



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

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## *Jo-Ann Iannotti's Latest Creations*

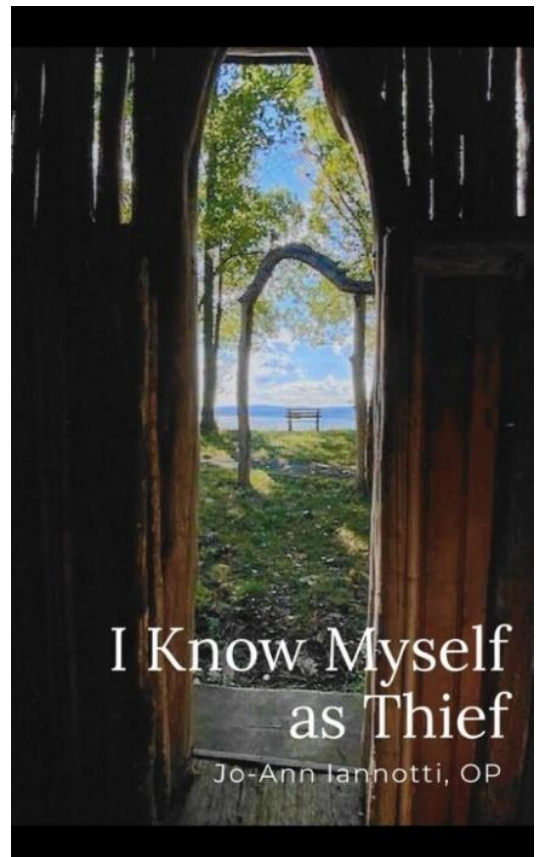


Jo-Ann Iannotti, OP has just completed two new adventures in different realms. She has launched a website, [twoarts.org](http://twoarts.org). You will be delighted browsing her website. Jo-Ann also completed a new book of poetry and photography. The book is a wonderful read and inspiration. Jo-Ann has used her innate talent to accomplish what she has received from other artists to create her own works of wonder, hence the title, *I Know Myself as Thief*. Her poem reflects her appreciation of what she has gained from being enriched by others.

### *Reading Other Poets*

When I sit in awe at the sound of  
their words,  
listen to the journeys of  
their hearts,  
walk in the richness of  
their memories,  
I know myself as thief.  
I know the envy in  
my heart  
wants, most of all,  
to steal  
their silence.

Jo-Ann Iannotti, OP



## President's Message



After the harsh, hard, cold Winter, how beautiful is the Spring! It is so refreshing to be able to go outside without all the winter paraphernalia of sweaters, hats, gloves, thick coats, scarves, and boots. I hope you are as delighted as I to see the trees blossom, and the flowers bloom with such profusely amazing variety of colors. Then there is the grass that suddenly turns from brown to green and grows so fast it needs mowing earlier than usual. The weeds, the ever-present problem of things growing where you don't want them takes a lot of vigilance. Then there is the nursing along of the plants you hope will produce nice vegetables later. Keeping up with the grass, the weeds and tending the garden is a time-consuming task. Spring cleaning, de-cluttering, brightening up the living space all happens at this time. But there is the precious time is set aside for the important task of Preaching the Word of God through Art. I'm hoping that the rest of you have been able to keep a handle on the very quick pace life has seemed to increase in speed. How about your artistic production? What have you created in response to "Times Such as These?" How have you "Preached Through Your Art?" This is, of course, the theme of our Gathering in July 2025 at Adrian. Don't forget to send in your Registration Packet. It will be a very informative Gathering with innovative exploration of new things to do, and discussion of what you want to see for the future. If you're not there we can't hear you. If you know someone with an artistic flair associated with the Dominican Order, invite them to join us. Have a wonderful Spring.



### Note from the Editor:

Sr. Elizabeth Slenker has resumed the role of Editor of the OPalette. May you find this issue in good order. May you enjoy this Newsletter and information. May your production be as fruitful as the articles sent in by Members who share their creations with us in this edition of the OPalette. Remember this is a Newsletter by the Membership, for the Membership, about the Membership. If you are involved in a project including non-members, please make sure you are in the photo. The rest of us love to read about what you have been doing with your artistic talent and productive creativity.

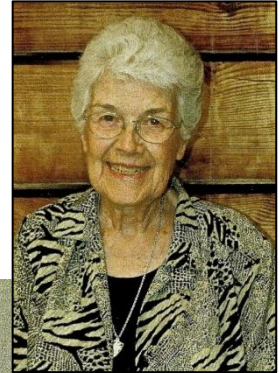
Sr. Elizabeth Slenker, OP, Editor



**Please send website submissions to: Sr. Barbara Schwarz OP at [Artafire@hotmail.com](mailto:Artafire@hotmail.com)**

## Rebecca's Cookies

Sr. Rebecca Otter takes her name seriously. For the holidays she made little "Otter" cookies for her family to enjoy. How clever to use cute little otters as gifts for the Otter family. Rebecca also shows her skill in crafting cookie bouquets for special occasions. In the Membership List Rebecca lists cake decorating as one of her artistic disciplines. Rebecca is also a gifted musician.



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## Welcome to our New Members

Four new members have joined the Dominican Institute for the Arts. They are: Kathleen Williams, OP, a Spiritus Sanctus Lay Dominican from Florida. Kathleen is pictured here with some of her paintings. We look forward to meeting you in person and getting to know you.

Sorry, there are no photos of the others.

Linda Lysakowski, an Adrian Dominican Associate hails from Kansas City, Missouri. She met the Adrian Dominicans in Utah where the sisters are involved in hospital ministries.

Donna Nesbit, a Peace Dominican Associate joins DIA from Reynoldsburg, Ohio. She was introduced and encouraged to become a DIA member by our John Mascazine. Donna works in Fiber Art and Painting. Donna is taking on line courses to improve her painting skills and hone her craft. She's involved with the Dominican Sisters of Peace ecology center, Shepherd's Corner. She has been very successful as a plein aire painter. Donna is involved in her local parish of St. Pius X in Reynoldsburg.



Gaye Reissland, a Peace Dominican Associate joins DIA from Columbus, Ohio. Gaye works with the Peace Dominicans in their Mother house as the Activities Coordinator. Gaye claims her disciplines as painting, mixed media and visual arts. We can thank John again for convincing Gaye to join DIA.

Welcome to all of you and may you enjoy the comradery and fellowship of DIA



## Special Greeting Cards

Who doesn't like to get a nice greeting card on a special occasion? Designing greeting cards is a fulfilling way to use one's natural creativity and artistic talent! A greeting card starts with an idea. Like all artists, greeting card designers must constantly remain in search of potential inspiration. Once the



designer has the nugget of an idea in mind, they need to get that idea on paper.

Completing the art is often only half the battle. Sometimes the artwork alone can convey the message and words are not needed. The note written by the sender completes the product.

Sr. Marian Diedrick goes a step farther. She creates her cards out of embroidery thread. This card represents her work. Someone who receives such a card keeps it as a work of art long after the occasion has passed. Sr. Marian how blessed are they who receive one of your amazing embroidery cards.



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## DIA Collaboration



It's a good and wonderful feeling when DIA members can share ideas, but even more so, to share resources. When I heard that my friend and Art Professor, Janette Knowles at Ohio Dominican University was in need of a kiln to upgrade and teach her ceramics courses, I thought of Mary Pat Reid. Mary Pat had mentioned to me that she had a kiln she was "seeking a new home for," and I put them in contact with each other.

Long story short: Janette was able to drive from Columbus, Ohio to Caldwell, NJ to retrieve the kiln and various other supplies. It was a win - win situation. I'm so grateful that DIA members are willing to share such resources and make meaningful contacts. This too, is how we preach and extend the reign of God's kingdom. I just wanted to share this one example that connected two communities:

Ohio Dominican and the Caldwell Dominicans. It's another benefit of being part of a caring and sharing community as DIA.

By John Mascazine

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## ***Memorials***

### ***Antonetta Martinka, OP***

Our dear Member Sr. Antonetta Martinka, OP, Sinsinawa Dominican, departed this life but will be remembered for all she contributed to the Dominican Institute for the Arts. Better known to DIA as "Tink" she entertained us with her extraordinary productions. Tink stood out in her exotic wardrobe which consisted of head apparel, shawls, scarves and flowing gowns. Tink never missed a Coffee House at



the Gala. She came up with skits about current events in a timely, humorous satire. We all remember her production in Springfield of her response to the Pontifical Visitation. There are members who laugh every time they think of how she put together a barnyard of different animals to respond to the situation.

At the nursing center where she lived, she kept up her avant garde characteristic with a little spot of purple in her snow-white hair that made her a standout among the other residents. She had a horn on her walker to let you know she was coming. She sent an article to the OPalette, the DIA Newsletter where she praised the caregivers and staff at the nursing home. We will miss you Tink. You have been a very special member of DIA. Entertaining, yet profound in your message of justice and fairness you got across your point in a humorous way. May you rest peacefully in the arms of your Creator and keep Heaven in stitches with your incredible skits.

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### *Sr. Sarajane Seaver*

Our special Dominican Institute for the Arts Member of over 25 years, Sr. Sarajane, better known to us as Seaver the Weaver, is now in Heaven probably joyfully at a loom creating some magical amazing piece. Sara Jane not only wove threads together, but she also included what she loved into her work. She wove music into her pieces. How she was able to do this was very intricate. She needed music with a five, rather than an octave scale. She found this in Gregorian Chant and used the Salva Regina as her inspiration. These special music shawls were premium, and wanted by other members of the DIA.



Sara Jane was a loyal member of DIA and attended the yearly Gatherings when she could. It was always refreshing for the rest of us when she came because she was such a joyful person. When she was diagnosed with memory challenges, she faced it with the same determination as creating a piece of weaving on her loom. When she was first diagnosed, she expressed her love by going to classrooms and telling children whose grandparents might be suffering from the effects of memory loss, to be there for them. These grandparents might not be aware of repeating the same question many times, but for the children to know how important it was for them to keep on loving their grandparents more than the illness. Being there, being loved by someone who might appreciate the presence of another was more important than trying to hold a conversation that might be difficult. With all mental conditions there are times when a person doesn't know or recognize anyone, but there are also those times when



***Seamless Garment***

memory is triggered by a word, a present, or presence of another that jogs the person into reality rather than being trapped in the fog of the illness.

We at DIA will miss our Sister, Sarajane, but we know she is happily examining all the tapestries hanging in heaven, and probably creating a weaving that not only includes music, but dance, poetry, painting, and all the other forms of art created by the members of the DIA. Sarajane Seaver, the Weaver, may you rest in the arms of your Divine Maker and happily continue your creative work in the heavenly realm. Be at peace. We love you.

### *Sr. Pauline Oplinger, OP, Adrian Dominican*



Pauline grew up in rural Kansas. She was educated in a small one-room schoolhouse. As a daughter of a Preacher, she knew the Scriptures well. She fell in love with art at a young age. She took every class that was available to her in the rural setting, at summer camps, and one-day classes. She decided in order to be an artist, she would need to be immersed in the art culture so moved to New York City, where she was exposed to the art world center. She had very few resources. Wanting an art degree, she attended Rockford College in Illinois because there she could afford the tuition. She decided to attend St. James, a beautiful esthetic Cathedral near the college campus. She was converted to Catholicism in 1953. Along the way she met the Adrian Dominicans and entered the Congregation in 1956.

Pauline holds an M.A. in Theology, and an M.F.A. with an emphasis in painting. She also gained certification in ceramics, computer graphics and calligraphy.

Pauline spent her years as an Adrian Dominican, teaching high school art. In her productivity she never forgot her early roots and captured the simple beauty of nature in her creative work. When she “re-tired” from teaching, she “re-directed” her energy into teaching art in the nearby prison. She took on the ministry of creating beautiful works of calligraphy related to the feast of the day with Biblical quotations and meaningful backgrounds. Shown are some samples of her work. These hung outside Rosary Chapel. Those who entered the chapel and attended the services had their hearts raised by her work capturing the essence of the feast.



We can say about Pauline that she was a quiet person. “Still water runs deep.” In her unassuming way Pauline had a profound impact on her students and the religious sisters with whom she lived. She loved to be with the community to worship. She loved to attend Mass. It wasn’t enough for her to sit on the balcony of the Chapel. She would get someone to push her wheelchair so she could be with the church congregation.

Pauline joined the Dominican Institute for the Arts in 2005 and has been a faithful member since. We of DIA are sorry to hear of her passing and hold Pauline in our prayer. May she rest in the arms of her Divine Creator as she lovingly pens her calligraphy to remind those in Heaven of the feast being celebrated today.



Sr. Elizabeth Slenker, OP, DIA President  
(Information about Pauline from her faithful friend, Sr. Susan VanBaalén)



## *The Parting*

The day began with its familiar stir.  
But for her, everything seems grey.  
Today, her son is leaving home.  
The hidden life is over.  
To it and to her, He must say farewell.  
They linger over breakfast,  
Remembering the happy times  
They shared together.  
They talked about Joseph....  
He loved him so much.....  
And how she so deeply misses  
His loving and caring ways.

How can she let Him go?  
Yet she must.  
For this leaving is also part of her Fiat.  
The time for lingering is over and the  
Separation comes at last.  
A kiss upon His cheek,  
A long and warm embrace,  
A broken sob.

She walks him to the gate  
And for one long moment  
Their eyes meet.  
There is no need for words  
Because their eyes,  
Mirrors of each other,  
Say it all!!

He walks down the road  
And she watches.  
One final glimpse  
As he turns the corner  
And he is gone.

Entering the empty house,  
Her eyes water.  
She sees his cup and plate,  
The loaf of bread they shared  
Just a short while ago,  
The chair He made for her when  
He took over Joseph's work  
His worn out sandals laid  
Upon the floor...  
He no longer needed them but  
She will keep them anyway.

Great streams of sunlight  
Play upon the wall,  
The loneliness moves in  
And she gives into her tears.

Pat Daly (Undated)



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### **A Leaning Tree on the Marian Woods Campus**

Roots weakening and letting go  
The tree has fallen  
But the strength of another  
Being the symbol of support  
Embraces this leaning tree.

The seasons come and go  
And the leaning tree  
Loses leaves and continues  
To lean in the cold and snow.  
The sun shines, the winds blow  
And the rains come showering  
down  
Embracing the leaning tree.

All that we need to do in life  
Is to acknowledge our roots that  
Weaken in time.

Give in to letting go.  
Recognize and accept the  
Strength of God and others.

As we continue to lean  
On the power of this embrace  
So generously shared with us,  
And the leaning tree

By Beverly Vetrano, OP.



## ***Hidden Gems: Works by Sr. Barbara Schwarz, OP***

Have you ever suddenly discovered something new about the person with whom you have had a long acquaintance, and whom you thought you knew? As I was working on a project for the Gathering, I came across a piece of information that I term a “hidden gem.” Among her many talents as designer, organizer, painter, artist, and preacher I learned that Sr. Barbara Schwarz is also a sculptor. This piece of information was tucked among her disciplines in the Membership List. I called her to ask what type of sculpture she did. She sent me a plethora of sculptures she has carved, formed, and assembled. I want to share these with you because her sculpture is impressive. Sr. Barbara shares her many talents with the rest of us, but her sculptures were “hidden gems.” I present it to you because this enlightenment needs to be put on the lampstand to shine out to the rest of us as inspiration and incentive. What other talents are hidden among the DIA Members that we do not know? What discoveries await us as we peel back the layers of hidden talent as we grow to embrace the skill of our artists. *By E. Slenker*

Sculptures by Sr. Barbara Schwarz, OP



## Year of the Snake

Our Sister Mary Anna Euring has created the following poem and graphic to honor the Chinese Year of the Snake. Although it didn't make the Winter Issue of the OPalette, may you enjoy it now and find the wisdom in her creation of Sophia.

### Ode to Sophia

You slithered across my path, startling me, frightening me,  
awakening me.  
You draw me closer and I forget my fear, it just melts away  
in the wonder of your Presence.  
Fascinated, I take you in, all of you, all two & one-half feet of  
you!  
As we silently gaze at each other, commune with each other,  
you exude your simple earthy wisdom: Show up! Be still!  
Listen attentively! Just be!  
Each day we meet and gaze some more.  
Are you really listening, head raised and alert, to the same Cardinal's Song as I? What vibrations do  
you sense?  
How do you feel as you glide along the cool dew-wet grass in this new days morn?  
Do you sense my gazing at you? I think you really do! my new Sabbath Friend.  
One stifling hot & humid day, I can't find you anywhere.  
Are you keeping cool in your underground home?  
Perhaps inviting me to delve beneath the surface, and wait for Mystery to unfold?  
You speak to me of the reality of change that leads to Transformation.  
"Letting-go" when the skin you're in just doesn't fit anymore.  
As I gaze, I ponder: what doesn't fit any more in my present life of transition,  
and pray for your gift of "skin-shedding" that you seem to do so naturally.  
I'm amazed at the uniqueness of your 'new' shimmering skin.  
Has anyone ever told you that you're beautiful?  
The last few days I showed-up, but you didn't.  
As silently as you slithered into my life, you appear to have slithered silently away.  
Are you hiding? Did I disturb your Solitude?  
Unknowingly, you have deepened mine!  
You, my startling, sensuous, Sabbath Friend, have transformed me by your Presence, and taught me  
that Sophia/Wisdom will continue to reveal herself in unexpected and surprising ways.  
And so...I wait...in Silence.



Mary Anna Euring, OP

Summer Sabbath during transition from F/T as Director of Pastoral Care to P/T as Bereavement Counselor

## Spread the Good News

In the Winter Edition of the Sparkill Dominican's Newsletter to its Donors and Membership, Sister Elizabeth Slenker was asked to write an article about the Dominican Institute for the Arts. These are some of the excerpts from her article.

The Dominican Institute for the Arts is an organization established in 1998 for Dominican Artists. The goal of DIA (Dominican Institute for the Arts) is to Preach the Word of God through Art. It includes all forms of art from painting to pottery, to poetry, to performance, to photography. Preaching the Word of God can be sacred movement, creations in fabric art, greeting cards, or other art forms in which our members are involved to enliven and enrich the lives of those to whom we minister.

Elizabeth went through the DIA Membership List and identified all the artistic disciplines in which our members are involved. This list shows the breadth of endeavor of our members.

Acrylic painting 2	Healing arts 9	Presenter
Appreciator 5	Iconography 3	Printmaking
Art therapy 3	Illustrator 3	Presenter 1
Basketry 1	Interior Design 1	Printmaking 3
Cake Decorating 1	Japanese Tea Ceremony 1	Quilt making 3
Calligraphy 7	Jewelry 2	Reiki 1
Card making 3	Knitting 3	Sculptor 5
Ceramics 3	Liturgical Dance 4	Sea Glass 1
Clay 1	Metal Arts 1	Social Justice 1
Clowning 2	Mime 1	Stained Glass 5
Computer art 3	Mixed Media 3	Stamping 1
Digital Art 1	Musician 17	Styroart 1
Drawing 3	Painting 28	Textiles 2
Drumming 2	Paper craft 3	Visual art 9
Embroidery 3	Pastel 1	Vocalist 5
Embossing 1	Photography 12	Watercolor 4
Fiber 2	Poetry 16	Weaving 3
Film making 3	Pottery 4	Woodcarving 2
Graphics 8	Preaching 14	Writing 15



Elizabeth acknowledged our Patron is Blessed Fra Angelico, an early 15<sup>th</sup> Century, early Renaissance Dominican Friar artist whose works created 500 years ago remain as fresh and inspiring today as they were for those who first beheld them. Each year one DIA participant is honored as the recipient of the Fra Angelico Award for excellence in artistic achievement.

Art in its many forms touches the heart and soul of those who view or participate and influence other artists to more contemplative creativity. The simplest design can inspire another to conjure



amazing possibilities. When an artist freely releases a work, it can impress the imagination of others who use the initial idea to build an amazing work of art that can impact a great number of people. It may be years later that the originator of the initial piece learns the affect the work has influenced on someone's life and creative juices.

Preaching the Word of God Through Art is not a one-time sermon, heard and often forgotten, but a lasting homily that continues to Preach the Word of God. Have you ever been so moved by the work of art that it brought you to tears? That Preaching is not forgotten, and the art form continues to preach. Think of Michelangelo's powerful Pieta that has influenced so much art.

If you are an artist; beginner, casual, professional or dabbler, and would like to participate in feeding your creative soul, we would like to encourage you to join our amazing, creative, courageous group. For further information you can visit our website, [Artafire@hotmail.com](mailto:Artafire@hotmail.com)



Michelangelo's Pieta



Will It Ever Stop? (Elizabeth Slenker 2024)

