



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

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A Plenitude of Poetry

Poetry by Ruthann Williams, OP

beyond
embracing the silence
of the midnight
this single moment
a ribbon of stillness
in the ever morning
searching
the stars
the moons
the eternity
beyond my knowing
my wondering
oh, God
oh, Splendor
oh, Magnificence
i kneel
in the presence
of your universe



Editor's note: After viewing the images taken from the Webb Telescope these poems were written by Ruthann Williams, OP a Caldwell Dominican. These color images demonstrate the work being accomplished by the genius of humankind to explore beyond the past limitations.



Editor's Note:

Members have been sending in all types of artistic endeavors in which they have been involved since the last Newsletter. We have received many beautiful poems and would like to feature these amazing gems in this OPalette. Enjoy this edition, which is sent to you from the center of prayer in each contributing person. -- Sr. Elizabeth Slenker, OP

Pat Daly and Ruthann had a discussion about composing a written piece. Pat likes to use a pencil. Ruthann was inspired to write this poem:

have you a pencil?
i like the feeling of a pencil
soft
yielding as baby skin
or a ripe peach
it seems to me to be
the only
way to write
a poem
pens are much too practical
too hard
and sure of themselves
too altogether righteous
for their own good
but pencils? ah,
pencils
poems just fall out of pencils
making all things possible
and – especially – erasable
for those of us
who like to change our minds.

President's Message

In 1999, when I became a DIA member and attended my first Gathering in Sinsinawa, I joined a group of Dominican men and women whose mission is to preach God's Word through our art. Through the years, we have remained true to our calling as Dominican artists and continue to proclaim the Gospel through paint brush, musical note, clay, film, stained glass, dance shoes, computer, woven fabric, and words.



Over time, I believe we have become much more than an organization of old friends who have met together and shared experiences; we have become a family. Webster defines family as "a group of common ancestry." We have become a family within the Dominican Family. We may not always agree with each other, but we are there for each other through thick and thin, no matter what. We are not just about our annual Gathering. Many of us constantly keep

in touch throughout the year. We encourage and support each other. Distance separates us, but the phone, email, and social media serve us well.

Prior to one Gathering, I was chatting with a member who was planning to attend. Due to family health issues, it had been quite a while since she had been able to be with us. This Fra Angelico recipient, an acclaimed and multi-published poet, said: "Pat, I'm coming home."

Many of us belong to local and/or national art associations, but when it comes down to who we are as Dominican artists, DIA is home. It is where others fully understand that the genesis of our work is based on that common thread woven throughout the fabric of our lives—contemplan et contemplan aliis tradere—to contemplate and to give to others the fruits of our contemplation.

In 1998, DIA was established with the mission of preaching God's Word through the arts. Today, a quarter of a century later, our preaching continues.

Take care of yourselves, stay well and be safe.

Pat



A Plenitude of Poetry continues on the next three pages.

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All Shall Be Well

Small infant stirring sounds, listen,
all is well.

Silent night,
Holy night,
Come faithful ones, Look.

Search, worry,
and find.
It's my Father's work, don't you know?

Sounds remembered, now a wall, wait, wait,
wait.

Loss, weep, sobs,
silent tears.

*Breathe,
blessed are you, be healed,
walk, speak, live!*

Lies
more lies, and more and more.

*Eat bread with us,
drink wine with us,
all of you, everyone.
Come as you are, hungry, thirsting.*

— Joseph Kilikevice, OP

Dominican Artist

by Miriam Brown, OP

My fire,
I say, is that of a
“Propagandist.”
I have a fire inside and want to spread it.

We are Dominicans:
Preacher-Artist flames
burn in us.

Light leaps up from our pallet of colors,
and shines in glorious praise.
Sparks ignite in poetic truth,
our fired clay bodies standing in love.

Orchestrating the flames
in rising crescendo
we sing and we sculpt
and give voice to the Word.



With torches to shine
on today's broken pieces
we give shape to mosaics
of Newness in light.

Holy, Holy, Holy
as we shine with the energies of the Creative
Divine.

Holy, Holy, Holy
as we are swept in the winds of the
Spirit.

Holy, Holy, Holy
as we hold up the torch of Saint
Dominic
and with Catherine we “set the world ablaze.”



Poetry by Mary Navarre, OP

A Heavenly Brick

It came down from a above like a brick,
Not a heavy, hurtful brick,
Just a bonk on the head
No damage done –
Rather an invitation,
To answer a gnawing question.
What shall I do with my life?

I was nineteen; I thought it could be anything.
Truth be told it was but three:
Teacher, nurse, secretary -
Until you marry and have five kids,
What about Gordy, the butcher's son?
No worry then about feeding the kids.

Boyfriends had been a bust so far,
I couldn't muster interest in football,
Or keggers, or spin the bottle, e-ew!
Mom slipped cigarettes and lipstick in my
purse,
A hint that it was time to find someone.
I thought, "Is this all there is?"

I wanted to climb every mountain,
Ford every stream, et cetera . . .
Not woo a boy,
Have his kids, feign happiness,
I felt no joy in that fate.
There has to be something more.

One Sunday morning
I went to Mass.
I was alone.
Before I reached the steps,
I felt the brick, saw the words
"What does it profit you to gain the whole
world,
And suffer the loss of your own soul?"

Then out of the blue,
I knew what I must do.
Write the letter.
May I come and join you?
The Sisters I had come to know
As joyful people, warm and caring,
Sometimes funny, often wise.



Dad was glad.
Mom not so, but give it a go.
Brothers – it won't be fun, Mare.
Sister – it's not fair,
You'll have hundreds of sisters, I have only one.

A new world awaited me at Marywood,
A bit medieval, but warm and welcoming.
We rose in the morning to the sound of the
bell.
The voice of God, they said.
Get out of bed, dressed, chant the morning
Office
In Latin no less.
Breakfast in the refectory.
A horarium scheduled every hour of every day.
Long habits swished about our legs.
We felt important, grown up,
In awe of all we saw and who we might be one
day.

I loved it all, and best of all
We studied theology, philosophy, literature,
History and Botany.
My life had been a bud closed tight,
Now in this place, this college,
I felt an opening, a glorious bloom,
A bright new light.

The years flew as they always do.
Things changed with the dawn of Vatican II.
The window opened, to let in fresh air,
Out with the old, in with the new.
I loved that too.

And so, I've come now to this day.
I've climbed mountains,
Forded streams,
Sixty years of joyful dreams and a little strife.
A question is gnawing,
knocking at my door.
What shall I do now with the rest of my life?



by Mary Navarre, OP



JUDGES

They were always fighting,
The Ephraimites and Midianites.
The Ammonites and Israelites
My father was one of them.

I was his daughter, his only child,
Yet, a slender reed, a maiden still,
His pride and joy.
I loved him, and he loved me.

I missed him away at war.
Then word came of victory.
I ran to meet him out the door,
hipping my tambourine with joy.

He shrieked in agony,
He had vowed to God
To sacrifice the first he would see.
Surely, it would be his faithful dog.

It was instead his faithful me.
He rent his garment.
"You have brought calamity on me!
"I have made a vow to the Lord."

.....
I knew what I must do
And made a bargain too.
"Do what you must do, but
Give me two months to lament my fate."

To the hills then, my friends and me
To weep and pray, to laugh and play,
to swim nude in mountain streams,
Sleep in each other's arms in the starlit nights,
And speak of what could never be.

It did not go as well for me
As Isaac who they say
foretold Jesus' sacrifice.
Parents name their sons for him.

No one names their daughter after me.
No word came to halt the blade.
I too, foretold the death of Jesus to the end.
Like Him - was not spared the sacrifice.

I am the nameless daughter of Jephthah.
My father kept his word
Met me at the door,
His sword was swift, his arm was strong.

I left my father to his endless wars,
His hapless friends,
His vows, his bargains,
his grief, and his despair.

Papa, do you miss me?
Go do your wars now,
Don't think of me.
I am your daughter still,

And I am free.

by Mary Navarre, OP

Judges 11:29 – 40 in the
New American Bible, Revised edition



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



A "Day Together"

The Associates of the Racine Dominicans sponsored a "Day Together" with the sisters. Four sessions were available, with everything from painting to paper box making to composting, etc. I did four sessions on Sea Glass Art. Had a delightful time with small groups of sisters. They were amazingly creative, and they were quite proud of their creations. This was held on November 12. –Kathie Solie



Labors of Love

by Annemarie Kallenbach



Recently I have had the privilege to showcase and sell to raise money for our wonderful Adrian Dominican Sisters. Katherine Dusseauat, Weber Center Gift shop, created a beautiful display of my work: crystalline and Raku ceramic hand thrown tiny jars as well as torch enameled copper earrings in time for their Christmas Open House.

Additionally, I am participating in two other holiday sales: Ann Arbor Holiday Art Fair and the Adrian Center of the Arts Holiday Mary. At one, I will be featuring

handmade books (handcrafted marbled end paper, handcrafted book cloth with a variety of stitching (Coptic, Italian long and Japanese Stab as well as simple pamphlet). I also created some origami photo albums. At the other, I did festive ceramic votive holders and mugs that feature a new store in Downtown Adrian: Mark's trading for handcrafted hot cocoa and tea blends. I also made 30 simple rings with sterling silver beads, cloisonné, and semi-precious stones. It has been a labor of love while I continue to mostly shelter in place.



Art News from Amityville

Barbara Schwarz, OP submitted the following as part of what she has accomplished this past summer. She created a video for the Homecoming Farm's Cluster event that took place 12/22/22. This work is a celebration of the monastic women Prioresses and Foundresses found on the wall of the Queen of the Rosary Chapel. If you would like to view this the link is

<https://youtu.be/9z2qRaLHHg0>. This link opened December 9.

Barbara also put together a video for Amityville's Founder's Day for the Leadership Team to be shown September 22, called "A Journey of Mission, Looking through the focus of mission in the History of the Amityville Dominicans." The link to view this is:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCWf4uIrsDzUIdAv1t-6FkvA>

To view Barbara's videos, she created for the Amityville Dominicans, their lives and works, go to:

[www.youtube.comHeritageAmityvilleOP - YouTube](http://www.youtube.comHeritageAmityvilleOP-YouTube)

Barbara also donated pieces of her photography work to these charitable organizations: Opening Word, the Ministry Gala and the Youth Preaching Movement.

Her artwork can be seen at the website below.

Barbara Schwarz, OP

www.artafire.homestead.com

Where Art and Spirituality meet!



This mandala was created by our member, Arlene Unverzagt (Amityville Associate). It was done in colored pencils.



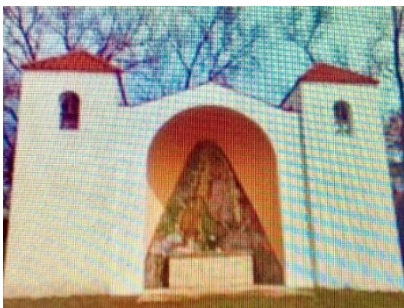
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Latest Projects by Joanne Daley, OP



*Joanne Daley's
Guadalupe
mosaic at
Endeavor,
Wisconsin*

In the late 1950's the Bishop of Madison recognized the unmet spiritual needs of the migrant workers who came through Wisconsin harvesting the crops. He is responsible for initiating the work on a plot of land that housed a shrine that contained a shrine to Our Lady of Guadalupe.

The mosaic in the shrine was created by two Dominican women, one who is our beloved DIA member, Sr. Joeann Daley. She spent her summer of 1964 constructing the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe in the shrine. Funding for the project was non-existent.

The materials to make the mosaic were collected by the migrants. The blue came from Noxema or Milk of Magnesia bottles; the brown from beer and whiskey bottles; reds from car taillights. Visitors were given pieces of glass or marble to put in place. The shrine became a community project and was a labor of love. The image of Our Lady is sixteen feet high, and thirteen feet wide housed between two pillars.



After a time when farming became more mechanized and migrants were no longer needed, the shrine was sold to a group who used it for a community center, and then when they no longer needed it, the shrine fell into disrepair. Father Grubba thought it was an important part of the town's history so

purchased it, paid the back taxes, and made plans to restore the shrine as well as the grounds. His plans include a walking path with the stations of the cross as well as a picnic area.

More information on this project can be found in the QUEEN OF THE AMERICAS GUILD, 2022 NATIONAL NEWSLETTER VOLUME 36 ISSUE 1.



My sister, Mary, at one time in the 1970s wore wigs, as did so many women during that time. She was recently cleaning out a closet and found a treasure trove of old styrofoam wig head forms and brought them to me, saying, "I thought that you might be able to do something with these!" Well, I guess she was right! Colored markers and imagination brought these three wig heads to life and now resting under the shade of the living plants.

The latest tall necked head form was ordered from a catalog. She is wearing a white stranded necklace and a rose head piece; clearly "Miss Ella" is dressed for a winter ball.

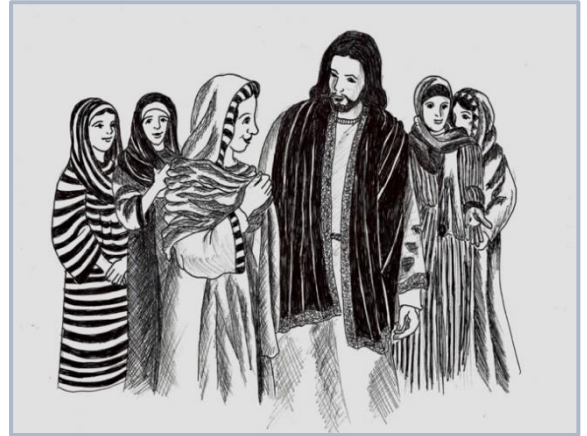


The fountain putti,
hand colored etching by
Joeann Daley

In Other Art News...

Elizabeth Slenker, OP finished her book on Expanding the Mysteries of the Rosary. She has taken Scripture Stories and illustrated her perception of the virtues of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph that she would like to emulate. In this work she also includes the friends of Jesus, his miracles and cures as well as those around him, women friends, and children.

The blue drawing, she made into her Christmas card of Joseph cuddling Mary and the Baby Jesus. The second drawing depicts the women who ministered to Jesus during his public ministry.



The Adrian Labyrinth Images from video by **Sue Schrieber, OP**

In September we rededicated our Adrian Dominican/Weber Center Labyrinth, after the restoration, and this video was made for that occasion. It gives an historical perspective in 4 minutes.

(There may be YouTube ads at the beginning.)

Labyrinth: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L6r8rnuNJjk>



A Labyrinth is a circle that contains one path leading from the outer edge to the center via a meandering route. One of the oldest known contemplative spiritual practices, these structures are found in many spiritual traditions and cultures throughout the world. The ancients knew the circle to be the sacred symbol of harmony, wholeness, integrity, and grace. During the Middle Ages, the practice of making a journey on foot to Jerusalem was no longer possible due to wars in the holy land.

As a result, labyrinths were built in cathedrals for the purpose of pilgrimage.



These are some of **John Mascazine's** latest glass art pieces He says about these works:

"I've been working on some new items and have attached a few images. I'm also working on a short reflection and request to my DIA peer artists to consider regarding how to go from words > Images. Hope to have that to you soon."



Beach Serenity



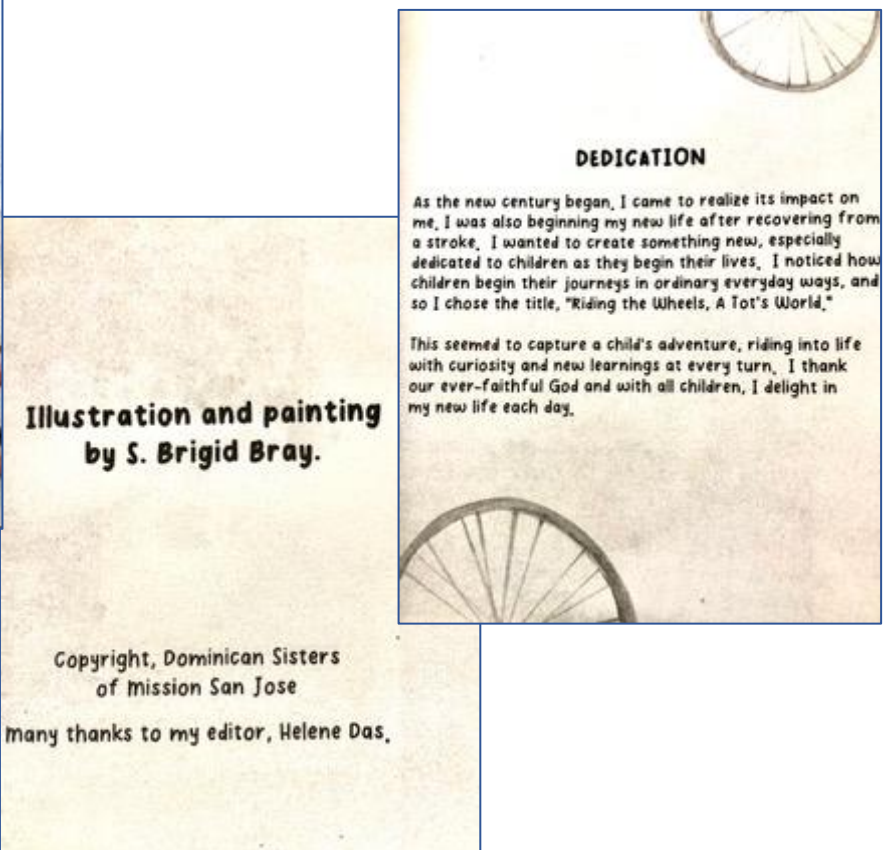
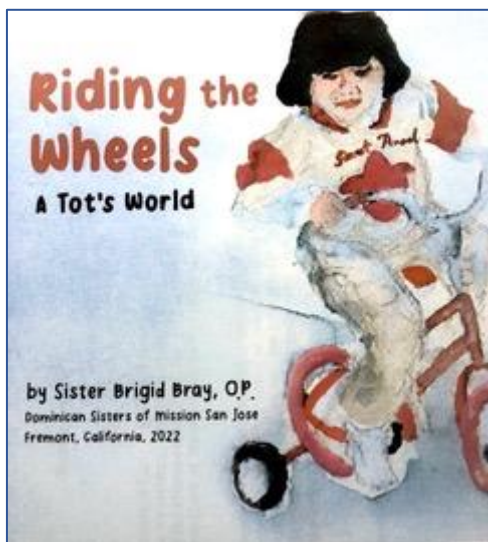
Swerve 2



Communion



This book was recently compiled by **Bridget Bray, OP**. In her dedication she relates her reason for creating her work.



Prayerfully Created from the Heart

by Donna Brunell, OP

For the past several years, my ministry has been mainly with and for local quilters. Several years ago, we formed a group we call our **Patchwork & Prayer Ministry**.

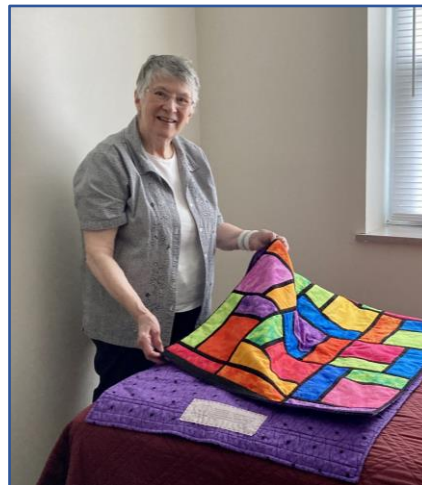
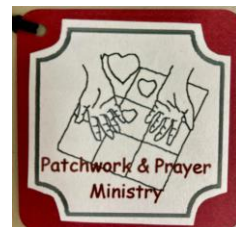
Our most recent activities have included providing a variety of handmade items to sell at Mariandale's Tree Huggers Festival in September and at the Holiday Boutique in December. The proceeds from both sales help enable the Center to continue its outreach programs.



Above: Two of a variety of mug mats available for sale at the Tree Huggers Festival. Below: One corner of the Holiday Boutique display.



Our group meets monthly for three days. Activities that have kept us busy for the past several years include making quilts that have been donated locally and globally to orphanages, nursing homes, shelters, and areas that have suffered from natural disasters. Labels and tags attached to the items include our logo and the words: "Prayerfully created from the heart by..."



Currently, we are making bed runners for the rooms at Mariandale. Each quilt contains a message letting guests know they are being included in

our prayers during their stay. We are amazed at the positive reaction we receive from guests who find in the quilt's artistry a source of reflection during their retreat.

Over the years, our group has established a bond that has sustained us during the pandemic and given us opportunities to build relationships and a sense of community while enjoying a ministry that is both fruitful and meaningful.

