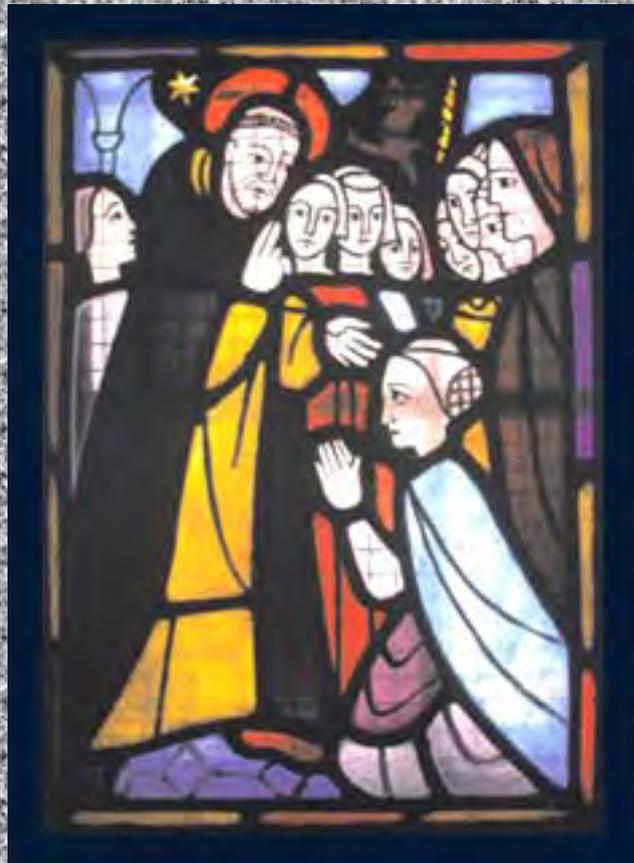


# DOMINICAN MONASTERIES

**A Historical Directory of  
Communities of Dominican Nuns  
World-Wide**



*Part 2 ASIA*

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## **ASIA**

In 2013, there are ten Dominican monasteries in Asia, two of which are still in formation.

**1936 - Japan, Morioka**

**1956 - Japan, Seto**

**1959 - Pakistan, Karachi**

**1969 - Japan, Bandai**

**1976 - Taiwan, Pingtung Hsien**

**1977 - Philippines, Cainta**

**1977 - Philippines, Bocaue**

**1990 - Korea, Baeron**

**2002 - Vietnam,**

**2002 - India**

The founding monasteries were in Belgium (for Japan), USA (for Pakistan, Philippines and Vietnam) Spain (for Taiwan, Korea and India).

In the 20th century, with four foundations in thirty-five years, Dominican monasteries were remarkably successful in Japan, given the small percentage of Catholics in the population. This is proving difficult to sustain in the 21st century, and in 2011 two monasteries united. In other locations in Asia (notably Pakistan, Vietnam and India) a lack of religious freedom/tolerance impinges on the life of the nuns to varying degrees.

Closed monasteries:

Japan Konan, founded in 1971 from Morioka.

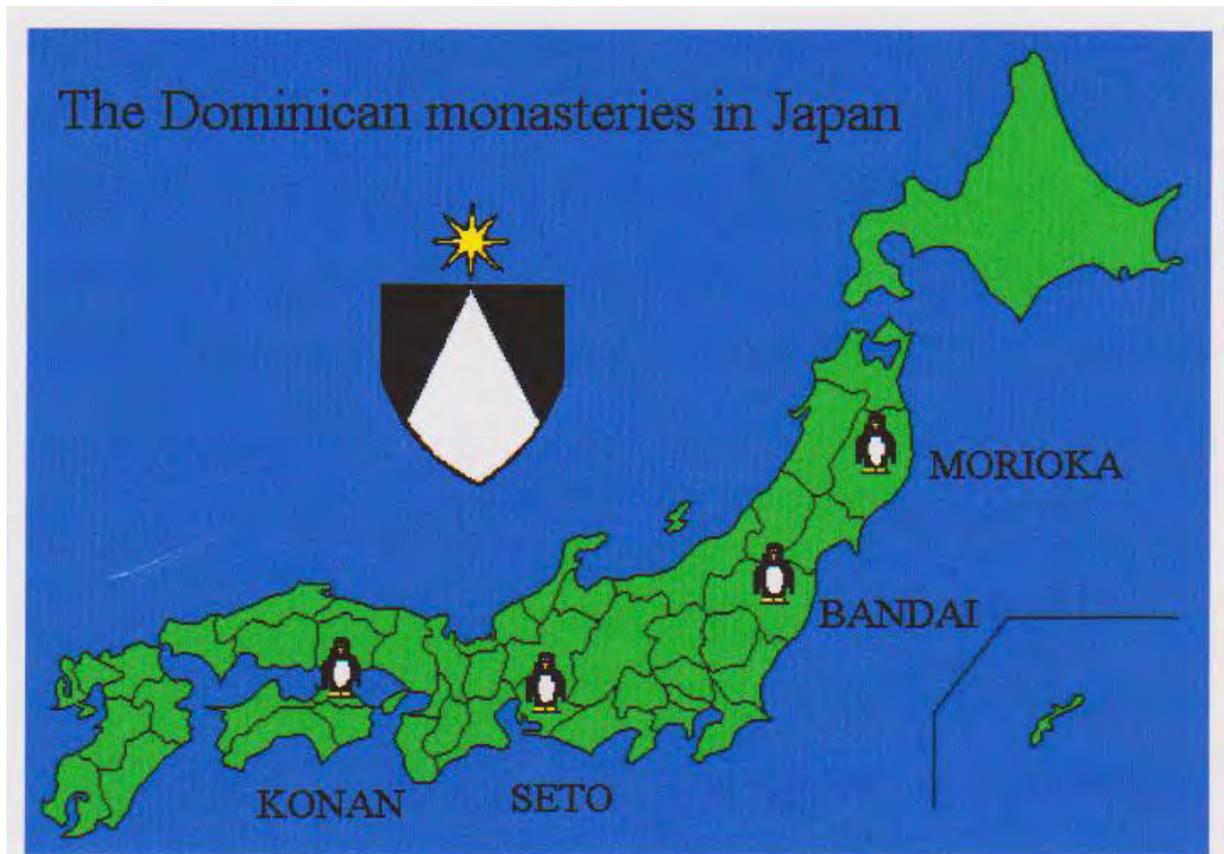
**INDIA**  
**Sancta Maria**  
**Perumpuzha P.O.**  
**Keralapura, Kollam Dist.**  
**Kerala 691 504**  
**☎ + 91 474 254 6465**  
**Founded from Cangas (Spain) in 2002**

In 2002 the Community of Dominican Nuns of Cangas del Narcea (Spain), decided to open a house in India, in Kerala, in the south of the country, nourishing the ideal that one day there would be a monastery of contemplative life in India. According to an agreement with fr Carlos Azpiroz, then Master of the Order, it was decided that the young novices who would one day form the Community of India, would do their religious formation in the founding monastery of Cangas.

The first years of aspirancy, postulancy and the first year of novitiate were done in India. Then the first three novices went to Spain for the canonical novitiate and for three years of temporary vows. Meanwhile, the monastery in India remained open, with a nun from Spain and one of the professed sisters from India, (who served as an interpreter) to welcome the young girls who wanted to join. This process continued, and today there are still some sisters in formation in Spain.

October 9, 2010 was a very memorable day for this Indian community; the first solemn professions were made in the presence fr Brian Pierce, General Promoter of the Nuns.





In 2005, the four Japanese monasteries of the Order formed the **St Mary Association of Dominican monasteries in Japan**, in order to “live in solidarity, to promote our religious life and to bear fruit”. Since then two of them have merged.

**JAPAN**  
**MORIOKA**  
**Dominikokai Rozario no Seibo Shûdôin,**  
**Ueda-Matsu-yashiki 2-32,**  
**Morioka-shi,**  
**Iwate-ken,**  
**020-0102 Japan**  
**Founded from Dinant (Belgium) in 1936**

In 1933 the nuns of the monastery at Dinant, Belgium were approached by the bishop of a Chinese diocese with a view to making a foundation at Quangdong. The sisters accepted the challenge and began to prepare, but in 1935 political instability in China started to make the project seem problematic. It was at this point that the Belgian nuns saw an appeal in a missionary magazine for a foundation in Japan. Contacts were made and the Dominican (French speaking!) bishop of Hakodate diocese in the north of Japan was delighted at the prospect of welcoming them

And so six nuns boarded a ship at Antwerp on April 7<sup>th</sup> 1936 and sailed for Japan to begin the great adventure of establishing Dominican nuns in the Far East. The location selected was Morioka. Things moved ahead quickly and after a brief stay in a temporary home in town the sisters were able to move into a purpose built monastery at the beginning of 1939. In the meantime the Belgian foundresses had been joined by a nun from the monastery of Lourdes and two Japanese postulants entered, one of whom had studied in France for four years – which must have greatly facilitated communication/

Of course at this point the sisters had no idea that there would soon be war between their new home and Europe and that they would be interned as prisoners. Nevertheless after the war the new foundation flourished and within twenty years of the arrival of the Belgian sisters, it was possible to envisage making another foundation in Japan.

On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of its foundation, the community of Morioka moved to new custom built monastery on the outskirts of the city. The Belgian foundresses all remained in Japan until death, eventually taking Japanese nationality. The last Belgian sister died in 2005. Japanese Dominican nuns have from the beginning largely earned their living by making cookies to a traditional Belgian recipe.



**JAPAN**  
**SETO**  
**Dominikokai Sei Yosefu Shûdôin,**  
**92 Higashinagane-cho,**  
**Seto-shi,**  
**Aichi-ken,**  
**489-0871 Japan**  
**Founded from Morioka in 1957**

In May 1957, six sisters left Morioka to found a new monastery further South at Seto in the diocese of Nagoya. One of the foundresses was Belgian Sr Marie du Sacrement, from the “home” monastery of Dinant. The following year, three more sisters from Morioka came to join them, enabling canonical erection. The new foundation was placed under the patronage of St Joseph. The sisters took with them the recipe for traditional cookies, from which they continue to make a living.

In June 2011, in response to the ageing of the communities and the lack of new entrants, Seto united with the monastery at Konan. This foundation had been made in 1971 at a time when the community at Morioka was thriving with over fifty sisters. The sisters had in mind the western part of Japan and indeed they were welcomed by Bishop Tanaka of the diocese of Takamatsu. On 24<sup>th</sup> September 1971 eight sisters from Morioka moved to Sanbonmatsu. Some ten years later the community moved to Konan, to a newly built monastery which was completed in February 1982 and placed under the patronage of Mary Mother of God. Later the same year the monastery became independent of Morioka achieving canonical erection



**JAPAN  
BANDAI  
Dominikokai Yuki no Seibo Shûdôin,  
Sarashina Genbashimichi 5086,  
Bandai-cho,  
Yamagun,  
Fukushima-ken,  
969-3302 Japan  
Founded from Seto in 1969**

The third foundation in Japan, placed under the patronage of Our Lady of the Snow at Bandai, in the diocese of Sendai was a collaborative effort, with two sisters from the community at Morioka, coming to join the four foundresses from Seto. The nuns at Bandai run a retreat house and make confectionery.



## KOREA

**Monastery of the Mother of God,  
Baeron Sanctuary,  
614 -3 Kuhak 2-Ri,  
Bong Yang Myon,  
Je Ch'On Gun Ch'Ung Buk (393-870)  
☎+ 04 43 651 2906  
Founded from Olmedo (Spain) in 1990**

In the 19080's, the Madre de Dios monastery at Olmedo, Spain received vocations from Korea; these were young women who had encountered Dominican friars working in their country and to whom they had expressed a desire for Dominican monastic life. In April 1990 a total of six sisters set off from Spain, three of them Korean, to found the first Dominican monastery in South Korea. The Bishop of Wonju in the centre of the country gave the sisters a piece of land in a mountainous location, overlooking the sanctuary of the Baeron martyrs in the valley below.

Baeron is a famous place of pilgrimage for Catholics in Korea. It is located deep in a mountainous area where the early Korean Catholics hid to escape the persecution of 1791. Here, they built six "Christian villages," kept their faith strong, and lived as farmers and pottery workers. Also the Baeron Seminary was the first theological institute in the Korean Catholic Church. It was established in 1856 and is now the Seoul Major Seminary.

So all in all, Baeron was an ideal location for the Dominican nuns: they had the land, they had the sisters but no money. For two years they lived on the site in a small prefabricated building. They appealed to well-to-do parishes in Seoul and were able to begin building work quite quickly. The monastery was completed and became autonomous in February 1993. The community is flourishing and still maintains its links with Spain, sending sisters regularly to Olmedo for formation.



**PAKISTAN**  
**Monastery of the Angels,**  
**Plot 213,**  
**Landhi**  
**Karachi 75120**  
**Founded from Los Angeles (USA) in 1959**

In the early 1950's, Bishop Cialeo, O.P. from Pakistan made the acquaintance of the nuns in Los Angeles, California. He stopped to visit the community every time he came to Los Angeles and at each visit asked if the sisters would like to make a foundation in Pakistan. At that time, the community was large enough to consider the request. The prioress, Mother Mary Gabriel, had no particular interest in Pakistan, though. Her sights were on Australia. When the late Joseph Cardinal Cordiero became Archbishop of Karachi, Pakistan, one of his first decisions was to invite a contemplative community to his diocese. Bishop Cialeo heard of his desire and immediately contacted him saying he thought he kneed just the community.

Eventually, Archbishop Cordiero made the formal invitation to the nuns in Los Angeles. In order to better evaluate the possibility. Mother Mary Gabriel and Sister Mary Imelda traveled to Pakistan in 1958. They both decided that, though it would be difficult, there was potential for a community of cloistered Dominican nuns to flourish in this predominantly Muslim country. In 1959, after much preparation, Mother Mary Gabriel and nine sisters left the monastery in Los Angeles for Pakistan.

Originally the community was situated in Karachi proper, on Ingle Road in a rather large house. The sisters learned to adapt to the many different ways of living they encountered. It proved both a challenging and difficult time. Gone were the many conveniences they had known, and yet, they found the strength of mind and soul to overcome the many obstacles. In time, it became imperative that the community move to a more permanent location. They did so in the 1960's, when they built a new monastery in an area outside the city.

The community has been through many hardships and dangerous situations, wars, floods, etc. But the sisters believe in their call to be witnesses of God's presence as most valued and needed. They are greatly supported by their many Muslim friends. At present the prioress and all of the sisters are Pakistani.



## **PHILIPPINES**

**Monastery of Our Lady of the Rosary,  
St Martin de Porres Street,  
Cainta,  
Rizal 1900**

**Founded from Summit NJ (USA) in 1977**

In the 1970's, several young Dominican sisters from the Philippines entered the Dominican Monastery at Summit New Jersey USA. At the time, this was not specifically with a view to a subsequent monastic foundation in their own country. However in 1972 shortly after the canonical erection of the Dominican Province of Friars in the Philippines, one of these sisters, Mary Lusina wrote to the provincial Fr Alarcon saying how wonderful it would be to have a monastery of the Order in their country. At the first Provincial Chapter held later that year, the prospect was mentioned.

On January 10th 1973, the Summit chapter voted in favor of a new foundation with agreeing to train Filipino women in the Dominican monastic contemplative life. On October 20, 1975, Sister Maria Aurea of the Nativity (Perez), O.P. was admitted by the community with the new foundation specifically in mind. Since there were not enough sisters to staff the proposed monastery, the solemnly professed Filipino nuns in Summit were chosen to form the core group under the leadership of Mother Marie Rosaria. On August 4, 1977, five nuns --- Mother Marie Rosaria, vicress, Sr. Mary Lucina, Sr. Maria Agnes, Sr. Maria Guadalupe and Sr. Maria Aurea --- left Summit On hand to meet them were Fr. Rogelio Alarcon and Mother Stella Salao, O.P., Superior General of the Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine of Siena. They stayed at the motherhouse of the Siena Sisters in Quezon City for about three weeks until they found a rent-free house that belonged to the Zaide family of Quezon City. The four-bedroom house was converted into a convent which the nuns occupied for ten months. On June 29, 1978, they moved to Manaoag, Pangasinan.

At the suggestion of Father Alarcon, Mother Marie Rosaria began the search for a suitable monastery site. The purchase of land and the construction of a monastery would be a considerable expense and the Philippine economy had slowed down under the martial law regime of President Marcos. At this point Fr. Jordan Aumann, O.P. and Bishop Leonardo Legaspi, o.p. came to the nuns' rescue. They petitioned Cardinal Jaime Sin to receive the founding group into the Manila archdiocese. The Cardinal gave the nuns a piece of land for perpetual use in Cainta, Rizal, a suburb of Manila. The construction of the monastery began in 1980.



## **PHILIPPINES**

**Queen of Angels Monastery,  
327 MacArthur Highway**

**Bocaue**

**3018 Bulacan**

**Founded from Los Angeles (USA) in 1977**

In the 1970's, a group of five Filipina sisters from the Dominican Congregation of Saint Catherine of Siena asked their superior for permission to live according to the rule of the cloistered nuns, with the possibility of eventually founding a Dominican Monastery in the Philippines. Initially, the sisters were encouraged by Fr. Cirilo Almario, (later bishop), and Fr. Harold, CP. In their quest to find a place where they could eventually live, Mgr Honoring offered his home and property for their use. The property was situated in the town of Bocaue in Bulacan, in the diocese of Mololos where Fr. Almario had recently been made bishop.

The sisters moved into the two-story house in Bocaue and promptly began living the cloistered life according to the 1933 Constitutions, the only Constitutions they could find. After a period of time, they became convinced of their desire to become cloistered Dominican nuns. They then proceeded to look for a monastery which would officially give them formation in the Dominican monastic way of life. At the suggestion of Master of the Order Vincent de Couesnongle, six Filipina sisters went to the Monastery of the Angels in Los Angeles USA for a year's training in Dominican monastic life and returned to the Philippines and about a year later three nuns from the founding monastery joined them.

The Filipina sisters bought the house from Mgr Honoring and work began on building a permanent monastery. Construction was delayed from time to time however because of the many typhoons and floods that this region experiences. The completed monastery was consecrated in 1982; it has been blessed with many vocations and all of the sisters are now of Filipina origin.



## **TAIWAN**

**Monastery of the Mother of God,  
40 Wansheng Road,  
Wanchin Wanluan Hsiang,  
Pingtung Hsien  
Founded from Olmedo (Spain) in 1976**

The Dominican monastery in the diocese of Kaohsiung, Taiwan belongs to the *Unione fraterna de la Madre de Dios* group of monasteries centred on Olmedo, Valladolid, Spain. Indeed Spanish Dominicans have been present in Taiwan since 1859 when they arrived as missionaries from the Philippines. Spanish Dominican sisters arrived in 1903 and German friars and Swiss Dominican sisters in the 1960's. And so it was normal for there to be a desire for a monastery of cloistered nuns in Taiwan, to complete the Dominican family so to speak.

The first group of foundresses from Olmedo settled at Tailao, but in the late 1990's they moved to new monastic buildings, better adapted to the needs of the flourishing community. This new monastery is situated very close to the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, a place of pilgrimage for the Catholics of Taiwan. The history of this church coincides with the second evangelization of the island of Taiwan, thanks to the work of the Spanish Dominican missionaries, and especially Fr. Fernando Sainz. In 1861, he began his mission between Kaohsiung and Wan Chin. In 1863 a small church was built of mud by these Spanish Dominicans, eighty-three people were baptized and so became the first local faithful. During the earthquake in 1865, the church collapsed and another was rebuilt which was consecrated on December 8, 1870. The basilica is in the care of a Spanish Dominican, and the village of Wanchin is the only community in Taiwan where Catholics are in the majority. It is not difficult to see that this was an ideal choice of location for the Dominican nuns, and indeed the community is large and flourishing with many Chinese vocations.



**VIETNAM**  
**MONASTERY OF OUR LADY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**  
**Dan vien Daminh (Dominican Monastery)**  
**572 / C Ngu Phuc, Ho Nai 3**  
**Trang Bom, Dong Nai**  
**2002 Founded from Farmington Hills**

The beginnings of the project for a Dominican monastery in Vietnam go back as far as 1998 when the then Master of the Order, Timothy Radcliffe suggested to the friars of Vietnam on the occasion of a provincial chapter, that they consider helping to found a monastery of nuns in their country. This challenge was taken up by Sr. Maria Rose Ngoc Huong, already a sister of a Dominican Congregation. After various visits to monasteries, she arrived at the monastery at Farmington Hills, USA, to begin a two year novitiate with a view to becoming a contemplative nun. Shortly after that, in May 2000, Sr. Theresa Bui Thi Tam also came to the USA to begin her time of novitiate formation for Dominican monastic life. The friars purchased a piece of land with a view to building a monastery for the nuns, but a degree of secrecy needed to be maintained concerning exact location as it is not normally possible to get authorisation for a purely contemplative life under the present regime in Vietnam.

October 23, 2002 is considered by the nuns as the official beginning of the Monastery of Our Lady of the Holy Spirit in Vietnam. On January 9, 2004, the Bishop of the Xuan Loc Diocese gave his written, formal approval of the monastery's presence in his diocese. In September 2010 the community received a first approval from the local authorities, and on the 25<sup>th</sup> of the same month, they had the great joy of witnessing the first Solemn Professions of Dominican nuns to take place in Vietnam. The five solemnly professed nuns in the community were formerly apostolic Dominican Sisters. Presently there are a number of sisters in formation. The community awaits the day when they can build a permanent, larger monastery. In the meantime, they are working to add another building and a second floor to their existing small house.

On the Feast of the Annunciation (March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2014), Dominic Nguyen Chu Trinh, Bishop of Xuan Loc Diocese proclaimed the decree of the canonical erection of the Dominican Monastery in Xuan Loc Diocese and presided at the Thanksgiving Mass. All took place at Ngu Phuc church, Ho Nai 3 at 9:00 a.m. Together with Bishop Dominic were the Most Reverend Paul Nguyen Thai Hop, OP, Bishop of Vinh Diocese, Fr. Joseph Ngo Si Dinh, OP, Prior Provincial of Dominicans in Vietnam, Cistercian and Benedictine Abbots and Abbesses, and approximately 50 priests concelebrated at the Mass. Sr. Mary Thomas, O.P., and Sr. Mary Pauline, O.P. representing Sr. Mary Peter, OP, Prioress of the Monastery of the Blessed Sacrament in Farmington Hills, MI, USA, which sponsored the new foundation, were also present, along with many Sisters from the Federation of the Dominican Congregations in Vietnam. Superiors and clergy belonging to the Diocesan Congregations and others along with our Lay Dominicans, relatives, benefactors and guests of the Monastery.



*The Community with Sr Mary Thomas of the founding monastery, Farmington Hills, and the Promoter of Nuns*



*On the occasion of the canonical erection of the monastery*