



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

Volume 26, Number 2 – Spring/Summer 2024 – www.diartsop.org

A Dynamic Duo in the Art Room

On just about any Monday morning, the second floor Art Room at Siena Center, Racine, is alight and abuzz. The energy is fresh and dynamic, and the conversation is brisk. Sr. Mary Vosters and Sr. Barbara Kukla are in their Monday Art Session! Members of DIA since 2001 and 2000 respectively, they are quick to point out their passion for art and its place as both preaching and prayer.

There are several elements that make this duo unique. First, they started painting on Monday mornings in the Art Room, starting around 2013 after Mary Vosters retired from Siena Center. Mary wanted to devote more time to her art and took art instruction from one or two Sisters. Later in 2013, Mary called Barbara Kukla, who was ministering in Ohio and West Virginia at the time, to move back to Siena to teach Mary art. Barbara says it took her a year to make the decision and the move, but she was in house at Siena by 2014, teaching art as therapy to domestic abuse survivors, and teaching art to Mary.

Secondly, starting in 2014, Mary and Barbara fostered artistry at Siena, inviting Sisters and Associates alike to come “do art” on Mondays in the large art studio. A number of Sisters and Associates, including Associate Mary Jane Lorentzen, took them up on the invitation. Mary Jane’s husband Ralph was happy when “MJ” did Art at Siena on Mondays, saying that MJ was always in a happy mood after those art sessions.

Thirdly, Barbara and Mary began working together three years ago in a way neither of them ever imagined.

Long about 2021, Mary contracted a severe strain of COVID-19, and as a result, lost her eyesight. Mary was left with ability to see shadows and colors, but not words. Quickly, Barbara became Mary’s “eyes.” A year ago, Barbara announced to the community that she had been diagnosed with health issues. These experiences have provided important life lessons for both Sisters. Mary has taught Barbara to let go of the idea that both should be painting the same way and style. Barbara has taught Mary the joy of interdependence, as Barbara places the watercolor (Mary’s preferred medium) paper on the art table and frames it with tape, allowing Mary to feel the dimensions of her piece as she applies primary watercolors.

They both recognize the life lessons this experience has taught them. Mary says that she has taught Barb how to be friends, and to let go of the idea that they both should be painting the same way. Barbara has encouraged Mary’s art, especially during the times when health issues nearly overcame both of them. They have both learned to trust and let go. As Barbara says,

“At first, health issues complicated the letting go, but lately it has helped to bring opposites together.”

Both draw on the spirituality of their time together. As Mary says, “We give one another courage, strength, and enthusiasm to continue. We inspire one another.” They also recognize the profound nature of their creativity.

“The way I do art is the way I see God,” Barbara declares. And Mary, in her DIA apron, agrees.



—by Associate Mare Wheeler

President's Message

Recently, while browsing through my "Save for Future" file, I came across a 2021 email sent by one of our members. It seems so appropriate for our world today, I wanted to share it with you. Here it is.

This is your assignment:



Feel all things. Feel the hard things. The inexplicable things, the things that make you disavow humanity's capacity for redemption. Feel all the maddening paradoxes. Feel overwhelmed, crazy. Feel uncertain. Feel angry. Feel powerless. Feel frozen.

And then **FOCUS**

Pick up your pen. Pick up your paintbrush. Pick up your damn chin. Put your two calloused hands on the turntables, in the clay, on the strings. Get behind the camera. Look for the pinprick of light. Look for the truth (yes, it is a thing---it still exists.)

Focus on that light. Enlarge it. Reveal the fierce urgency of now. Reveal how shattered we are, how capable of being repaired. But don't lament the break. Nothing would be built if things were never broken. A wise man once said: there's a crack in everything. That's how the light gets in. Get after the light.

This is your assignment.

Courtney E. Martin

Those are powerful words. I'm happy that I found them at this time. I wanted this message to you to be special. As many of you know, come July 2024, per our DIA Constitution, I will have served the maximum terms on the Board but will continue on it as ex-officio for one year with voice but no vote.

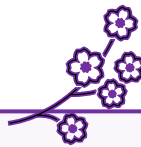
I want to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you for the support and encouragement you have given me. Also to thank the Leadership Teams, Communicators and Associate Directors of the Dominican Congregations. By personally reaching out to individual members who are artists but not DIA members, several of them have joined us in our journey to preach God's Word through art.

I have loved every minute of serving as DIA President even the challenging ones (and there were a few of those).

Take care of yourselves. Am looking forward to being with many of you this coming July at our Gathering at the Weber Center in Adrian.

Peace,

Pat



From the Editor:

This OPalette is filled with our members' activities of Preaching the Word of God through Art. May their industry and productivity be an inspiration to all of us to do the same.

DIA CONTACTS

Pat Daly OPA

President

480 Liberty Street
Braintree MA 02184
781-843-8137
pmdaly@yahoo.com

Ann Marie Santen OP

Vice President

5555 Dugan
St. Louis MO 63110
C: 314-952-7930
annmsanten@gmail.com

Elizabeth Slenker OP

Secretary

9921 Benson Avenue
St Ann MO 63074-3606
314-954-5677
slenkeree@yahoo.com

Joella Miller OP

Treasurer

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

Mary Pat Reid OP

Membership

1 Ryerson Avenue
Caldwell NJ 07006
973-518-1938
marypreid@gmail.com

Irene Mary Diones OP

Member at Large

43326 Mission Circle
Fremont CA 94539
H: 510-657-2468
C: 510-673-5588 (preferred)
Irene@msjdominicans.org

John Mascazine OPA

Member at Large

PO Box 433
Dublin OH 43017
614-565-4822
twineducation@yahoo.com

The Care and Feeding of Community Arts Development:
Joeann Daley & the
Montana Arts Council

This article appeared in the Montana Care and Feeding of Community Art Development about our esteemed Fra Angelico recipient, Joeann Daley. She got a first page spread as well as a second page of her work among the people of Anaconda, Montana of preaching the Word of God through art. The Montana piece about Joeann was printed on a large 11"x17" double pages article and went out to folks all over Montana and the country. I have no idea how many people saw it.

In October 2023 Sr. Joeann Daley returned to Montana from her home in Michigan to celebrate the Montana Art Museum exhibition of her prints and collage works "Montana Remembered." The works were created between 1969 and 1984. Many more prints were made from the plates etched then. The show celebrates an important career in the state's cultural history.

Daley played a formative role in the development of rural arts programs and has especially been touted for her own artistic practice and for her optimism, enthusiasm, and dedication as a community organizer.

While living in Anaconda she documented the everyday life of the people who lived there, without nostalgia, capturing an era of change.

In 1971 while Anaconda was in the middle of a company strike Daley helped the community create the Copper Village Museum and Art Center in an abandoned church.

"It's important for me to experience, to look and to feel, then to translate these visual experiences into a visual form which captures the essence rather than the reproduction of a reality."

Daley likened her efforts to one of the many weavers of the Montana tapestry which is people

taking ordinary stuff out of ordinary lives and creating magic with it.

For fifteen years after Montana, Joeann divided her time between Sinsinawa and Dominican High School in Whitefish Bay where she was an "artist presence" in the school and the broader community. Art classes and people from the area came to her printmaking studio for artist gatherings and art exhibits. When the school had other needs for this space Joeann discovered a whole new art form that she could do in her art apartment and would be using her engraving skills on Styrofoam cups rather than metal plates. She called it "Styroart!" She currently lives in Shorewood but will eventually be living with her Sinsinawa Dominican Sisters at Stair Crest Retirement Center in Muskego, Wisconsin.



Art, Music, and Shinnecock Kelp Farmers

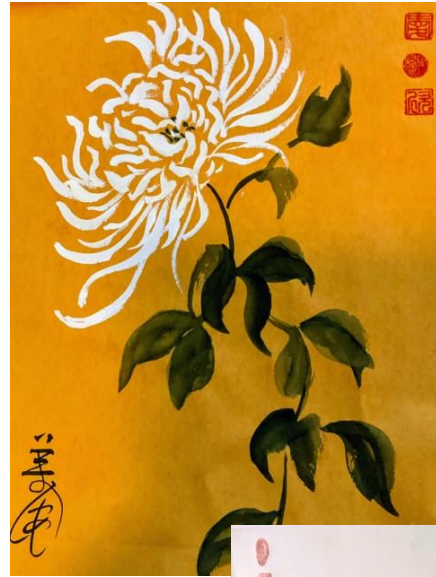
Do you believe that talking to your plants and playing music will help them grow?

Here on Long Island, my Amityville Dominican Congregation and the Brentwood Sisters of St. Joseph have been collaborating to support the Shinnecock Women Kelp Farmers project to grow kelp in Hampton Bays as their ancestors did before them. Kelp (seaweed) can help remedy water pollution and climate change issues and also be utilized as an eco-friendly fertilizer.

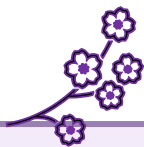
We were invited by the Shinnecock women to take part in their “Kind Words” zoom gatherings by offering prayers to encourage the growth of the tiny kelp seedlings. As a musician, I recorded peaceful flute music for them, and as an Asian Brush Painter, helped support the project financially with proceeds from my recent art exhibit held at The Barnes Gallery in Garden City.

Since the energy created by prayer is boundless, I also invite you to support this project by sending “long-distance” prayer. For more information, just google “Shinnecock Women Kelp Farmers” and also listen to my peaceful flute music on YouTube: “Sister Mary Anna Euring Plays the Flute for Kelp.”

—by Mary Anna Euring, OP



(Editor's note: I listened to the piece on YouTube. It is beautiful, worth the meditative time of 2:47.)



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

In the News!

Sr. Barbara Schwarz

On March 21, 2024, Sr. Barbara Schwarz received the Preachers of Peace Award at the Third Annual Gala entitled Kindling Creativity.

Barbara's Plaque reads:

Sr. Pat Brady Award
Sr. Barbara Schwarz, OP
For your contribution in furthering the Charism
Of the Dominican Order to our youth.
With our thanks, the Dominican Youth Movement
DYMUSA Gala 2024

To see the entire presentation go to: [DYMUSA 3rd Annual Gala Video.](#)

The presentation to Sr. Barbara happens at about 36:40 into the presentation. Sr. Peggy McVetty, OP, Prioress of the Amityville Dominicans says to Barbara, *"You are a Preacher. You are a preacher by your lifestyle, in your heart, mind, body and soul. You've shown that time and time again, through your videos, your art, your preaching, whether it be on video or locally. My favorite way of your preaching is your writing. You have a depth that words cannot describe..."*



The whole Leadership team of the Amityville Dominicans also congratulated Barbara on her work and encouraged her to continue to "do the work of God."

Even Barbara's sibling, Margaret, spoke of Barbara's dedication to her artwork and creativity as a gift from God. She still has a wooden box Barbara decorated for her. Margaret says that Barbara has given her time and talent for the glory of God, to do the mission of the Dominican Order, to go and preach the Gospel.



The presenter of the award, Sr. Gin Fleming, OP, said that whenever the DYMUSA has called upon Barbara she has always been there for them, and that the organization is eternally grateful.

Our own President, Pat Daly, OPA, included in the video, congratulated Barbara on her preaching through the Arts.

Sr. Barbara, you spread your love through your preaching and through your art. Congratulations.

MarySue Schwab

I just found out that my painting was accepted in the 131st Women's Art Club Show of Cincinnati! So excited! April 7th- April 28th. -MarySue



Sister Mary Anna Euring

Sr. Mary Anna Euring's Poster for her Art Exhibit and sale to help the immigrants on Long Island.



Phylliss M. Chappell

Our Member, Doctor Phylliss Chappell keeps a very busy schedule. Here is a list of her presentations, journal articles and traveling she has done recently.

The Hidden Effects Medical Notes May Have on Patient Care. This presentation explored the negative effects on healthcare of stigmatizing comments about Black patients in the medical record. Houston Methodist Hospital Employee Resource Group: Black Ties for Culture.

We Must Express Our Faith! The Impact of Religious Faith on Decision-making in End-of-Life Care. These presentations included, with permission, the artwork of Janet McKenzie.

The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, 26th Annual Supportive and Palliative Care Clinical and Research Symposium.

2023 Conference on Medicine and Religion, held at The Ohio State University

Annual Assembly of the American Academy of Hospice and Palliative Medicine, Montreal, Canada

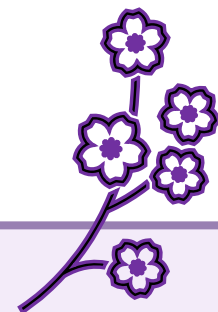
International Conference on Communication in Healthcare. We Must Express Our Faith! An Artistic and Narrative Exploration of the Impact of Religious Faith on Decision-Making in End-of-Life Care. San Juan, Puerto Rico

Journal Article Published: We Must Express Our Faith! The Impact of Religion and Spirituality on End-of-Life Surrogate Decision Making. Journal of Pain and Symptom Management.

Journal Article Accepted for Publication: Holding on to Faith. Journal of Palliative Medicine

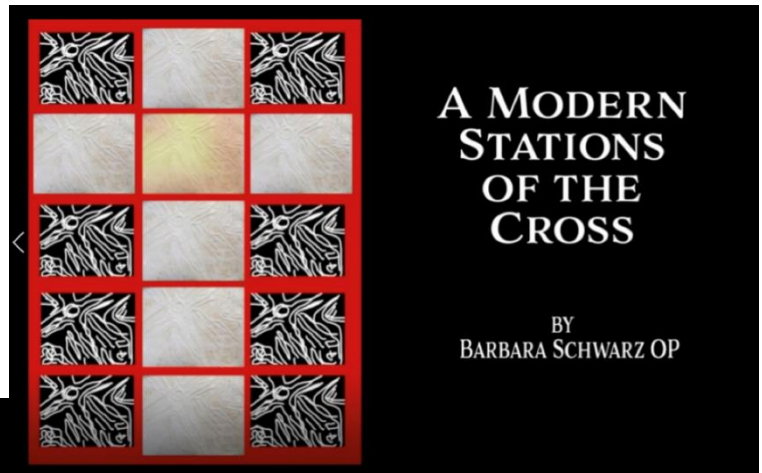
See you at the 2024 Gathering in Adrian MI – July 22-25!

Don't Forget: At the Gathering there will be a Coffee House. Bring your talent, get your act together, strut your stuff. The Coffee House is only as good as you make it. We've had musicians, dancers, clowns, comedians, groups perform together, funny stories, poetry readings, or whatever you can imagine that might be entertaining. Get your act together.



Sister Barbara Schwarz Shares Her Lenten Works of Art

Sr. Barbara Schwarz, OP has created a powerful set of the Stations of the Cross. You can visit her website, www.artafire.homestead.com, Where Art and Spirituality meet to view all of them, and perhaps treat yourself.



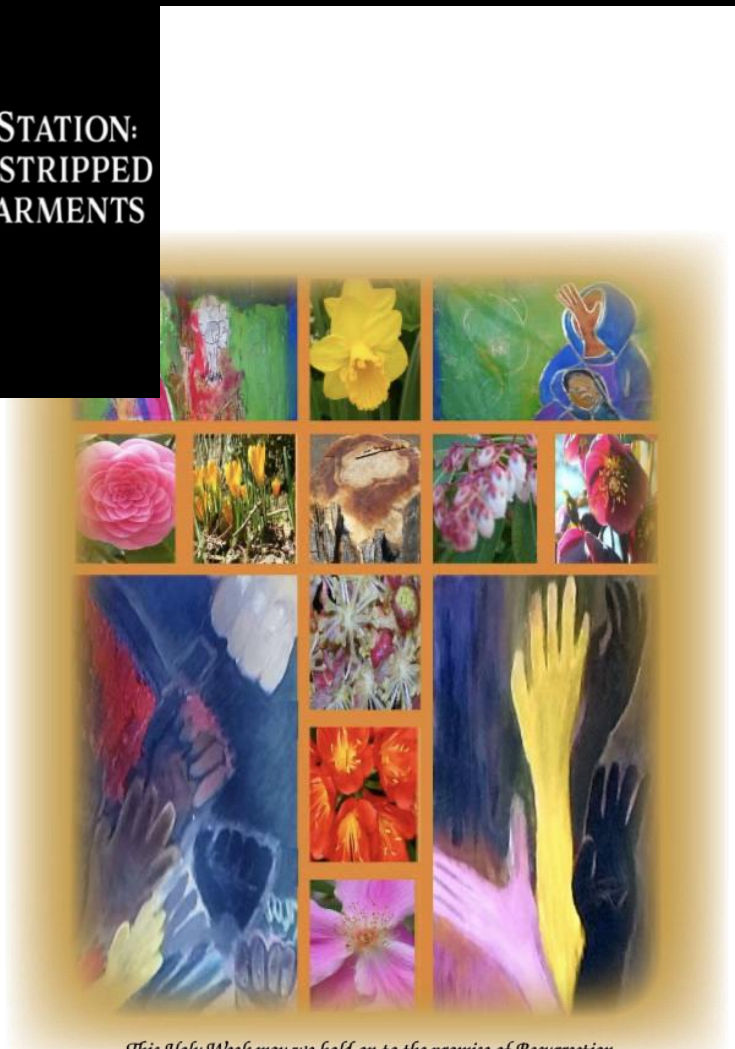
**TENTH STATION:
JESUS IS STRIPPED
OF HS GARMENTS**

people who are broken -
those on chemotherapy
persons whose rights are
violated, the unjustly accused
robbery victims, those
murdered, burglarized
clearcut forests, climate
change

persons treated as numbers
HIV, AIDS, Ebola victims
those living in abject poverty
seniors living alone whose
loved ones have died, refugees
destruction of rainforests
war destroyed towns &
villages, rape victims, those
sexually molested



A work of art from Sr. Barbara Schwarz, OP sharing Holy Week.



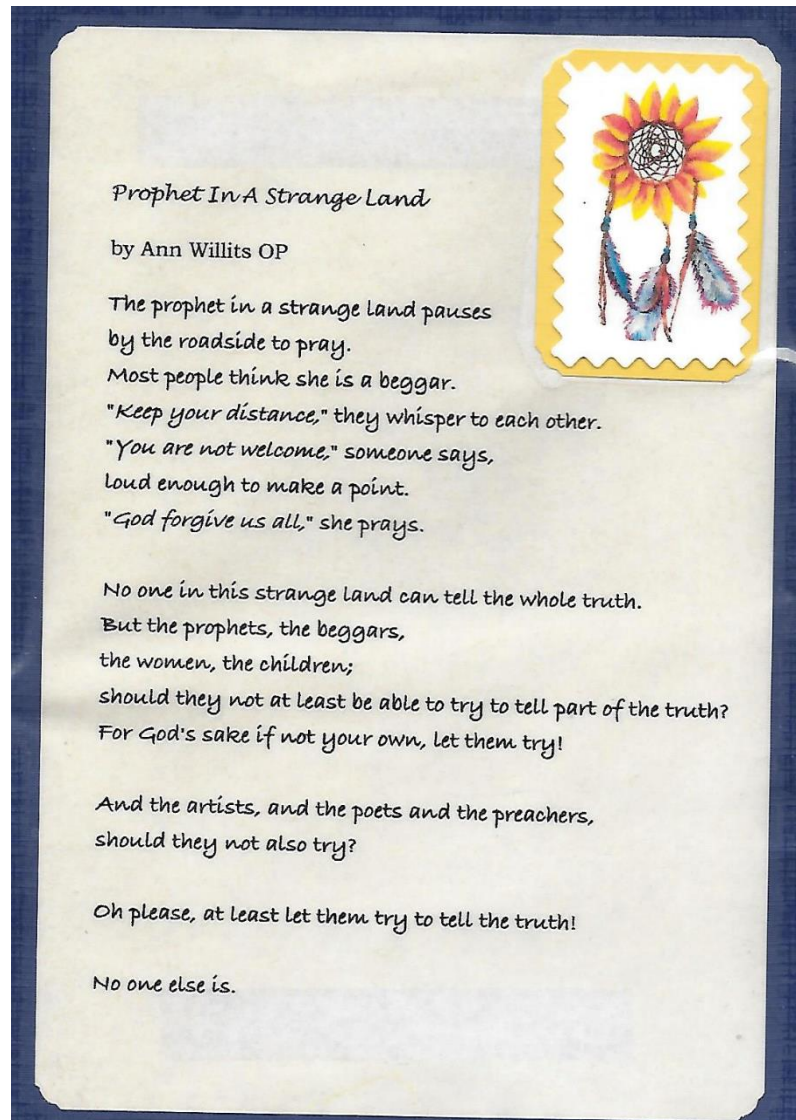
*This Holy Week may we hold on to the promise of Resurrection
and the hope that in Christ Jesus all things are possible.
I may know not how but I hold you in Love
which is the only power and authority that matters.
Barbara*

A Heart Full of Gratitude

A heart full of gratitude
Has the power to move boulders
To carry legions of warriors'
On the slenderest of shoulders
A heart full of gratitude
Melts hatred and blame
With soft words and kind smiles
Can shed terror and shame
Can walk hundreds of miles
Will heal years of oppression
Make a humble confession
Will wipe a child's tears
Love one's own face in the mirror
A heart full of gratitude
Is more precious than gold
It finds that loving and giving
Never grows old
In the warmth of a hug
And the light of a smile
The worlds' worries and terrors
Can dissolve for a while
So... let's celebrate life
And feel joy in each other
Giving Him praise and glory
For each sister and brother
Peace, hope, joy,
Kack Nugent



Poem by Sr. Ann Willits (deceased, but not forgotten):



Newsletter Staff:

OPalette Editor: Elizabeth Slenker OP – slenkeree@yahoo.com

OPalette Layout: Donna Brunell OP – dbrunellop@gmail.com

