

# Four Pillars of Dominican Life

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*“... moved by the Holy Spirit to live according to the spirit and charism of Saint Dominic ...”*

~ Rule, §2

*“... they are marked out by the particular style of their spiritual life and of their service to God and to their neighbour in the Church. As members of the Order, they share in its apostolic mission, by study, prayer and preaching in keeping with their state as members of the laity.”*

~ Rule, §4

*“How must we live, and what must we do, to fulfill our vocation as men and women who proclaim the saving message of Christ so that it becomes a burning reality in our own lives and in the lives of those to whom we are sent?”*

~ fr. Damian Byrne, O.P.

## ¶ Mission

*“They have as their vocation to radiate the presence of Christ in the midst of the peoples so that the divine message of salvation be known and accepted everywhere by the whole of mankind.”*

~ Rule, §1

*“Together with the Brothers and Sisters of the Order the members of the fraternities take part in the apostolate; they are to share actively in the life of the Church, and be ever ready to work with other apostolic groups.”*

~ Rule, §9

*“It is for the laity to translate into action the social teachings of the Church. It is for you to develop a culture of truth, in collaboration with the other members of the Dominican Family, which must replace the present culture of lies. This will necessarily involve you in the struggle against injustice, violence, racism, sexism, classism and corruption in all aspects of human life. It will require that you construct new social structures which protect life in all its stages. It will be your task to reform our mentality in regard to the use of ecology.”*

~ fr. Damian Byrne O.P.

## ¶ Community

*“They do their best to live in true community in the spirit of the beatitudes, and they give expression to this in regard to other members of the fraternity, particularly the poor and the sick, and as circumstances require, by doing works of mercy and sharing with them what resources they may have, and by offering prayers for the dead; so that all may be united in heart and soul in God.”*

~ Rule, §8

*“The fundamental law of democracy is majority rule, but it is different with us, in spite of our frequent voting. Our law is unanimous rule. In the conventual chapter, and it is the same for provincial and general chapters, the prior should not look for a quick vote, but should try to have the question thrashed out, so that everyone has his say: and a common debate will lead to an agreement that is as near unanimous as possible. This striving for unanimity, even if we do not always succeed in doing it, is the sure guarantee of the presence of the Lord and his Spirit and by that very fact, it is a more certain way of discovering the will of God.”*

~ fr. Vincent de Couesnongle, O.P.

*“We allow others, not the privilege, but the right to do things in a different way; allow them space to fly their own kite [...] We allow them room to develop their initiative, creativity and organising ability – in a word, a climate which enables them to grow and be themselves.”*

~ fr. Damian Byrne, O.P.

## ¶ Study

*“The purpose of Dominican formation is to produce people truly adult in faith and so able to hear, celebrate and proclaim the word of God.”*

~ Rule, §11

*“Study is not one activity [amongst others] of a Dominican; it should enter into every aspect of our life. It is part of the way that we grow in friendship with God, delight in His creation, and take pleasure in His presence. It is fundamental to our preaching, challenging us to wrestle with the complexity of human experience in its encounter with the gospel, moving us beyond facile answers that do not take seriously the people to whom we talk. Study belongs to our search for a new and more just world.”*

~ fr. Timothy Radcliffe, O.P.

## ¶ Prayer

*“...hearing the divine word, and reading Sacred Scripture, especially the New Testament, as far as possible daily liturgical celebration and participation in the sacrifice of the Mass, regular celebration of the sacrament of reconciliation, celebration of the liturgical hours in union with the whole Dominican Family, as well as private prayer such as meditation and the Rosary...”*

~ Rule, §10

*“Liturgical and personal prayer and the permanent evangelisation of our lives emerge as a consequence of our contemplation of the word of God. It makes us constantly aware of the truth contained in the words: ‘Without me you can do nothing, with me you can do all things.’ It is a life of prayer that enables us to preach to a secularised world to which the Gospel is foolishness.*

*The hectic pace of life in so many parts of the world seeps into our lives and makes it difficult to make time for prayer. There are some who can permeate their work with prayer. There are many others who by temperament need another climate in which to pray.”*

*~ fr. Damian Byrne, O.P.*