

Brother Dominic R. Thomas

Personal Data *birth: 9/11/24; baptism: 2/28/43*
Ordinations *elder: 1950; evangelist: 1957; apostle: 1964*
Leadership *GMBA President 1948-1966; GC Quorum of Seventy President 1962-1963; Michigan/Ontario District President 1963; Chairman Special Affairs Committee; GC First Counselor 1971-1974; GC President 1974-present*
Mission Work *Muncey Indian Tribe, Canada; Nigeria, West Africa*

Dominic Thomas was born in New Castle, Pennsylvania on September 11, 1924. His mother died in 1925 and his cousin, who lived in Pitcarin, Pennsylvania, raised him until his father remarried in 1929. The family moved to Lorain, Ohio, and shortly thereafter his parents met the Church. They were baptized in 1931.

Young Dominic began attending services in Lorain and was active in the Sunday School and MBA. It wasn't long before the love and generosity of the saints became evident. When his father lost his home during the depression, Brother Jim Acquilino offered him his. His entire family lived with the Acquilinos for approximately two years until his father was back to work again. On another occasion when his mother was very ill, he can recall how the sisters in Lorain came to their home daily and helped nurse her back to health again. It was during those early years in the Church that he developed a desire to become a member, as he was personally touched by the examples of love and caring demonstrated by the brothers and sisters of the Lorain Branch.

He graduated from high school in 1942, and then moved to Detroit, Michigan where he found work at the Ford Motor Company as a metallurgical apprentice. It was during this time that he began to pray that he would receive a penitent spirit, and on February 28, 1943 the Lord called him into the Church.

Shortly after his baptism, he went into the military service. While serving in the military, Brother Dominic attended the University of Arizona in 1944 and 1945. The Lord was his company and strength and provided him with many wonderful experiences to sustain him in his faith. On one occasion, he prayed as a young person that God would assist and encourage him in his service to Him. His father, who had passed away in 1945, appeared to him in a dream. Brother Dominic asked him whether, in retrospect, it was worth serving God, and he nodded his head most vigorously in a very encouraging way and expressed to him how happy he was in the Paradise of God.

Preparation for Leadership

When he returned to Detroit after completing his military service in 1946, he married Sister Dolores Romano. They were blessed with three children, Jared, Jeffrey, and Rebecca. He enrolled at Wayne State University in Detroit where he earned a Bachelor's Degree in 1950 and became a classroom teacher for the Detroit Public Schools. He continued his education at Wayne State University and received a Master's Degree in Education in 1952 and a Doctorate in Educational Administration in 1961. His career in education included some of the following responsibilities: school administration, director of testing and reading programs, curriculum consulting, and administration of a citywide language education program.

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"My Jesus I Love Thee, I Know Thou Art Mine"

One experience Brother Dominic would often refer to later was a short dream he had in which he saw the Lord being crucified. As the nails were being driven through the Lord's hands, he awakened in tears singing that wonderful hymn, "My Jesus I Love Thee, I Know Thou Art Mine."

In 1948 he was elected to the office of GMBA President and served in that capacity until 1966. It was during Brother Dominic's administration that the Church experienced a significant revival amongst the young people of the Church. A change in the GMBA bylaws opened the way for young people to have a more active part in the Church. At the same time, greater efforts were also being made to reach out to the rising generation, which brought forth much fruit during his tenure. During this same time, the GMBA became involved with a fund-raising project to purchase land for the construction of the General Church Auditorium. This project was successful and eventually led to the purchase of the land upon which the World Conference Center now sits.

The Anointing of God

In the fall of 1950 he was ordained an elder and served along with Brother Joseph Milantoni at Muncey, Ontario, Canada in 1951 and 1952. Following that, he served as Presiding Elder at Branch 2. He was ordained an evangelist in 1957 and an apostle in 1964.

The night before his ordination, he prayed until dawn and just as he was about to end his prayers, he heard a choir singing the hymn, "Jesus Lover of My Soul." The words of that hymn answered the yearning of his heart for God's help as he entered the Quorum of Twelve Apostles.

The day of ordination brought additional encouragement, including the following experiences that were recorded during the meeting:

A basin and towel were then brought forth for the washing of Brother Thomas' feet. As our brothers sat on the rostrum awaiting this sacred ordinance, Brother Anthony Corrado, filled with the Spirit of God, took the towel and began to pray with a voice that could be heard by all present. While Brother Thomas' feet were being washed, his countenance was changed unto the likeness of an angel. Brother Corrado then spoke in the gift of tongues and Brother Mark Randy gave the interpretation, "This is My Will." Brother Biscotti then laid hands on Brother Thomas and anointed him with oil. While offering a fervent prayer he spoke in tongues, which were interpreted thus: "In the Name of our God, we do this." Having been anointed an apostle, he arose filled with the Spirit of God, approached the ministry, and began to kiss and embrace each elder brother as he went along, including the elders who were seated in the congregation.

Sister Ruth Braendel from Detroit, Branch #1 had a vision in which she saw Brother Dominic's feet just above the ankles, covered with brass, standing on solid rock. Sister Clara Gentile from Detroit, Branch #2 saw two hands present him a bouquet of beautiful white flowers with roots ready to be planted.

In 1971, Brother Dominic was elected first counselor of the General Church and in 1974, Brother Dominic was elected President of the General Church and is currently still serving in that capacity. More will be written in the next volume of *A History of The Church of Jesus Christ* about the significant progress the Church has made during his tenure in office. For now, however, it should at least be noted that the

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Church has experienced unprecedented growth in the past 25 years, with respect to worldwide evangelism. The Church of Jesus Christ, as of this writing, has established missions in over 20 different nations in both hemispheres, in addition to five different American Indian Tribes. The number of Church members in foreign countries has been growing rapidly and has far exceeded the rolls in the United States.

Shortly after the World Missionary Conference in 1983, several General Church missionaries passed away which raised much concern in Brother Dominic's mind over the work at home and abroad. The night after Brother Frank Morle's funeral, Brother Dominic had a short dream in which he found himself at a church gathering. In one corner of the meeting-place, a sister sat weeping. Brother Thomas went to her side and tried to console her, but she refused to be comforted; and, looking at him through her tears, she said in a loud voice, "The Great Work of the Lord!" After the fourth effort, he awoke. It left him with the conviction that we, as a people, need to press on with the work of the Lord in spite of any and all setbacks that come to the Church.

When his wife, Sister Dolores, was stricken with cancer in 1974, they were strengthened by the prayers of the saints and God's grace throughout her illness and recovery. The contributions Brother Dominic has made to the Church over the years have been considerable, and, after all these years, he is continuing to bear fruit and provide leadership to the Church.