



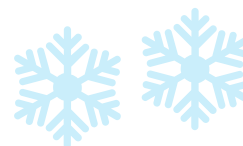
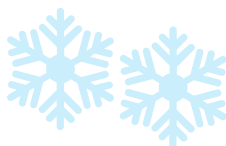
Searching for truth and beauty, preaching through the transforming power of the arts

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Joyful Red Round Table

Having lived a full life, my beauty gathered a variety of life
My artist delighted in the planning, choosing the very best woods,
Taking time to find the fine grains using the very best tools
To shave my edges into soft curves that shined in the sun
On my table my creator blended beautiful tones of red, brown, orange and gold
Sometimes moving slowly, sometimes in a rush
Yet it was lovely when she rested
Her beautiful face on my dried finished shiny coat.
Joy bounced across y circle displayed in front of a big bay window
To enjoy the beauty and birds for all who gathered in my space.
Midnight moon sent a holy glow through the bay window to my coat of red.
Kids jumped on my chairs and hid under the oak leaves,
While playing hide and seek.
Life is kind of like that.
New toddlers crawled on, chuckling away, bringing laughs to all.
Playing cards and board games, learning lessons, and hearing stories of life.
Teenagers put down their phones, rested on my space drawing weird characters.
Life rolled on underneath and above, surprises each day.
No routine here, earth rotated,
Flow of activity and quiet arrived in the stillness of the night.
Scribblers, ink pens and accidental spills changed my coat of red
And tears flowed out on my tabletop,
As my creator released her grief when friends and family died
And my tabletop was the only presence to travailing loss
Trying to find peace and presence.

by Mary Ellen Robertson



President's Message

Greetings and Blessings to my DIA sisters and brothers. With a new year enters new hope and aspirations. I trust you had a peaceful Christmas and Epiphany, now are hopeful for 2026.

One of my most fond memories is of my Father taking me to church with him on Sunday evenings and admiring the stained-glass windows of the oldest Catholic church in my hometown. I marveled at the way the evening light would still stream through the glass panes and the ways the images "came alive" even under subdued lighting.



My own experiences resurfaced upon hearing the story of a young boy who while touring churches ask his parents: "Who are these people pictured in these stained-glass windows?" "They are saints and holy people," his parents replied. Then, his parents asked him: "Do you know who 'saints' are?" And the boy, almost immediately responded: "Saints are people who let God's light shine through."

In many ways, that is what we are called to do as Dominican Artists and Preachers. We, as well as our artforms, are intended to "Let God's light shine." It is my hope that this year, 2026, you will not only experience God's light and presence, but also allow God's light (and Love) shine ever more brightly through you and your creative works.

May God creator bless us and keep us safe in this new year.

John Mascazine, OPA

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Year of the Horse

I can never be proud of my art, since I deeply realize that's it's all a gift from God. I simply feel like a brush in God's hand! I meditate before I paint, and the whole process has become prayer.

Since this is the Luna Year of the Horse, I'm sending you all the blessings that the Horse signifies: Vitality. Strength and Health!

Asian Brush Paintings to help Immigrant & Refugee Women

I had always wanted to learn Chinese Brush Painting but was always too busy with my various ministries. However, when I retired at age 75, I finally had the gift of time, and took lessons at the nearby Islip Museum. Now that I'm re-engaged as an artist and musician, it gives me great joy to still be involved in my ministry to and with the poor, since I am able to donate all proceeds to our congregational ministries, particularly with immigrant and refugee women.

This past April I had a "Spring Art Show & Sale" that netted \$8,000 which was donated to our "OPening Word" literacy program. In September I entered my "Peacock" named "Awakening" at the Babylon Town Hall, which won "Best in Show" and sold for \$500 to support our program for women immigrants.

Molloy University, which was founded by my congregation, invited me as a guest artist to exhibit at their "Alumni and Student Exhibit" in October. I exhibited "Magnificence in Motion." December brought another surprise, as they purchased it for \$1,000 to hang in



their permanent art gallery and, at the same time, know they will also be helping immigrant women during this difficult time as they deal with ICE.

Yes! God is good, so very good! I'm grateful for this gift that our Artist God has given me, and delighted that it continues to support our Congregational Ministry to the Poor.

During this year as I celebrate 70 years as an Amityville Dominican, my song of thanks is one that my Health Care Aide from the Island of Jamaica taught me:



"I'm Drinking From My Saucer, Since My Cup Has Overflowed"!

Happy Year of the Horse and blessings of Health, Vitality and Strength,
Mary Anna Euring, OP

I thought you might like to see photos from my art show in April, and when I went to Chinatown to show my paintings at the Fall Festival. The Lion Dance was great!

In October, “Center Light”, the managed care program I’m enrolled in, transported me to their center in Chinatown, New York City, to show my Chinese Brush Paintings to the participants and join in the Fall Festival. I shared my art process with them in English, and the Director translated it into Chinese.

Love, Mary Anna



Newsletter Staff

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New Meditation Space and Gallery

Since last summer's closing of the INAI gallery and meditation space on the Adrian Dominican campus, several DIA members have been working on a new site for a meditation room and gallery space on the campus. A simple but beautiful meditation room opened to the Adrian Sisters and their co-workers late last November--just in time for the Advent and Christmas season.

This sacred space is now hosted in Madden Hall, a main building on the Adrian Dominican Land. Although the room is small and quiet, it offers several art pieces to enhance peace and meditation.

The art exhibited in this space, includes a sculpture by the following Adrian Dominicans: Judi Engel, Associate; paintings by Barb Chenicek and Barb Cervenka; icons by Cheryl Liski; and weavings by Nancyann Turner. Sue Schreiber coordinated the whole endeavor.

Currently this committee is working on a new gallery space to honor and celebrate the creative work of women. It will be ready in April of 2026.

Nancyann Turner, OP



St. Dominic, Barbara Chenicek, OP

Icons on each side by Cheryl Liske



The Resurrection, by Judi Engle



Pat Daly's Stories

Pat Daly was a good storyteller. She had a memory like a computer. She remembered stories from the time she began DIA. I had asked her to record her best ones so we would have a written record of them. She made a list of twenty-five stories. Unfortunately, Pat passed away before she could get them recorded. The recorder player was sent back to me with no stories. It would be great to have a written record of our heritage, which would be good to get into print. So, I move to Plan B. I am listing the stories that Pat had written down, and her sister, Norma, sent to me with the empty recorder. If you might know the story, and would be willing to write about it, maybe we could preserve some of the history from our beginnings.

Here is the List:

1. Kathy Harkins idea of a Dominican Art Group
2. Incorporation of DIA
3. Getting the 501C-3 status
4. Writing of the Constitutions
5. Getting the Constitutions approved
6. The Fra Angelico Medal
7. The Spirit Award established
8. Mary Irene's lost camera
9. Pat Spangler's lost brown purse
10. Springfield: E. Michael Boyle falling & black eye
11. Springfield: Novices dancing
12. After the meetings staying up all night and talking
13. Sheila Flynn's surprise at receiving the Fra
14. Convent Station: ½ ?
15. Sparkill – Dominic DeLay wearing the seamless alb
16. Elkins Park: jigsaw watercolor puzzle.
17. Adrian: Ukelele band and the hula dance
18. Adrian: Pat's clothes got lost in flight and she borrowed from others
19. Racine: Belly dancers
20. Great Bend: one plane per day to Great Bend; Janicew Holkup missed it and slept on the floor in Denver. She did make it to the Gathering
21. Great Bend: Dream catchers; Pat gave away Kathy Rhody's
22. Adrian: Tour of INAI with Rita and Barbara
23. Grand Rapids: E. Michael Boyle: Desperado
24. Adrian: 2014 when the ceiling fell
25. Tink's version of the Visitation with DIA members playing the animal parts.



If you would have any information about these topics, and would like to help preserve our past, I would really appreciate your telling the story in your own words. Of course, your version might be different than Pat's, but that's alright. At least we can capture some if we all work on this together.

Thanks, Elizabeth Slenker

December 24, 2025



Christmas is a time of wonder and delight for our children, unless you are those we see in bombed war zones we see on the news. We search for a place to ignore the heaviness of heart that invades our adult lives as we juxtapose the scene onto the relative safety of our own lives. How do we celebrate the holidays this year when viewing heartbreaking scenes of two children holding hands sitting in the rubble of their bombed-out neighborhood. It strikes me that they were doing what any of us must do to live in a world of violence and destruction. Do what children do, simply hold onto each other.

As adults who may struggle to get past the fear of human touch, we seek family and friends whose take on things matches ours. Rational conversation escapes us in the face of gut-wrenching scenes that make the holiday cheer we seek seem so out of place. So we find ourselves seeking a deeper understanding of the Christmas message.

We find a simple one that has always been there behind the tinsel and noise. This night in which we live is a silent one, and yes, a holy one. It is one where we find each other and hold hands.

As we provide the joy and wonder of Christmas time for our children, what messages of hope and joy can we rescue from the holiday excitement children enkindle that can let us into their world? Protecting ourselves from news reports only offers a pretense that all is well and is as it should be. Our choice seems to be to either ignore or engage the world in which we live. Is respectful conversation about the state of our world possible as we consider how to be with friends and relatives? Can we rescue some holiday cheer from the daily narrative of discord that invades our lives? I propose that the task before us is a sacred one that asks us to be thoughtful and respectful as we listen to each other and remember that we share the blessings and challenges of life together. May kindness find a home among us again.

May you and those you especially love find peace and kindness during these holidays. As we come together as family, friends and spiritual sojourners, may the Christmas proclamation of the birth of Jesus, a brother to all people be welcomed among us. That's the message. He lives among us. Find him there behind every joy filled and heartbreaking moment of our lives.

With loving kindness,
Br. Joseph Kilikevice, OP

Please send website submissions to: Sr. Barbara Schwarz OP at Artafire@hotmail.com

The Black Christ

By Cheryl Liske, OP

“Black parishioners have a legitimate complaint when they walk into a church to worship and everything is White. Christianity forces people to accept Western European culture.”

The above quote is from the late Father Raymond Ellis, who in 1968 commissioned artist DeVon Cunningham to paint a mural of a Black Christ in the domed ceiling of Detroit’s St. Cecilia’s Church (now St. Charles Lwanga). A national controversy erupted when the mural appeared on the cover of Ebony magazine in March 1969.

The Black Christ gained international prominence again in 2009 when the Vatican sent out a postcard globally with four depictions of Christ’s face, three were from antiquity and the fourth was the only living artist so honored—DeVon Cunningham.

Fr. Ellis passed in 1971, and artist DeVon Cunningham passed in 2023, but the mural remains the center of controversy after the Detroit Archdiocese announced the closing of the church in June of 2025 with the last Mass scheduled for October of 2025.

At that time, DIA members, Nancyann Turner and Cheryl Liske, members of the diocesan anti-racism coalition got involved with keeping St. Charles Lwanga open after being contacted by and parishioners including Ruth Johnson, longtime partner of artist DeVon Cunningham. While our primary interest was the potential shuttering of a Black Catholic church, saving the mural of the Black Jesus was exceedingly important, both in its present value as an image of Christ, as well as in its historical value for the Black church of Detroit.



A leaky roof and a mostly non-functioning boiler are contributing to water damage to the mural. The diocese cites high repair and maintenance costs, dwindling membership and the shortage of priest for the closure. Though membership has dropped over the years, the church has remained a particularly vibrant example of a Black Catholic church in Detroit.

The anti-racism group hired a Canon lawyer to represent the parish leaders in their dealing with the archdiocese. Since then, the archdiocese has reversed their decision on the closure of the church. The anti-racism group discovered the leaking roof was a clogged roof drain (easily fixed) and a local Detroit charity is currently installing a new boiler. On January 14th, DIA member Cheryl Liske, will join the anti-racism coalition, Ruth Johnson and a drone photographer to assess the damage to the mural.

While the church of St. Charles Lwanga will remain open, the archdiocese still plans to sell the parish's former school building. The sale of that building will help pay for repairs needed at the church.

Moral of the story: Sometimes being a Dominican artist means defending the image of God against prejudice, wind, weather, and diocesan bean counters.

Link to Detroit News Article - **Detroit Catholic church with image of Black Jesus saved from permanent closure**



The Detroit News

<https://www.detroitnews.com › detroit-city › 2025/11/28>. Attached: Photo by Ruth Johnson (used with permission)

Announcing!

Hello friends, I am a member of DIA and have been a Dominican Associate for 3 ½ years. I am an accomplished author, having published more than forty books; here is a little more about me.

Linda Lysakowski, ACFRE, MTS-FT

Linda is a graduate of Alvernia University and holds a master's degree from the Franciscan School of Theology at University of San Diego. She is the author of more than forty books including *Recruiting and Training Fundraising Volunteers*, *The Development Plan*, *The Pastor's Guide to Stewardship and Philanthropy*, and co-author of fourteen *Nonprofit Quick Guides*. Her spiritual books include *The Face of Jesus 2nd Edition*, *See This Christ, 2nd Edition*, *Crown of Thorns 2nd Edition*, *I Thirst*, and *Francis of Assisi, Universal Saint: Franciscan Spirituality in Various Faith Perspectives*.

Are you interested in starting the new year off with a spiritual book study?

If your sojourner group or book club is interested in expanding its members' spiritual horizons and **meeting the author**, I have several new releases that might be of interest. Most books are in their second edition, with questions for study and reflection for each chapter. And if your book club meets at a time that fits my schedule, I am happy to introduce the book in the first session or join one of your sessions to answer questions. You can choose from the following (all are available on Amazon):

Francis of Assisi, Universal Saint: Franciscan Spirituality in Various Faith Perspectives

This book explores how some of the world's major religions and their followers, as well as non-religious people, are in harmony with the spirituality and theology of Francis of Assisi. While this book cannot, of course, cover all world religions and spiritualities, it highlights a wide scope of the major religions. I believe that many world religions have a lot in common with Franciscan spirituality. While their beliefs and doctrines vary greatly, it is my premise that most religions, and those who profess to follow no religion, often identify with Franciscan spirituality, which appears to have a universal appeal.

The Face of Jesus, 2nd Edition

A journey of transformation through the eyes that saw Him. What did it mean to truly see Jesus? In this newly expanded edition of *The Face of Jesus*, I invite you into a compelling journey—one shaped by those who looked into His eyes and were never the same again. Of course, I was not present, but I share my ideas of what it must have been like for those who saw the Face of Jesus up close and personal. From fishermen and Pharisees to the woman at the well, to thieves on the cross, and even an angel and a demon, this book brings the historical Jesus to life through the deeply personal encounters of those who walked, wept, questioned, and believed in His presence. But Jesus is more than history—He is ever-present. Some see Him as a Middle Eastern teacher, others through the lens of their own culture—black, white, brown, or Indigenous. He is a man of many faces because He meets us in every language, every culture, every broken and beautiful moment of our lives. In these pages, you'll meet the joyful Jesus, the grieving Jesus, the angry, compassionate, misunderstood, and victorious Jesus. This second edition includes fresh insights, new reflections, and deeper questions to help guide your own spiritual encounter. Are you ready to look again at the Face of Jesus—and see more than you ever expected?

See This Christ, 2nd Edition

A thoughtful read of a Christ who is present and approachable in our daily lives. It's easy to read with a pondering and deliberate style of drawing forth images to aid in our reflection on the Laughing Christ, the Teaching Christ, The Angry Christ, the Healing Christ, the Servant Christ, the Dying Christ, the Risen Christ, and the Loving Christ. It's the perfect book for churches, Christian book clubs, ministries, schools, and all who wish to better understand Jesus. The book is based on a poem written by the author more than four decades ago:

See This Christ

*See this Christ who is laughing,
and dancing with the children in the streets.
See this Christ who is teaching,
and longing for all people to be free.
See this Christ who is angry
at the way we have denied our Creator's love.
See this Christ who is touching,
healing broken bodies, broken souls.
See this Christ who kneels before you
washing feet of sinful people.
See this Christ who hangs here bleeding,
weeping, dying for your sins.
See this Christ in all His glory,
risen now triumphantly.
See this Christ who loves you,
and wants you to be with Him every day.
Yes, he wants you to be with Him in all ways.
Every day.*

Crown of Thorns, 2nd Edition

What People Are Saying About This Book:

"Linda's words, creatively placed on the lips of Jesus, will powerfully draw you in, and take you to those sacred events of 2000 years ago. But you will also find yourself in the present, where Jesus continues to suffer among us, and with us, today." Father Ron Zanoni Pastor Christ the King Catholic Church, Vicar for Clergy, Archdiocese of Las Vegas

"Linda has done an excellent piece of work in bridging the Lord's crown of thorns with our personal and community crown of thorns. She offers many courses of action that can be taken to remove those thorns for those interested in transforming the evils of our world." Janet Ackerman, OP

I Thirst

Most Christians are familiar with the seven last words of Christ, as he was dying on the cross. If you are not familiar with them, they are:

1. "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."
2. "This day you will be with Me in Paradise."
3. "Woman, behold your son; son, behold your mother."
4. "My God, My God, why have you forsaken Me?"
5. "I thirst."
6. "It is finished."
7. "Father, into Your hands I commend My spirit."



This book focuses on the shortest of these phrases, but one that, more than likely, had a lasting impact on those who heard it as he spoke those two short words, "I Thirst." Today these words can have a lasting impact on us, if we stop to ponder: What did Jesus thirst for, was it simply a cool drink of water, or more? Did He thirst for our love? For us to listen to *all* His words? For us to act on those words? Perhaps your own thirst will drive you to ask how we, as mere humans, can possibly quench Jesus' thirst. If you are ready to try, I invite you to read the book and share it with others.

Linda Lysakowski, ACFRE Linda@LindaLysakowski.com 702-580-1448

Serving and educating the nonprofit community for more than thirty years. Let me help you with your nonprofit fundraising needs:

To inquire about specific consulting services email me at: Linda@LindaLysakowski.com

To schedule a meeting with me: <https://calendly.com/lysakowski/meet-with-linda-30-minutes>

To check out my online courses: www.LearnWithLinda.online

To check out my books: www.LearnWithLinda.online

To check out my spiritual books, blogs, and podcasts: www.SpiritualWritingsWithLinda.com

To get notices about training sessions, sign up for News from Linda: Linda@LindaLysakowski.com

Call for Nominations for the 2026 Fra Angelico Award

It's that time of year, when we plan ahead to our Summer Gathering and ask our membership to nominate individuals for the highest award that our organization offers.

The Fra Award criteria are:

- **The artist's work is of the highest quality in his/her field.**
- **Is highly honored in artistic circles.**
- **Exemplifies the ideals of DIA.**

Please send your nominations to: Elizabeth Slenker, OP at slenkerelizabeth@gmail.com.

Please send your nomination **by April 15**. If you do it now, you won't forget.

Artists' Retreat

There will be an **Artist Retreat following the DIA Gathering** in July at the Weber Center in Adrian Michigan. The Gathering runs from Monday, July 20 through Thursday, July 23. The Artist Retreat will run from **Thursday, July 23 through Monday, July 27, 2026**. There will be a limited number of spaces available for the retreat because the Weber Center is hosting another group. However, this is a wonderful opportunity to extend your stay and spend some quality time being reflective and actively engaged with your art and spirit.

Look for additional information in the next few months.



In Loving Memory



Pat Daly, OPA, Peace Associate

Jeanne Stickling, OP, Adrian



Thoma Swanson, OP, Peace

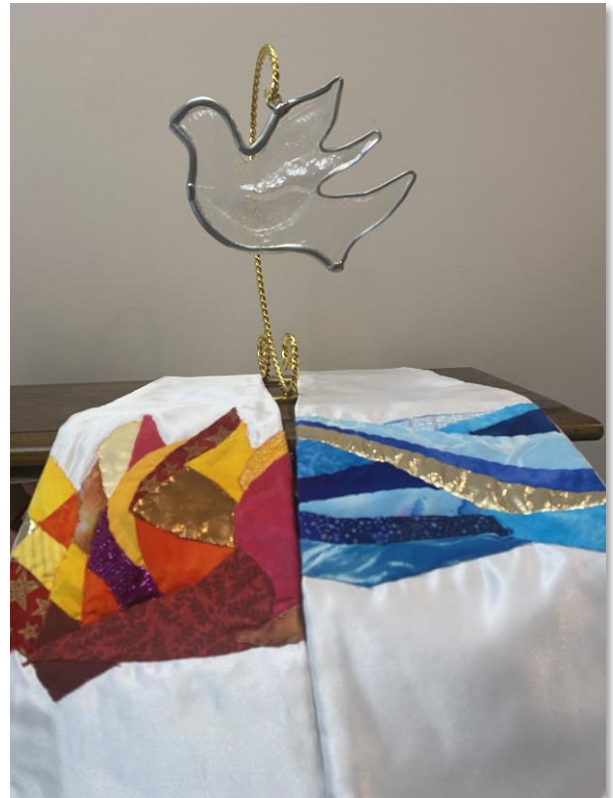


Supporting a Journey of Faith

On the Feast of Christ the King in November, five people entered the Catholic Church at St. Pius X parish in Reynoldsburg, Ohio. While the sacraments of initiation are traditionally received by new converts at the Easter vigil, the diocese has been encouraging year-round Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA). Those who are ready are being received on other important feasts.

The art of two DIA members was integrated into the faith formation process. The week before the candidates and catechumen received the sacraments, the OCIA team held a retreat to give them a deeper understanding and spiritual preparation for each sacrament. During the session on confirmation, one of John Mascasine's stained glass doves served as a symbol of the Holy Spirit. The session included a witness talk, prayer and a hymn accompanied by laying of hands.

During the Mass on the feast day, each of the candidates for full reception into the church wore a stole made by Donna Nesbitt. The stoles were appliquéd with symbols for baptism and confirmation. After his baptism, the lone catechumen was draped with a stole as well, to serve as a symbol of his new life in Christ. It is such a privilege to have our art used in this important step in the faith life of our brothers and sisters.



Poem by Martha Bartholomew

Found!
The Beauty of being still
Ever scarce in days of yore.
I will stake a claim as I wait
Until times settle as before.
Spare me that! At least in part!
The hurry scurries – oughts and shoulds –
Their attempt to steal what is real – until
The Beauty by which I am Found becomes obscure again.
Martha Bartholomew

