

# ***BLESSED MARGARET OF CASTELLO, OP***

## ***CHAPTER IN FORMATION***

**Boise, Idaho 83704**

June 14, 2004

Ms. Karen Woods, OPL, President  
Fr. George Matanic, OP, Provincial Promoter  
Fr. Roberto Corral, OP, Prior Provincial

Re: Petition: Blessed Margaret of Castello, OP Chapter-in-Formation, Boise, Idaho

Dear Karen, Fr. George, and Prior:

After nearly five years in formation, the members of this chapter do hereby petition to be established as a full-fledged chapter with voting rights on the Provincial Council, pursuant to paragraph 11, of Appendix C of the Statutes and other applicable statutes.

Last year, we sought to be established but Karen Woods, OPL, and Fr. George Matanic, OP had recommended that we wait one year. We have done so and now submit this petition accordingly.

Over the last several years, we have worked hard to develop the chapter in its formation stage. We have continued to meet on the third Sunday of each month without interruption. At each meeting, we commence the meeting with fellowship time and a minor potluck meal. At the end of the meal, as people gather, the members make their way quietly to the chapel at St. Paul's Catholic Student Center on the Boise State University campus. The Rosary is prayed. We pray for peace and an increase in vocations to the Order.

After the Rosary, the members assemble and discuss the current topic for formation. Over the five years, we have followed carefully the first year formation for inquirers, which includes the Four Pillars of Community, Prayer, Preaching, and Study. We also spend time on the Rule, the Liturgy of the Hours, the teachings of St. Thomas Aquinas, the history of the Order, and a consistent overview of St. Dominic's life. In addition, we have done studies on the Rosary, and aspects of its spirituality. At each meeting, we use various sources, including the Scriptures, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and other significant sources. We also lead some discussion with regard to the subject of the meeting, and encourage participation to lead the members to think, to discuss, and to try to lead them to understand the Truth. At the end of two or three hours, the meeting ends in prayer.

For two years, one of our members, Phil Ferguson, OPL, held a monthly *Aquinas Circle*, which invited members of the Chapter and others to come together and read, study, and discuss St. Thomas.

The chapter has been mentioned frequently in the diocesan newspaper, *The Idaho Register*, either by article regarding receptions, professions, or other events. We also purchase an annual ad in the diocesan directory, and are listed in that directory as a ministry for lay folks. We stay in touch with the bishop and the newspaper editor. Our last meeting with the Bishop of Boise was last December which included Stephanie DeNinno, OPL, and John Keenan, OPL.

It is our overall effort to remain relevant, up to date, and Catholic in this modern world, and to conform to the spirit and aim of the Order of Preachers.

Over the last four years, we have held two public colloquia. Most recently, on May 15, 2004, we held one at St. Paul's in Boise call the Marian Colloquium. We had seven speakers and the public attended with much discussion, learning, and excitement about this subject of our Blessed Mother. The event was video recorded. On October 31, 2000, the chapter held a colloquium on indulgences for the millennium. It was well researched and discussed with many speakers. It was well received by the folks in attendance. The purpose of the colloquia is chiefly formation, then to be of aid to people

who attend. The formation purpose is to help our members to publicly speak, and to learn to preach and teach in a public environment. There is not Catholic college in Idaho, and there are few resources for research and study. Yet, Idaho remains largely a Mormon community with strong Protestant and fundamentalist leanings. The Chapter hopes to aid the Catholic community and family here in Idaho, by serious research and study on topics as times passes—to help create a Catholic culture.

The Chapter has been incorporated under the laws of the State of Idaho, and is a nonprofit IRC 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization. When we first commenced, it was apparent that people wanted to give money to the Order, and because we were in formation, we could not use the Order's tax exempt statutes. Therefore, to give donors advantage of a tax deductible contribution, the chapter incorporated and sought tax exempt status. That has been granted by the IRS. As a side note, the Chapter has approved the use of this status by others within the Order upon request.

In 1999, the chapter sought to establish a school. I met with my pastor, Fr. Richey of Holy Apostles Catholic Church in Meridian, Idaho, and we met with the Bishop of Boise, Michael, and his staff. The bishop approved our use of three classrooms at St. Matthew's Chapel in Eagle, Idaho. The school lasted one year with 18 students, but the chapel was consolidated with another parish and sold. We did not continue the school past that one year.

In 2000, the chapter was donated 25 acres of farm land in Homedale, Owyhee County, Idaho, about 45 miles northwest of Boise. Since that date, donors have placed a building on the Homedale property, and last month, the building was completed which includes a general meeting area, along with three large bedrooms, and kitchen and dining area. The purpose of the building is to establish a retreat center. No one is currently living on the property. However, one of our members, Gayle Boyer, OPL, lives on adjacent property and is the caretaker of the Chapter's property on a daily basis. The farm land is cultivated and income from the cultivation goes back to the Chapter to improve the property. We have remained in close contact with the Owyhee County Commission about current and future use of the property, and we remain in compliance with the law.

The Chapter is very much a family, whose goal is to learn the Faith and to grow in fellowship among ourselves and the Church as a whole. It is a very positive, learning, and growing environment when we get together for our monthly meetings. Our meetings bring together a diverse group of men and women from various backgrounds from a government employee to a bookkeeper, from a farmer to a wood artisan, from a librarian to an attorney, from a university professor to a medical doctor, and everything in between. We have 14 professed members, and four recently received, and three this year that have submitted their applications. The four are now in formation for their first year. There are two perpetually professed members done so in 1988, under the statutes of the Province of St. Joseph, and one who recently received her life profession early because of health reasons upon approval of the President and Provincial Promoter.

Finally, we have a Council that gets together the first Saturday of each month. We try hard to organize each chapter meeting, discuss business, and get the job done. It is a diverse group with the time, energy, and intelligence to work together, all grounded in prayer.

In closing, the undersigned, on behalf of the members, inquirers, and the Council, does hereby petition the Provincial Council President and Provincial Promoter, upon approval of the Prior Provincial, and respectfully request that you allow this chapter to be fully established.

Please let us know if you need any further information. You may direct any inquiry to John Keenan, OPL, at (208) 375-2532.

Respectfully submitted, in our holy father, St. Dominic

Sincerely,

**Blessed Margaret Of Castello, Op, Chapter In Formation**

/s/

Sr. Alice Marie Schmid, OP, *Religious Assistant*

/s/

Stephanie DeNinno, OPL, *Moderator*

/s/

John C. Keenan, OPL, *Formation Director*