

# 1873 to 2023

San Francisco, California

## St. Dominic's Catholic Church

Radiating the Joy of the Gospel in the Heart of the City

### Dominican Order Established in California

1850's Dominicans arrive in San Francisco.  
1853 The Archdiocese of San Francisco is created.  
1854 The Cathedral of St. Mary (Old St. Mary's) is built.  
1863 The First Dominican Priory in San Francisco established.  
1863 The Dominican Order pays \$6,000.00 for the city block bounded by Steiner, Bush, Pierce and Pine Streets.

**June 1873**

First Priory residence is built at Steiner and Pine Streets

**Feb. 2, 1876**

The Priory of St. Dominic's is formally established.

### The First St. Dominic's Church

**June 29, 1873**

The first St. Dominic's Church at the corner of Bush and Steiner Streets is blessed by Archbishop Alemany.

**Jan. 23, 1874**

The main altar of the first St. Dominic's Church is consecrated.



## *The Second St. Dominic's Church*

April 18, 1880 Fr. Vilarrasa's quasi Provincial Council approves the building of a new, larger church.  
Oct. 7, 1883 Rosary Sunday, the cornerstone of the second St. Dominic's Church is laid.  
Nov. 13, 1887 Archbishop Riordan blesses the second St. Dominic's Church.  
Aug. 1893 Franciscan friars celebrate Mass on the feast of St. Dominic.  
Oct. 2, 1898 Rosary Sunday, Organ is first used.

### **April 18, 1906**

The Great Earthquake destroys St. Dominic's Church. Mass is held outdoors until October of 1906.



## *The Third St. Dominic's Church*

May 1906 The ground breaking of third church.  
Oct. 1906 The third church opens on the Pierce Street side of the block.  
May 1907 Third church is dedicated.  
1911 Construction of the second Priory residence on the corner of Bush and Pierce Streets begins

*Intended as temporary, the third church remains in use as a church until 1928 and as a parish hall until the 1960s when it was finally torn down.*

## The Fourth St. Dominic's Church

1917 Fundraising begins for the fourth St. Dominic's Church.

March 25, 1923 Construction begins on the fourth St. Dominic's Church.

June 29, 2023 The Fiftieth Anniversary of the Parish.

August 6, 1923 The cornerstone of the fourth St. Dominic's Church is laid.

Feb. 19, 1928 The Fourth St. Dominic's Church is completed. Archbishop Edward J. Hanna dedicates and blesses the new church.

### April 1929

Altar piece designed by Arnold Constable carved of Botticino marble arrives from Pietrasanta, Italy.

### September 7, 1932

The Altar piece is consecrated by Most Rev. John Joseph Mitty.

+ TEC DEM IN HONOREM T  
S. DOMINICI CONFESSORIS  
ET S. ORD. PRIOR. FUNDATORIS  
LEPIS. SICER. IACTUS. FORT.  
DIE. 7. AUGUSTI. M.DCCCXXVIII

cornerstone

1948

Seventy-Fifth Anniversary of the parish. Mass is celebrated by Fr. Benedict Blank, Provincial. A Papal Blessing commemorates the event.

### 1973

St. Dominic's Church Centennial Celebration

## *First Restoration of Fourth St. Dominic's Church: Phase I*

Saint Dominic's Preservation and Restoration Project, Fr. Martin de Porres Walsh, O.P., Pastor

**1984** Engineering tests determine St. Dominic's Church is seismically unstable.

**1986** St. Dominic's Preservation and Restoration Project begins.

**1989** The Loma Prieta earthquake destroyed the beautiful "lantern" of Saint Dominic's tower. The tower itself was severely damaged, but was repaired and strengthened during the two months the church was closed.

**1991** Sufficient funds are raised to begin construction of nine flying buttresses. The cost is \$6.6 Million.

**July 1992** Construction is completed.

**August 1, 1992** Archbishop John R. Quinn of San Francisco dedicates St. Dominic's Church.

## *First Restoration of Fourth St. Dominic's Church: Phase II*

**1998** With the seismic retrofit of St. Dominic's Church having been accomplished in 1992, the focus of the parish shifts to restoration of its exterior and interior walls and roof, preservation of its neo-Gothic interior graced by stained glass, wood carving, and marble statuary, and restoration of its historic Woodberry organ.

## *Stained Glass Window Restoration Capital Campaign*

Saving God's House, Fr. Xavier Lavagetto, O.P., Pastor

**2002-2004** Five south nave windows and walls and church tower restoration is completed. (\$2.8 million)

**2006** Restoration begins on 11 sanctuary and transept windows and walls. Cost (\$2.3 million)

**2007-2008** North nave and front windows and walls are restored. (\$3.2 million)

## Novitiate

August 13, 2002 the Novitiate of the Western Dominican Province is moved to St. Dominic's. Ten men begin their formation as future Dominican friars.  
Fr. Anthony Rosevear, O.P., Novice Master, 2002 to 2023.



The Novitiate continues to be blessed with vocations as nine young men receive the Dominican habit on **August 31, 2023**.

Fr. John Marie Bingham, O.P., Novice Master, 2023 to present.

## The Columbarium at St. Dominic's

2012 One of the most visual additions to the church is the establishment and construction of the columbarium behind the main altar in the ambulatory and the Friar's Chapel.

June 29, 2013 The Columbarium at St. Dominic's is inaugurated by Fr. Xavier Lavagetto, O.P. with a Mass of Celebration and blessing.

2018 The Ascension Room Columbarium is installed in the front of the church.



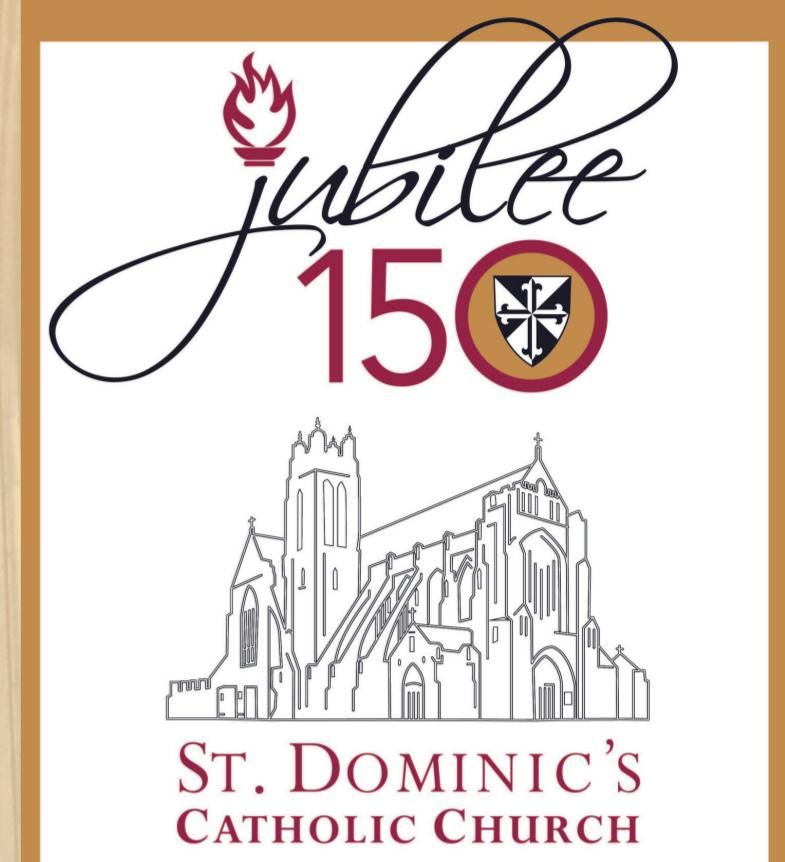
# June 24, 2023, until August 4, 2024

## St. Dominic's Sesquicentennial Jubilee Celebration

The Jubilee celebration of the 150th Anniversary of the Parish and the 100th Anniversary of the fourth church building includes fifteen months of special events, teaching, and outreach.

### June 2023

The Apostolic Penitentiary, in Rome, Charged with the granting and use of indulgences, designates the Church of St. Dominic in the Archdiocese of San Francisco, California as a Vatican Recognized Pilgrim site for Plenary Indulgence and has granted a Plenary Indulgence to the faithful who truly repent and are driven by charity under these certain conditions from June 24, 2023 until August 4, 2024.



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# 2023 Restoration of the Bell Tower

## Original Construction

When originally constructed over 100 years ago, the St. Dominic's Church was graced with a soaring tower topped by a beautiful octagonal "lantern." In 1989, the Loma Prieta earthquake severely damages the church, collapsing the lantern portion onto Bush Street.

## Loma Prieta Earthquake Repairs

The church is closed for two months to effect repairs. What remains of the tower is made structurally sound with interior vertical steel beam reinforcements and tubular cross-bracing between the verticals.

## The Toll of Time

Over the years, the marine atmosphere of San Francisco has taken its toll, corroding the structural reinforcement. Meanwhile, seismic construction standards have become more stringent.



## Our Tower Renewed

The parish has undertaken an extensive \$2 million renovation project to restore the tower and illuminate its facade. Join us in preserving our heritage, ensuring that future generations continue to experience the beauty and spirituality of this remarkable place.

