



# Why Dominican?

## **Presentation Notes for Inquiry Module 1: St. Dominic and His Mission of Preaching**

**Objectives:** At the end of this first session, the Inquirer will be able to:

1. Identify some personal characteristics of St. Dominic that continue in the heritage of the Order.
2. Highlight specific important events in St. Dominic's life experiences that prepared him to found the Order of Preachers.
3. Reflect on his/her own life experiences that led him/her to investigate joining the Dominican Order.
4. Deepen his/her understanding that God provides opportunities that, if taken, will lead to a closer relationship with Him.

**Materials:** chalk/ chalkboard or marker/poster board, Master Sheet of the timeline of St. Dominic's life, blank sheets of paper to use for timeline and pencils, bibliography of biographies of St. Dominic

**Prayer/Contemplation:** Timothy 4: 1-2

Tell the participants that since this is the first session, one of the members of the Formation Team will read the Scripture selection then pause a few moments for silent, personal reflection. Remind the Inquirers to note their own response to the selection for later use in the discussion of the life of St. Dominic.

**Study:**

1. First have participants make a timeline of notable events from their own personal life to be discussed later in the session. Distribute the Master Sheet you have made of the timeline of St. Dominic's life.
2. Instruct the participants to use the timeline to post the year of each of the important events in St. Dominic's life as they are discussed.
3. Divide a blackboard or poster board into sections that represent St. Dominic's life with headings such as Early Years, Middle Years, the founding of the Order,

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Master of the Order, and Later Years.

4. Begin the discussion by telling the participants that the discussion will emphasize:
  - a. identifying events in St. Dominic's life that influenced his founding of the Order of Preachers
  - b. recalling ways that "the charge to preach" was evident in the events in the life of St. Dominic
  - a. identifying some personal characteristics of St. Dominic
5. Allot enough time for a brief discussion for each of the sections. If you choose, events can be discussed randomly from the perspective of being influential rather than in chronological order.
6. Discuss particular events that indicate that St. Dominic understood "the charge to preach".
  - a. Ask participants to identify some personal characteristics of St. Dominic. As they are mentioned, connect each one to a characteristic of the Order if possible. You can make a list of these on the board or poster if you think that visual aid would be helpful.
  - b. Example: Dominic was studious rather than playful as a boy leading to the importance of study in the Order.

**Community:** Check the time remaining for the session and include a reference to a time allotment for each person in the next instructions you give to be sure that everyone who wishes to do so has a chance to speak and share. Continue by asking each person to share one of the influential events of their own lives from their personal timeline with the group as a way to begin to learn about one another.

**Apostolate:** As a facilitator, try to connect each person's sharing to living/preaching God's Word. A simple statement such as "It seems that attending a Cursillo weekend helped put God in the center of your life."

**Conclusion:**

1. Conclude the discussion and the session with a comment about the opportunities that God provides each of us to grow in our faith. Comment that the participants' attendance at these sessions is one of those opportunities, whether or not they choose to become Lay Dominicans in the future.
2. End the session by inviting the group to pray the Liturgy of the Hours. Pairing each newcomer with a veteran member of the Team is usually quite helpful especially until instruction in the Liturgy of the Hours is provided.

**Follow-up:**

There are many different types of biographies about St. Dominic ranging from children's books to scholarly investigations. Encourage the Inquirers to begin reading at least one children's version of the life of St. Dominic as well as an adult one that matches his or her own style of learning. Distribute a partial list of biographies compiled from "favorites" of the members of the Formation Team. Remind them to be aware of and adhere to copyright restrictions.

Reading about topics related to the current study topic should be on-going during Inquiry and Candidacy and throughout one's life as a Dominican. Encourage participants to access the Resources page on <http://www.whydominican.net>.

**Assignment:**

Distribute the Study Guide with the assignment for the second session. Be sure that the Inquirers have a contact phone number or e-mail address for at least one member of the Formation Team.