

Sparkill Dominican Sisters Celebrate Their Growing Presence in Pakistan



The Dominican Sisters of Sparkill

have a growing presence in Pakistan as they mark 60 years of service there.

Twenty-two Dominican Sisters of Sparkill, 15 vowed and seven in initial formation, are in Pakistan, compared with 11 vowed and three in initial formation in 2009.

Twenty-one of the 22 sisters were born in Pakistan, a predominantly Muslim country.

"These young sisters are a gift to our congregation," said Sister Mary Murray, OP, president of the 257-member Dominican Sisters of Sparkill.

"Their eagerness and enthusiasm for religious life is evident. May they always be blessed in their lives as Dominican Sisters."

On March 2, Sister Sumaira Patrick, OP, professed her final vows at a Mass celebrated by Bishop Benny Mario Traves, of the Diocese of Multan, in St. Dominic's Church in Bahawalpur. Sister Sumaira teaches at Dominican Primary School in Multan.

On Feb. 24, Sister Mehreen Abbas, OP; Sister Reema Ashraf, OP; and Sister Anna Bashir, OP renewed their vows one year after their first profession before their community in the Dominican Convent in Bahawalpur. All three are teachers in the Dominican Convent School in Bahawalpur, which has more than 1,350 students in kindergarten through 12th grade. The school was established by the Dominican Sisters of Sparkill in the late 1950s.

"I have known Sparkill sisters since my childhood, and it gives me immense happiness to be part of this congregation and continue their legacy of joy," said Sister Mehreen, O.P.

In early February, Sister Samreen Javaid was received as a novice after completing her postulancy, and Sadaf Aamir, Masal Akhtar and Rashana Younas were welcomed as postulants. They are pursuing their studies with three second-year novices in the congregation's novitiate in Multan and at the Pastoral Institute there. They also visit or assist families in need, and participate in ministries mentored by the professed sisters in Dominican Primary School.

The Dominican Sisters of Sparkill first served in Pakistan under the leadership of Sister Mary Purissima, OP, former principal of St. Helena Grade School and St. Helena High School, both in the Bronx, after a request from the Dominican Friars of the Eastern Province of St. Joseph to join them in their new mission established in the Diocese of Multan.

The Dominican Sisters of Sparkill opened a novitiate in Pakistan in 1968. Education is the primary ministry for the sisters, who serve in five Pakistani schools.



Sister Mehreen Abbas, O.P.; Sister Reema Ashraf, O.P.; and Sister Anna Bashir, O.P., renewed their vows in the Dominican Convent in Bahawalpur on the first anniversary of their first profession February 24.