

GATHERED INSPIRED SENT

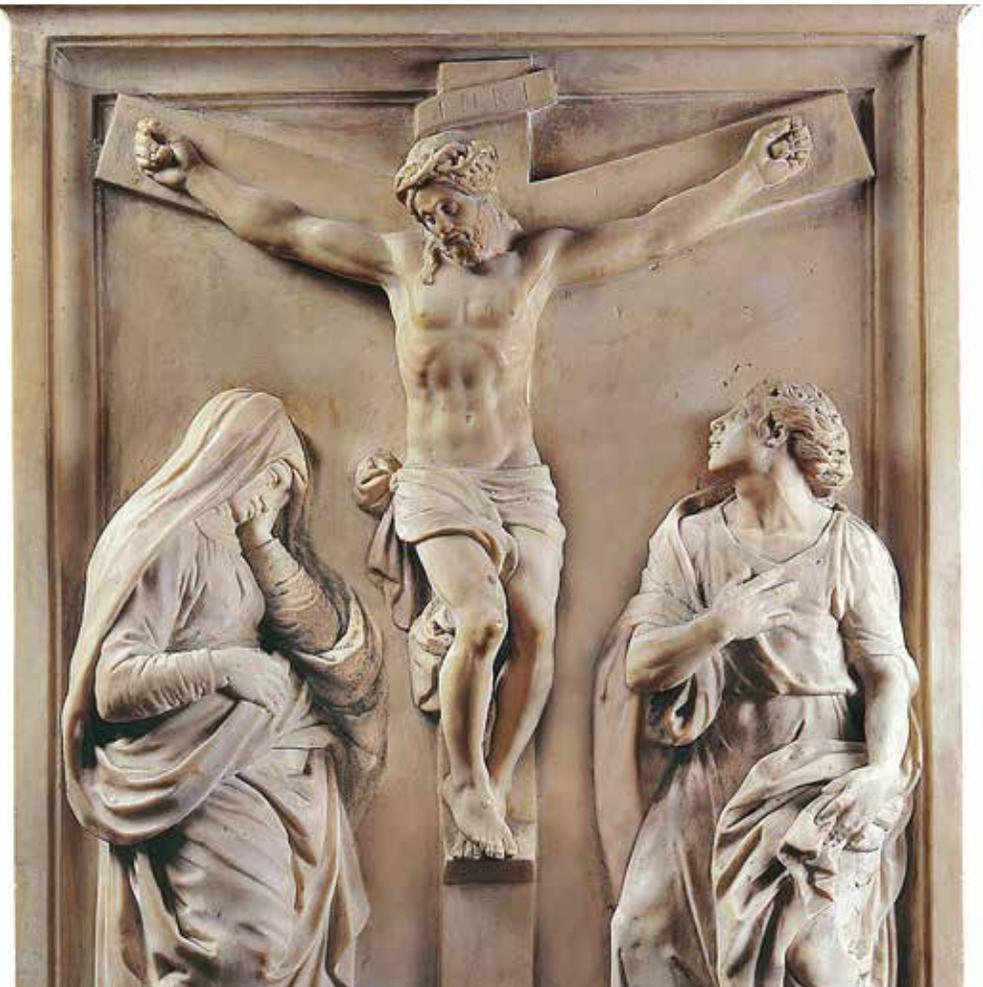


My name is Thomas, and I am twenty-three years old. I was raised Catholic, but I was not serious about my faith until I was sixteen. Since then, two devotions have been central in my faith life. The first is Christ crucified. One of my favorite verses in all of Scripture is Romans 5:8, where St. Paul reflects that “God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us.” Reflection on the Passion narratives taught me how much I am loved by God. Over the years, my love for the Lord grew. By the time I turned twenty, I no longer assumed that I was called to marriage. My thought was that, if the Lord gave his life to me, I should be open to his will for my life. The prophet Jeremiah taught me that I do not need to fear the Lord’s plan for me, it is “for my welfare and not for woe, so as to give (me) a future of hope” (29:11).

The second central devotion in my life is to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and that is why I am discerning the Friar Servants of Mary. After I became serious about my faith, one of the first ways I prayed was the Rosary. I prayed all four sets of mysteries, but I found the Sorrowful Mysteries especially compelling, because Christ crucified was (and is) so important for me. As my reflection on the mysteries deepened, Mary became a companion for me, and a model of saying “yes” to God. As I began discerning my vocation, her Fiat was an example for me. As I was nearing the end of my Undergraduate studies, I researched

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ORDER OF FRIAR SERVANTS OF MARY
Vocation Newsletter





diocesan priesthood and various religious orders.

One evening in 2019, after praying the Sorrowful Mysteries, the Marian title “Our Lady of Sorrows” popped to mind. I had heard it before, but I hadn’t given it much thought until then. In fact, I thought it was odd – after all, there is enough sorrow

Novitiate. Shortly thereafter, I received the joyful news that the Prior Provincial accepted me, and I began my Novitiate in August 2022.

As a Novice, I am blessed with a year to step back from formal studies and deepen my understanding of what it means to live consecrated religious life as a Friar Servant

Reflection Questions:

- 1. Why do I love Jesus? What about him is compelling me to discern religious life? What Gospel passages especially resonate with why I love Jesus? Sit quietly with them and ask God how he wants you to respond. What feelings and questions arise? Take them to the vocation director.**
- 2. What is the role of Mary in my prayer life? What about her example inspires me? How does she help me follow her son?**

in our world today, shouldn’t we focus on Easter joy? Reflecting on it anew, and in light of all I knew of Christ crucified, I came to see devotion to Our Lady of Sorrows as ultimately joyful, about Mary’s trust that nothing would be impossible for God, even turning her deep pain at the horrific execution of her son into a cause for joy – and we’re still talking about it two-thousand years later. If God could turn sorrow to joy for Mary, he can do the same for us today. If Mary could trust God through her pain, with God’s strength we can do the same. I googled “devotions to Our Lady of Sorrows” and stumbled across the Wikipedia page for Our Lady of Sorrows, which linked to the Wikipedia page for the Servite Rosary. I bought one and began to pray it.

of Mary. My classes with the Novice Master, which are more like seminars, have greatly aided me as I discern whether to request to make vows. As my discernment deepens, it is the same model of Mary’s radical “yes” to God’s radical self-gift that guides me. I want to follow God like she did. I want to serve God and God’s people like she served. When I die, I want to join her at her son’s banquet in Heaven. Please pray for me and be assured of my prayers for you!

- Bro. Thomas Kremer, OSM, Novice

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follow



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I found it so compelling that I had to research the Servites. I found the website, and eventually reached out to the vocation directors. After I graduated with my bachelor’s degree, I began the application process. I entered the Postulancy at Our Lady of Sorrows Basilica in Chicago, Illinois, in 2021. As a Postulant, tools for contemplative prayer, living the life of a Friar, and opportunities for self-reflection taught me more about God, the Order of Friar Servants of Mary, and myself. What I learned set me on fire. At the end of my Postulancy I requested entrance into the