organizations making a difference at the United Nations today—a difference that seldom surfaces in the headlines. As a member of the Order of Preachers, the DLC's commitment to the charism of Saint Dominic obliges its members to speak. The Order has a long history in which the Dominican voice of *veritas*, or truth, has made a difference for justice. Thus, Dominicans today realize that what goes on at the U.N. is their business.

At the United Nations in New York, Sr. Eileen Gannon, O.P. representative of the Dominican Leadership Conference, participates in the U.N. system as an NGO via the Department of Public Information status, which enables her to gather information on pressing issues and communicate it to others and through her membership on ECOSOC (Economic and Social Counsel) by which Sr. Eileen serves on several committees including: Iraq, the trafficking of women and children, Israel/Palestine, HIV/Africa, and the culture of nonviolence. These issues are determined by the Dominican Call to Action document and the DLC resolutions.

The challenges that any NGO representative faces, however, are not only with members of the U.N. "I have to be able to communicate effectively with my sisters and brothers in the Dominican family who at times are overwhelmed by all the issues that require attention. Many are working very hard trying to resolve social issues in their own neighborhood, let alone the world. It is the work of the Dominican family that provides credibility for the NGO presence."



Sr. Eileen Gannon, O.P. (far right) gave Dominican Communicators a first-hand look at her work at the United Nations.

Indeed, it is for these reasons the Dominican Leadership Conference NGO is relevant. But what impels its members to connect, engage, and persevere? What truly makes this NGO relevant? Sr. Eileen answers, "It is by our prayers and earnest longings for peace that we are prepared for the ongoing task at the U.N. As members of the worldwide Dominican Order, we have an opportunity to listen, learn, and then act. As preachers who have a deep concern for the salvation and integrity of all people, I believe that the words we speak to the world community do make a difference. We are building the reign of God."

—Br. Don Kania, O.P.

*Br. Don is the editor of Dominican Life, an online news portal for the USA Dominican Family (www.domlife.org).*

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Meet us on the internet at:  
[www.op.org/domcentral](http://www.op.org/domcentral)

**Do you have any story ideas, news items, or photos? We welcome your suggestions. Please send them to:**

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## FRIARS IN PRINT

✦ **FR. MICHAEL POWELL, O.P.** wrote a short story, "The Great Pizzell War," in the February 2004 issue of *The Liguorian*.

✦ **FR. JORDAN KELLY, O.P.** has written Liturgy Preparation Guides for the Triduum, Easter Sunday, and Pentecost. The articles were published in the Winter Edition of *GIA Quarterly*.

✦ **FR. PAUL H. COLLOTON, O.P.** published an article entitled "The Sacraments of Initiation and the Paschal Mystery" in the Winter Issue of *Liturgical Ministry*.

✦ **FR. MICHAEL DEMKOVICH, O.P.** was chosen guest editor of the Fall 2003 issue of LISTENING, which includes his article, "The Persistence of Thomas Aquinas."

✦ **FR. THOMAS O'MEARA, O.P.** wrote articles on "Dominican Studies" and the "Theology of Thomas Aquinas" in the Fall 2003 issue of LISTENING.

✦ **Fr. Andrew Carl Wisdom, O.P.** wrote homily notes and guidelines for the annually published *National Vocation Awareness Week* kit by the National Coalition for Church Vocations.

## IN MEMORIAM



**Brother Gerald J. Pidcock, O.P.**  
BORN: August 19, 1927  
PROFESSED: March 17, 1952  
BORN TO ETERNAL LIFE: November 9, 2003

**Father Jacob J. Joerger, O.P.**  
BORN: November 10, 1923  
PROFESSED: August 31, 1961  
ORDAINED: May 22, 1948  
BORN TO ETERNAL LIFE: January 1, 2004



For further information on these and other  
brothers who have died, go to:  
[www.op.org/domcentral/people/inmemoriam](http://www.op.org/domcentral/people/inmemoriam)

