



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

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Margaret Ormond to Keynote 2019 Gathering

If ever a speaker “needs no introduction,” she is Margaret Ormond OP, the Planning Commission’s choice of keynote speaker for DIA Gathering 2019. Best known among us, perhaps, as the first president of the Dominican Sisters of Peace, a congregation with eight motherhouses, Margaret’s name recognition seems to stop just a little short of that enjoyed by that other talented native of Brooklyn, NY, Barbara Streisand.



Seriously, Margaret Ormond entered the Order in Columbus Ohio, served in its traditional ministries of education, formation, preaching, and elective congregational leadership for many years before the completion of her STL in theology culminated in her remaining in Rome as the First Coordinator of Dominican Sisters International. In this role she has facilitated collaboration among Dominican women in Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America. Margaret served as Director of **Parable** as well.

With all of those rich and varied activities, however, there’s one unique hub of spiritual energy she appears to have missed: Margaret Ormond has never participated in a DIA Gathering. How does this global leader of Dominican women envision the role of the artist as preacher at this time in our church, in our world? What does her encounter with culture on so many continents tell her about the role of the artist in communicating divine revelation? What is the DIA doing that she values? What does she wish we’d do more? The Planning Commission has assigned the 2019 Gathering the theme of *gratitude*. What will Margaret Ormond discover in the DIA which finds her grateful and/or what will we discover in her that leaves us challenged? ***For her answers to these questions, read this page in the next OPalette!***

Note: Sr. Margaret is pictured above with Sr. Janice McLaughlin, MM who was our Keynote Speaker in Oakland in 2012. *Birds of a feather?*

DIA Artists at the Borders

Among the many Dominicans who have visited the refugees at our southern border we are not surprised to find six Adrian Dominicans including **Janice Holkup** who sent us her impressions from the **SOAW Border Encuentro** in Arizona last autumn. Here the border between Mexico and the USA runs through the center of Nogales, cutting the town into two countries. A wall runs for miles beside the border, preventing entrance for people fleeing abject poverty and other inhuman conditions. Among their memorable events, the *Encuentro* group attended a vigil at Eloy, the roughest detention center with the highest death rate in the U.S.

Janice kept her artist’s camera busy even as her artist’s soul was shaken by a crowd of images, both exquisite and obscene. The photo she chose to share with us captures a symbolic artifact, a puppet Monarch butterfly, slipping through the columns of the twenty-foot- high wall. Janice tells us that the beautiful image of this fragile survivor from an endangered species attempting to penetrate the barrier between the two countries moved her with a deep sense of hope. **Borders con’t. on p.4**



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Message from the President

In many parts of this country, snow has not only blanketed the earth, it has also frozen due to plunging temperatures. It is cold, cold, and cold. My kitchen table sits in front of a bay window overlooking the back yard. Each year, as the ground becomes snow-covered, I bring out a photographic image I made many years ago and place it on the window sill. The photo is of yellow crocus pushing their way through the snow and it is entitled "Arising." During the 2009 Gathering, I shared this image with the group. Within fifteen minutes, our member **Jude Bloch**, who has since returned to the Divine Artist, shared a poem she had written in response to the crocus image. These many years later, I would like to share both that image and Jude's poem with you.

WHAT IS ARISING IN ME NOW?

The yellow crocus in the old snow
of yesterday only smiles at the grey day's sun
momentarily . . .

But she rises
between cold and heated drafts
calling attention to her
one fragile and delicate moment.
That is all the reason she knows.

*Jude Bloch OP
July 16, 2009*



Pat Daly, OPA



**Be sure to register for the 2019
DIA Gathering**

THE ATTITUDE OF GRATITUDE AS BEATITUDE

July 28—31

**Pallottine Renewal Center
15270 Old Halls Ferry Road
Florrisant, IL 63034**

We are inviting all our visual artists to submit, in jpeg format, a potential design for our 2019 Christmas card. Please submit your design to Pat Daly at pmdaly@beld.net. All designs are due to Pat no later than **June 30, 2019**. For example, pictured is the design by **Janet Wright** for the 2018 Christmas card of the Adrian Dominicans.



The How Behind My Art

By Kathy Voss, O.P.

“Rooted in the Gospel, we recognize our own spiritual longings and those of the world.”

(Chapter Enactment of the Adrian Dominican Congregation)

As an artist, my own spirituality grows in appreciation through the often-inexpressible beauty our Loving Creator gifts us through nature. Hence my artistic endeavors lean heavily on nature in my attempts to convey those gifts. I do so through the use of digital painting, making use of the Corel Painter Program wherein brushes in most traditional media can be incorporated. Should an observer of my work take time to look closer, be enriched or grow in appreciation of God’s gifts, then I have achieved a level of success.



My early love of art was present throughout my childhood. One could find me quietly sitting by myself sketching pictures of what I found in the newspaper, a magazine or a book. Whenever art was to be included in an assignment for school, I would really get excited. When high school came along, my mother encouraged me to fill out an ad for ART INSTRUCTION, a mail order program which provided all the tools and materials needed to complete a lesson. Acceptance into the program depended on how well ART INSTRUCTION felt you did on this initial project. Okay, they accepted me— and probably everyone else who applied. My father was a printmaker and toolmaker himself. At first, he took a hard swallow over the cost of the program but he would always sit across from me as I did my projects. Yes, he was proud.

Following high school, when I entered the Adrian Dominicans, there was no question that I would pursue my BA and major in art. This I did through our own Siena Heights College (now University). Luckily when I was assigned in or around Toledo I had the privilege of taking painting classes through the Toledo Museum of Art. I began with acrylics and stayed with that medium for many years. Much later, I learned how to do oil painting from our own DIA artist, Janet Wright.

I loved teaching the primary grades, but also became discouraged because both my students and their parents needed psychological bandages. So after several years later, I obtained an M.A. in psychology from the University of Detroit (now Detroit-Mercy University). That degree provided me with probably the best skills to elicit behavioral changes in both my students and their families. And their art grew also. Love of nature accompanied my ministries as: Educator Pre k-High School; Religious Education Coordinator, Community Mental Health Therapist, Senior Citizens Pastoral Care, Parish Bereavement Program.

Throughout most of my life, my art revolved around painting in acrylic and in oils, calligraphy, design, and photography. It was while I was recuperating from heart surgery that I began to use digital graphics. Since 2011, I have been

taking lessons online as a student in Digital Art Academy. These are two examples of my works created on Corel PAINTER.



Borders, con't from p.1

Mary Pat Reid has joined a group at the border. She and her companions left New Jersey in an ice storm and landed in an Arizona desert. They found the center of their border ministry, not in tents and rude huts, but in Casa Alitas, a former Benedictine monastery. This massive structure, they learned, was purchased by a developer who has given it to the diocese to house migrants until May. The sisters themselves were given hospitality in a convent a ten-minute drive from there. Instead of confrontations with hostile border guards and/or drug smugglers, they were welcomed by director of input, a gracious Sister Angelica, and driven to and from the convent by smiling Sisters Claudia and Virginia. Entering the Casa, they were greeted by happy, smiling small children waiting for intake and medical clearance. Mary Pat looked forward to "doing art" with them. But for Casa Alitas art lessons were not an immediate priority.



Feeding sixty travelers for lunch demanded the volunteers' first attention, followed closely by cleaning up to feed the next forty travelers. In the kitchen, Mary Pat's skilled precision with cutting tools was put to good use chopping celery, carrots, and onions, but she had to admit that cutting plum tomatoes into eight pieces for the salsa challenged her patience. That patience was rewarded mid-week when the group declared Mary Pat a Master salsa maker. Also, her legendary talent for stretching supplies helped to prepare three-day packages "to go" for migrants still on their way to another United States destination. Stints at sorting clothes in the laundry room further relegated paints and crayons to the sidelines.

Eventually, on the fifth day, a facilities catastrophe at the monastery intervened to surprise Mary Pat with the opportunity she longed for. Overnight a sewer had backed up and the electricity supporting the freezer failed. All work in the kitchen and laundry room had to be postponed until after the plumber arrived. At last, Mary Pat was free to go to the playroom where she could exercise a different way to "feed the children." Visitors are forbidden to photograph the children, so we will have to imagine their faces by looking at hers.



The cross in the photo is one of 800 that have been placed in the Arizona desert where more than 3,000 sites of remains have been found since 2,000. Artists would call these Artifacts "junk sculpture," for they have been fashioned from cans and other refuse left by migrants traveling through the desert.



In the meantime, across our northern border in Toronto, Canada, **Joseph Kilikevich** continued his gentle mission to dismantle walls on multiple spiritual and cultural borders by "preaching through the art of a guided meditation." As one of 8,000 representatives of ancient religions and contemporary spiritual paths, Joe prayed, worked, and shared life for a week at the seventh international "**Parliament of the World's Religions.**" Activities included plenary sessions, workshops, prayer and meditation experiences, musical and theatrical performances, a film festival, and many networking opportunities. Of the seven of these Parliaments in as many different places, Joe has attended six and presented at five.



WHY CALLIGRAPHY SURVIVES AUTOMATION

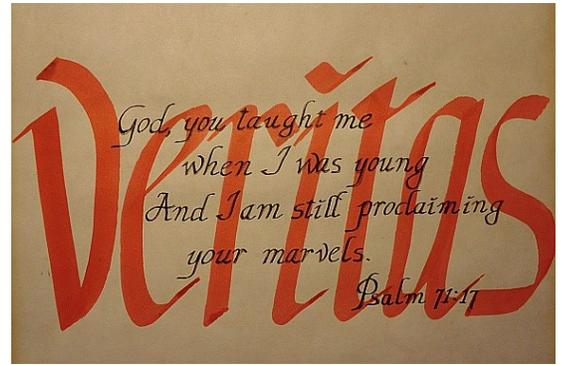
Marshall McLuhan, the Canadian media theorist renowned for “the medium is the message,” has also observed that when technology replaces human labor with an efficient mechanism, the laborious human process becomes elevated to the status of art. Thus cultural historians can trace “the art of calligraphy” to the year that Guttenberg’s printing press obsolesced hand-lettered bibles. So too, now that computer-automated fonts have deleted cursive penmanship from the requirements of basic literacy and a single click can deliver a thousand documents, communication specialists inform us that the most powerful message to or from an important person is a hand-written note. The hands-on art of calligraphy elevates a document or artifact’s value and cultural significance.

Are there DIA artists still contributing to this art form? Only 17% list calligraphy as one of their chosen genres. Among them, **Catherine Anderson, Sharon Bock, Irene Mary Diones, and Mary Anna Euring** explain its value by describing their own experiences and sharing some of their works with us. **Sharon** and **Irene** began creating alphabets in early childhood for their own pleasure, but usually DIA artists have developed their skills over a lifetime of fulfilling others’ needs. Typically, the talents of congregational calligraphers have been enlisted to enhance invitations, awards and citations, wedding and religious profession vows. Mass-produced posters, fliers, program covers, and other pedestrian graphics are now routinely delivered by the computer. Now only celebrity fashion designers can afford to engage professional calligraphers to create their distinctive signatures. And when a person or project is really special, only a hand-lettered creation satisfies.

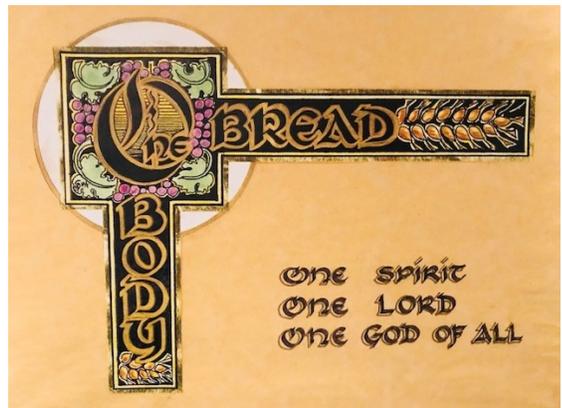
Above all, for the artist who is also a religious, the benefits of the calligraphy process outweigh its inconvenience, for often as the scribe’s hands work with a scriptural text, tactile contact creates an intimacy with the Word. At this point, labor evolves into personal prayer. For **Irene Mary**, “The joys I have experienced are the fullness and clarity that become visible to me more than when I simply hold thoughts in my mind and heart..

. . . More joy comes when others see the meaning of a calligraphic design . . . even beyond what I have done.” **Sharon**, whose projects once included a 4ft x 6ft sign for a rural church, admits to using convenient software now, she resolves to resume what she remembers as “the sheer joy of it.”

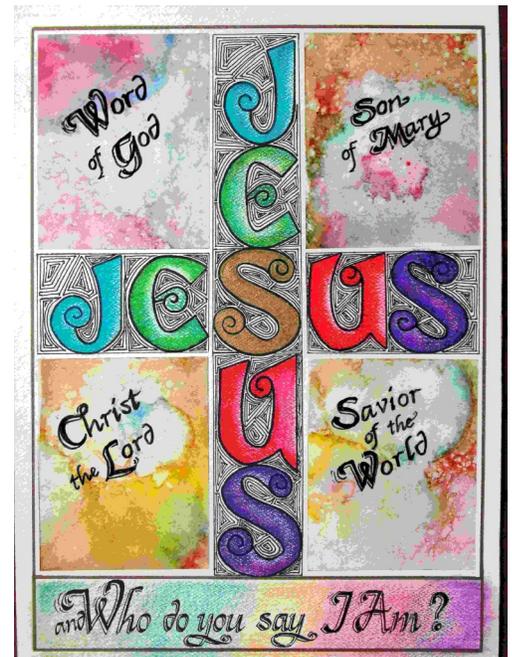
Mary Anna was a busy adult when classes in Asian Brush Painting were offered at the Islip Art Museum near her hospital ministry. One day, one of the Chinese doctors who saw her work pointed out that a Chinese painting is incomplete without a poem. “Thus began my learning of Chinese calligraphy and Japanese haiku.” In her retreat journals after that, “ponderings on texts from scripture appear as Chinese calligraphy on watercolors. . . . As someone who is spiritually uplifted by magnificent art,” **Mary Anna** affirms, “I believe that the art of beautiful writing has the power to transform hardened hearts into hearts of peace and compassion and as a Dominican, calligraphy enables me to continue the holy preaching.” Calligraphy, con’t. on p. 6



Mary Anna Euring



Irene Mary Diones



Irene Mary Diones



The Healer’s Art

In our last issue, **Dr. Phylliss Chappell** reported that Houston’s two medical schools had chosen to adopt “The Healer’s Art,” a pre-clinical curriculum designed by New York Times best-selling author Dr. Rachel Naomi Remen “to address the growing loss of meaning experienced by physicians nationwide under the stress of

today’s health care system.” Phylliss promised to provide more details after the program got going in January 2019. Phylliss always keeps her promises. In the following article, words in quotes are from her summary.

Students and faculty create a Healer’s Art community as a “safe space” “unlike the judgmental, competitive, performance-driven environment of traditional medical training.” It creates a place where students “are encouraged to explore and value their beliefs and values and to listen generously to the diverse beliefs, ideas, and experiences of others.” Phylliss chose to suggest the scope and style of the program with an anecdote which will be of special interest to DIA artists who are engaged in art therapy as well as pastoral associates who offer bereavement counseling.

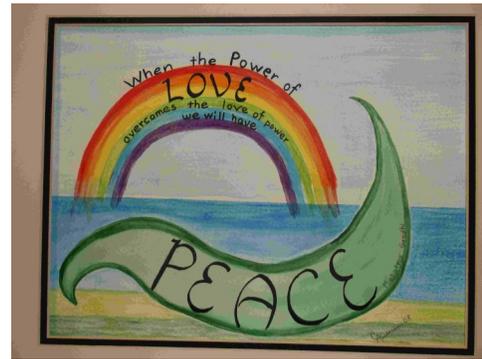
During the session entitled Sharing Grief and Healing Loss, “The Healer’s Art holds a tradition of giving each student a small soft sculpture, a handmade heart.” This practice was initiated by hospice in an effort to remind caregivers to take care of their own hearts. “The soft *feelie* hearts are symbolic, reminding students to hold their own hearts and the hearts of their patients and their patients’ families with tenderness. . . . Students often continue to carry the hearts for many years. . . . The hearts are traditionally made by volunteers. In my first year as a course director I was responsible for providing the hearts. I enlisted the help of the Poverty Committee of the Dominican Family of Houston. . . . Members of the Poverty Committee purchased the fabric and cut and partially machine sewed the hearts. Then, with the women of Angela House, (a transitional living facility for previously-incarcerated women) we stuffed the hearts and hand sewed the final seam.” Nearly a year later, Phylliss was called to the bed of a woman dying of cancer. When she took one of these hearts from her pocket the woman identified herself as one of the residents of Angela House who had helped sew hearts with the

Dominicans. They have continued to complete the soft-sculpture hearts annually ever since.

According to Phylliss, the progressive loss of caring and compassion among physicians is a well-documented problem. It is the hope of The Healer’s Art program that “students will trust the power of listening and presence to heal, and that their compassion will survive the rigors of medical training.”

Calligraphy, con’t. from p.5

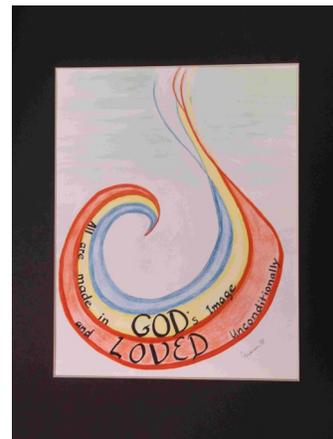
Catherine Anderson describes her submissions:



Title: “Peace”

When the Grand Rapids Dominicans dedicated the month of December to pray for the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Catherine Anderson was inspired to reflect on the words of Mahatma Gandhi:

“When the power of love overcomes the love of power, we will have peace.”



Title: “Love”

In January, after attending a workshop with the theme “Human Trafficking Touches All Our Lives,” I “was moved to paint something representing our belief: “All are made in God’s image and Loved Unconditionally.”



PREACHING THROUGH MUSIC



There are few professional pleasures greater than the gift of having a former student mature into a partner in ministry. The faculty at the Mission San Jose School of Music is currently experiencing this fulfillment through Genevieve Boken, a student of both **Sr. Andre Marie Fujier** and **Sr. Irene Mary Diones**. Now a freshman in Presentation High School, San Jose, Genevieve shared with Irene her hopes not only to continue developing her skills on piano, guitar, and ukulele, but also to become a volunteer teacher, spreading the truth and fostering social and moral values. She wanted, she explained, to communicate what she had learned about music's role in discovering our gifts and in the development of the human person.

Genevieve has been an outstanding Girl Scout, so the idea of service is very strong in her. Before graduating from grade school, Genevieve presented to **Irene Mary** her detailed plans for a volunteer music education project. Details included timelines, arrangements for appropriate personnel, materials and resources needed, a venue for prospective students, whom to invite, length of each lesson, and the possibility of a performance. That possibility was soon on its way to reality.

Working together with her mother, a Girl Scout Troop Master who procured donated funds, they arranged for a series of nine Sunday classes sponsored by the Mission San Jose Dominican Sisters under the supervision of

Sister Irene Mary. Four sisters enthusiastically volunteered to participate: **Sisters Andre Marie, Elizabeth Lee, Veronica Esparza, Dulce Aguilar**. Even though the group had just barely started, they were invited to perform for parochial and professional events including a songfest for the elderly sisters in St. Martin's Residence.



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Magdalena Ezoë continues concerts



Magdalena Ezoë, Professor of Music Emerita at Siena Heights University, continued her First Sunday Music Series on February 3, in St. Catherine Chapel at the Adrian Dominican Sisters' Motherhouse Campus. She played a number of compositions by Béla Bartók. The concert featured *Three Hungarian Folksongs*;

Evening in the Country; *Diary of a Fly*; and *Dance in Bulgarian Rhythms*. Magdalena also played the CDs of Bartók's *Game of Pairs*, from his *Concerto for Orchestra*, featuring bassoons, oboes, clarinets, flutes, and trumpets in pairs, and his *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta*, Adagio section, often called *Night Music* because of its quiet and mysterious quality.

The free concert, open to the public, also featured brief presentations by Sister Magdalena on the composer, the compositions, and what to listen for in the music. Sister Magdalena taught music at Siena Heights for 37 years and has composed parts for the Catholic Mass, hymns, chamber music, and other music for the organ and the piano.

A Touch of Technology by Elaine DesRosiers

Although I love to oil paint outdoor scenes, mostly buildings, I rarely do so in *plein air*. I prefer to work from a photograph because the sun moves fast and the values change. That is where the computer fits in. Using my digital camera I take several shots until I get one close to my desired layout. After downloading the photo onto my computer I crop it until I get as close to a size that is proportional to the size of the canvas; that is usually 1 to 2, or 1 to 3. I want the *building* in the painting to have realistic dimensions and I get them by doubling or tripling those of the photo. I allow myself artist's privilege for the rest of the painting. For the old house in Maine, pictured at the right, the photo is one third of the painting, so the dimensions of the house are three times the photo.

