



Searching for truth and beauty, preaching through the transforming power of the arts

E-Newsletter

Volume XXIII

No. 1 Fall 2021

www.diartsop.org



DIA Zoom Gathering “The Healing and Prophetic Power of Art” July 2021

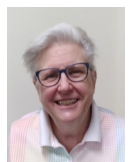
The highlight of all our DIA Gatherings has been sharing prayer, our gifts, our expertise, ourselves, and how we as Dominicans preach through the arts. How good it was to have so many in attendance at the 2021 Virtual Gathering! The nurturing effects of meeting yearly is encouragement, affirmation, congratulations and sharing with each other our art forms, be what they may. Sue Schreiber and Nancy Ann Turner captured this productivity in the beautiful, prayerful meditation in the powerful black and white images of the exhibit, *“Quiet Places and Sacred Spaces.”* The closing prayer stated, *“And so we begin with the reminder that the arts can heal, the arts can preach, the arts can deepen contemplation and expand vision. We pray for the artist in each of us and all of us. Amen.”*



The membership was introduced in prayer to the art of “Kintsugi” the Japanese art of taking something that has been broken and repairing it, with the brokenness emphasized as part of the mended design. As a philosophy, Kintsugi treats breakage and repair as part of the history of an object. It is a technique of taking the areas of brokenness and en-

hancing them with lacquer dusted or mixed with powdered gold, silver, or platinum, which emphasizes the brokenness rather than something to disguise. How fitting that these prayerful reflections were in response to the pandemic isolation and loss experienced by all during these past eighteen months, where many of us have had to face the reality of being alone and trying to stay productive in our output in spite of the isolation.

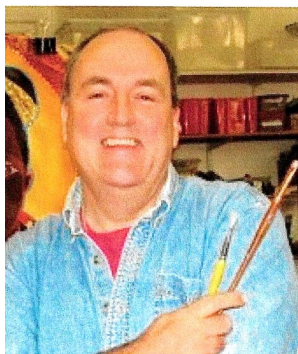
Virtual Gallery: Barbara Schwarz compiled an amazing Virtual Gallery with two parts. The first was a Memorial of the DIA Members who have gone to their eternal reward in the past year. Covid-19 ravaged our ranks, and we lost several members due to this pandemic. Others succumbed to illnesses. It was a loving tribute to these eight members who will be fondly missed. The membership was very touched and a few tears were shed in seeing their art for the last time. Barbara then anthologized of the works of twenty-five members who sent images in their various disciplines accomplished in the past year. All had comments of praise for this great compilation of work by the various artists in their multi-disciplines including music-making, stained glass, various painting types and styles, sculpture, photography, poetry and many more. It is a wonderful way to share the creations of the members. Amazing job! Thanks, Barbara. (If you want to see some amazing art visit: www.diartsop.org for this presentation and to enjoy the updated website.)



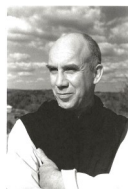
Keynote Speaker:

Brother Mickey McGrath, OSFS

What a delightful treat to experience the images, stories and creative spirit of Brother Mickey McGrath. The time spent with him was like a mini retreat. His presentation was first-rate in how he intertwined the work of some of the best known artists such as Georgia O'Keefe, Corita Kent, Vincent Van Gogh and Henri Matisse weaving together the work of some of the world's favorite Saints, Therese of Liseaux, Thomas Merton, Thea Bowman and Catherine of Siena into the full, rich presentation of his own created imagery. He used his art as a spiritual experience with simple, timely prophetic representations. He shared his work with wisdom and grace with an added Dominican flavor to his philosophy and spirituality.



Georgia O'Keefe and Thomas Merton both searched for the spiritual meaning of existence. Merton searched through poetry, photography and ink brush.

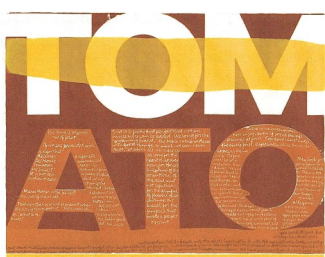


O'Keefe through painting large images of flowers and objects she found in the desert. She said, *"I know I can't paint a flower, but maybe I can paint the experience of a flower"* She stated she painted big so people would look at her work. Merton advised, *"Art enables us to find ourselves and lose ourselves at the same time."*



The artists Corita Kent and Henri Matisse used words and cut out images to relay their message. Corita Kent created silk screen prints. Her premise was that art should be affordable to all.

Her advise to us, *"Love the moment and the energy of that moment will spread love beyond the moment."*



Her art makes a strong statement. She had the courage to speak out. She eventually left California because of patriarchal pressure and moved to the East Coast where

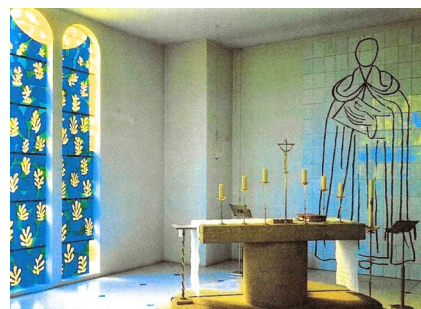
she continued to create art as a lay person. In her print about tomatoes, she said, *"Mary was the juiciest tomato of all."*



Matisse used the premise to reduce things to the simplest shapes, and then repeat the shapes. He said,, *"From chaos rises the World of the Spirit. I want my paintings to have the same effect as an easy chair*

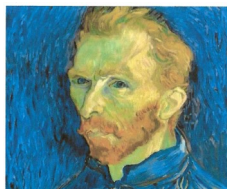
after a long day of work." He helped finance, build and decorate the Chapel of the Rosary in Vence, France for the Dominican nuns because of his affiliation with Monique Bourgeois, who had nursed him during an illness. She did pose for some of his paintings. One of the more famous ones is "Monique in Gray Robe." She became a Dominican and took the name Sr. Jacques. A tender portrayal of this relationship can be found in the film documentary *"A Model for Matisse."* The Chapel is unique, based on Nature shapes. Matisse said about his work, *"To look at something as though we had never seen it before needs great courage.... The essential thing is to work in a sign of prayer."*

This Chapel is a tall building, very simple in appearance. The architecture arouses your curiosity with its colored windows. Only when you are inside, does the



chapel reveal its full splendor thanks to the reflections of the windows on the marble floor. The west windows show the pattern of trees done in blue, green and yellow, inspired by the sky, earth and sun. The palm tree theme behind the altar is what Matisse calls the *"tree of life."* The whole Chapel is ablaze with light. The Stations are created as one total work rather than as fourteen separate events. Matisse attempted to say the most with the least amount of description. Therefore all the faces in the Stations of the Cross are blank save the shroud offered to Christ by Veronica. We see his inception of the Minimalist Art movement in these Stations. He is often called the father of Abstract Art."

Both Van Gogh, artist, and Therese of Liseaux, saint, had a relationships with God. Van Gogh struggled to find his spiritual side through painting. Therese



found God in everything and everyone. Van Gogh created images to express the raging spiritual and psychological turmoil within him. Therese took the turmoil around her to create a saint pleasing to God. She said, *"If you are willing to serenely bear the trial of being*

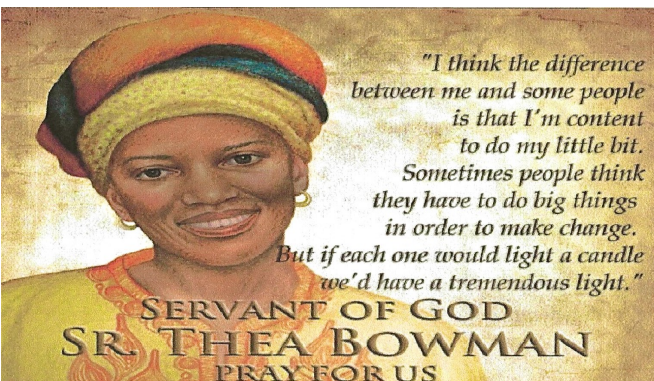
displeasing to yourself, then you will be a pleasant place to shelter Jesus." Quotes of Therese below

MAY YOU TRUST GOD THAT YOU ARE EXACTLY WHERE YOU ARE MEANT TO BE even when alone be cheerful remembering always that you are in the sign of the angel. I am not disturbed when I see a weakness in myself; on the contrary, it is in my weakness that I glory. Jesus wishes to own your heart completely. A little way is the way of spiritual childhood and make even the way of trust and sacrifice. RESOLUTE SELF-SURRENDER to procure it for him WITHOUT LOVE, DEEDS, EVEN THE MOST BRILLIANT, COUNT AS NOTHING TO THE MARK.

TO DRAW NEAR TO JESUS St. Thérèse of Lisieux WE MUST BE SO LITTLE ... OH! HOW FEW SOULS ASPIRE TO BE LITTLE AND UNKNOWN to live in love is to sail forever, spreading seeds of joy & peace in hearts. then, let us take our place humbly amongst the imperfect, deeming ourselves little souls whom the good God must sustain at each moment in hearts. I glory the nearer one gets to God, the simpler one becomes. THE WORLD'S THY SHIP AND NOT THY HOME if every tiny flower wanted to be a rose, spring would lose its loveliness. I WILL LET FALL FROM HEAVEN A SHOWER OF PEARLS. I WILL SPEND MY HEAVEN DOING GOOD UPON EARTH.

Sr. Thea Bowman and St. Catherine of Siena have their love for God in common. Thea Bowman was an African American Franciscan who sang Gospel type music and preached wherever she could. She stated, *"I can't preach in the church. Women can't preach in the Catholic church. But I can preach in the streets, in the neighborhood, in the home and in the family."*

In 1984 Thea was diagnosed with breast cancer. Music was the salve for her soul. She said, *"When I hurt I like to sing some of the old songs. I find that prayer and song take me beyond the pain."* She prayed *"to live until I die."* This prayer was answered, as Thea continued her gatherings seat-



ed in a wheelchair. She stated, *"My goal is to share the Good News. I want people to know that happiness is possible."* *"I think the difference between me and some people is that I'm content to do my little bit. Sometimes people think they have to do big things in order to make change. But if each one would light a candle we'd have a tremendous light."* In 1989, a year before her death, the U.S. Bishops invited Thea Bowman to be a key speaker at their conference on Black Catholics. She got the Bishops to hold hands and sing.

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d6pBrBoawII>)

Thea Bowman's words echo those of St. Catherine of Siena, *"I aim to set the world on fire, and what a flame that shall be."*

Along with all the examples of the Saints and Artists, Brother Mickey included a plethora of his artistic images to complement the works of the above mentioned artists and Saints. His presentation had a richness and breadth that will take time to assimilate and absorb.



Georgia O'Keeffe's
Light Iris

Some of his great one-liners:

"Give permission to love art."

"Vatican II is the best kept secret."

"Use whatever gets you into a prayer mode."

"Art is born in-between the spaces. Creativity basically comes in emptiness."

"Start at the word that means the most and build from there."

"Word and image are a way to meet in the middle."



The Spirit Award: The Spirit recognition Award was presented to our DIA Member, Sister Liz Sully, Sinsinawa Dominican, who both embodies the spirit of DIA and has rendered significant services to DIA in the spirit of its mission.

Liz has served as Vice President and President. She has contributed beautiful prayers to several Gatherings. Liz attended most of the our Gatherings, except a couple missed due to health reasons. Congratulations, Liz Sully.

The Fra Angelico Award: This will be awarded at a later date due to the recipient, Sister Irene Mary Diones, not being able to attend the 2021 Gathering.

Virtual Gathering Feedback :Some of the comments made by members about the Gathering experience:

The DIA Gathering was an informative, inspiring, unifying very contemplative experience. Brother Mickey McGrath was a perfect choice. Everything about his presentation gave accessibility to the presence of a variety of artists.

- Joeann Daley

This was my first Gathering experience but I was welcomed as though I've always been a part. The sharing was wonderful. The resources and experience of each person so rich. It is wonderful to be part of DIA and how much it means to our artist sisters.

- Nathalie Meyer

Brother Mickey's presentations were themselves works of art, with quite a lot to absorb. The prayer times were exquisite, presented with thoughtfulness and creativity. I strongly suggest that in the future all such events be recorded and placed on our website for our members to revisit. This would give us a chance to continue to be nourished by the feast we are being served. To be able to view and pray those lovely prayer sessions again and to view the images that went with them, to hear the speaker and pause to ponder what he gave would be making use of an ongoing resource that is unique to DIA.

- Joe Kilkevise

(continued on page 7)



Our Rosary Project and Beyond

Sister Esther Calderon, OP Peace has taken on the Casa Alitas project. If you have any Rosary beads or would like to make a donation, please contact her: ecalron@opeace.org.

She writes:

Hi everybody, The reason this is going to all of you is that it is a project that fell into my hands and has produced abundant fruit. This was a project that Sr.Thoma Swanson and Associate, Pat Daly were involved in before COVID-19 hit our shores. At that time they were able to send some beautiful wall hangings and rosaries for CASA ALITAS, a center for migrants reaching our border seeking Posada.

This year as soon as ALITAS reopened they got back "on duty" and started a "Rosary Project" as Pat says, "one email is all it took to get the whole country mobilized." That is no exaggeration folks from one end of the USA to the next had been generously sending me rosaries to provide for the people at ALITAS. Just holding the Rosary bring them so much comfort and joy.

Some of those generous folks have also sent money for me to get them socks, and shoe laces (which border patrol removes from everybody when they arrive at the border) also adult and children's underwear as that's one thing that we're always short.

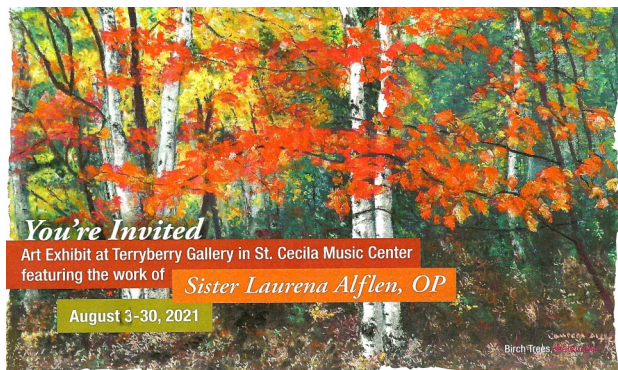
So wanted to share with you all what has kept me quite happily busy this summer and what Dominican Institute for the Art, Lay Dominican Chapters, Associates from different Dominican Communities, and Dominican Sisters and Dominican Men (Fathers and Brothers) all have shared of their wealth. Gracias a Dios!

From the bottom of my heart I too am so grateful as are the volunteers at ALITAS. So happy to be able to provide the people with something that will bring peace and closer to God.

Love and peace, Sister Esther Calderon, OP

What's Going on?

Sr. Laurena Alfen had an exhibition of her work at the Terryberry Gallery in Grand Rapids Michigan, August 4-30, 2021 She writes about her exhibit:



I am a Grand Rapids Dominican Sister. During the many months of quarantine because of Covid, my painting habits changed. I made quick, timed sketches with an ink pen. I liked them. Inspired by reading my Pastel magazine, I tried different techniques using my spray can. I liked them

Then after twenty-four years, two counted cross stitch hangings were returned to me from a Sister who had finished them. I had lost the sight in my right eye. I loved what she did.

All this was done in the silence of the art room with the radio playing music from the Blue Lake station. It was contemplation and I gift it all to you

STATIONS OF THE CROSS



ARTIST: SISTER GERARDINE MUELLER, OF
MOTHERHOUSE, SISTERS OF ST. DOMINIC, CALDWELL, NJ

Gerardine Mueller of Caldwell created the Stations of the Cross for the Mother house. She is 100 years old and works as an artist every day.

INAI hosts exhibit of Photography and Poetry September 7– October 31. Photography as “visual poetry” and seeing the the “eyes of the heart” are two themes in the artistic works of **Suzanne Schreiber** and **Rev. Cathy Johnson**



Nancyann Turner felt inspired to participate in Detroit's Healing Memorial, a large-scale participatory public art installation that recognizes the depth of loss in Detroit and all Southeast Michigan during the COVID-19 pandemic. A collaboration between the City of Detroit Office of Arts, Cranbrook Art Museum and the Detroit Riverfront Conservancy, this memorial will offer support and healing for residents of southeast Michigan who experienced all forms of loss, including physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, social, occupational, and environmental.

Barbara Schwarz's “Jesus and the Bent Over Woman continues to travel the Globe. Recently it was published by the World Council of Churches with and article by sister Imelda Poole.



OIKOUMENE.ORG

Thursdays in Black Bible study series-Looking and Seeing (Luke 13:10-17)

Be sure to sent us your shows or events so the website and newsletter can publish them!



A Note from your New Editor:

Hello everyone,

I'm Sr. Elizabeth Slenker, your new Editor for the DIA O'Palette. Before me a blank page stares at me. It's that beginning step that is the most difficult. My mother used to tell me, *"If you want something done, learn how to do it yourself."* The learning curve will stretch me, although I do have a background in publishing as I was the Moderator for the St. Thomas Aquinas College Yearbook for over fifteen years. I have also published three books.

I sit here thinking about the tremendous undertaking at hand and the big shoes to fill of our beloved past Editor. The task of compiling an interesting and informative Newsletter seems overwhelming. Sr. Elizabeth Michael Boyle will surely be missed. I promise I will do my best, but as you've heard in the past, the O'Palette does not get published unless there is material to put in the Newsletter.

When you have something you've achieved, or think might be a good subject for the Newsletter, please send it while you are thinking about it. We all get so involved with other projects, that our good intentions to send material usually get lost if not done immediately. I will keep a file of the material you send and publish it in a future issue. Please send your material to slekeree@yahoo.com. Any questions my phone is 314 954 5677.

**We are ever grateful to
Elizabeth Michael Boyle and Elaine
DesRosiers for the years of dedication
to DIA and its news letter**



Introducing your new Layout Editor:

I'd like to introduce myself as I will be replacing the "Sundance Kid," Sr. Elaine DesRosiers, in creating the DIA O'Palette Newsletter. My experience in layout and design dates back to the mid 1980's for my original Congregation, The Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine of Siena, Fall River, Massachusetts. I continued this work for the Dominican Sisters of Hope, and also designed our first ophope website.

Technology has come a long way from the "cut and paste" method used when I first began on an electric typewriter. With the advance of newer, better software I soon found I could work with greater efficiency, speed and creative possibilities.

I am excited about taking over the layout of O'Palette in 2022! I know Elaine's shoes will be a challenge to fill, but I am looking forward to working with Elizabeth as the new editor!

Donna Brunell OP

Dominican Sisters of Hope

C: 914-806-8534



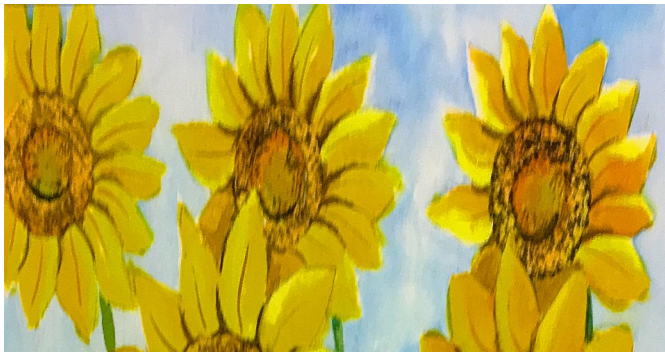


Prayers Requested:

Please pray for our members who are ill at this time, especially Pat Daly our President and Martha Bartholomew as well as those whose illnesses we haven't heard about. Please remember those who still experience the side effects of Covid-19.

Sharing Our Art:

Each person was able to share with others the work accomplished during the year. It was amazing how many spent their time in quarantine in very creative ways. DIA has found our sharing of art to be a very important component of the Gathering experience. We take the time to listen, learn and acclaim each other!



Virtual Gathering Feedback continued:

I really appreciated the gathering and input from Mickey McGrath. His approach to the arts was interesting and valuable. I enjoyed my small group chat rooms. Although I haven't done any art work during the pandemic, I do make creative environments in our Chapel. For St. Dominic's Feast I risked my being by picking sunflowers in a deep ravine. It is always refreshing to be connected with DIA.
- Martina Stegman

Two of our published poets share their work:



Martha Bartholomew

At the Crossing

Love only seems to stop breathing
In that nanosecond
Where time and timeless splash
Into the ever flowing stream.
We are all caught, gasp —
Pulled along by Love remembered
Newly awakened
Unencumbered
Free!

Elizabeth Michael Boyle, OP



Elapsed Time

Up in the fitness center
facing the cemetery
I set the stats to the minimum
muster my will to the maximum
and start pumping toward life eternal.

Through the huge window
I can see below me
row on row of granite
head stones marking the resting place
of all my personal trainers.

"You who taught me to fast
and grope and fight my way
from self-delusion
through self-forgiveness
to out-of-the-body clarity
as solid as muscle
as porous as bone.

What would you tell me
if you could
of that final breathless second
of *time remaining* where
surrender marks the toughest

Pat Daly, OPA, President

480 Liberty Street
Braintree, MA 02184
781-843-8137
pmdaly@beld.net



Ann Marie Santen, OP, Vice President

5555 Dugan
St. Louis, MO 63110
c. 314-952-7930
annmsanten@gmail.com



Joella Miller, OP, Treasurer

705 E. Siena Heights Drive #3
Adrian, MI 49221
517-263-7665
jmiller@adriandominicans.org



OUR WELL-MASKED BOARD

**Aneesah McNamee, OP,
Secretary**

1257 E. Siena
Heights Dr.
Adrian, MI
49221
949-525-1528
aneesah@mac.com



Mary Pat Reid, OP

1 Ryerson Avenue
Caldwell, NJ 07006
862-485-5406
marypreid@gmail.com



Rudolf Loewenstein, OP

St. Dominic's Priory
South Hampton Road
London, England NW5 4LB
020-7482-9219
Rudolf.loewenstein@english.op.org



Searching for truth and beauty, preaching through the transforming power of the arts

Editor: Elizabeth Slenker OP slekeree@yahoo.com. Any questions my phone is 314 954 5677.

Layout Editor; Donna Brunell OP

Web Master: Barbara Schwarz OP artafire@hotmail.com

Kindly sent to us any news we care share in newsletters or on the web.

