

Weavings

Women making a difference

WINTER 2019



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*Custodians
of Beauty*

ARTISTS IN OUR COMMUNITY

WINTER 2019

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On Cover:

Sister Pauline Blandina, OP
in her studio, December 2018



Dominican Sisters of Sparkill proudly
announce their participation in the
AmazonSmile Program.

From the president ...

Dear Friends,

Perhaps you have noticed that this edition of *Weavings* has a new look with a new logo that includes a small icon next to the words “Dominican Sisters of Sparkill.” I’d like to share with you some of the symbolism of the design.

The icon features a starburst with the Dominican shield in the center, illustrating how our Dominican heritage lies at the heart of our



Dominican Sisters
of Sparkill

life and mission. The glowing circle of white around the shield symbolizes the light of Truth and the spirit of Saint Dominic, who was called the “Light of the Church.” The many rays represent the different ministries that the Sisters have started, both past and present, and the varying lengths of the rays of light symbolize how each ministry has its own unique history. We chose to use green for the rays to illustrate how our ministries continue to grow organic offshoots of our Dominican roots.

There are many gifts our members bring to their ministries, as well as countless relationships that have enabled us to serve others more effectively. Our community is so grateful to each one of you for enabling the Sparkill Dominicans to live our mission of proclaiming the reign of God through ministry for justice, focusing on the vulnerable and their needs, and caring for creation in whatever ways we are able.

May you and your loved ones have a blessed and joyous 2019!

In loving gratitude,

Sister Mary Murray, OP



SISTER MARY MURRAY, OP
Dominican Sisters of Sparkill President

*May you and
your loved ones
have a blessed and
joyous 2019!*

THREADS OF WISDOM AND GRACE ...

“People are like photographs...”

For many of us, February is a month when our patience wears thin. We have become tired of the long dark nights, the inconveniences of winter weather, and the need to “bundle up” when we simply want a little fresh air.

By the time February arrives, it can seem as though the darkness of winter will never end. Just as Anna and Simeon kept their watch in the temple, waiting patiently for the coming of the Messiah (Luke 2:21-38), so too we keep watch for the hopeful signs of the coming of spring.

February has fewer days than any other month in the year, yet it can seem to last the longest! Even though the days are clearly getting longer, it is often described as the “darkest” time of the year.

But darkness isn't always our enemy. Darkness can be our opportunity to grow in appreciation for the light. Darkness can give us an incentive to seek the light.

A wise friend once told me, “People are like photographs; they develop in the dark.” Let us pray that we will use the gift of February darkness to discover how much we need the light of Christ in our lives and to “develop” according to God's plan—growing closer to Jesus through our daily prayer, our participation in the Eucharist, and our compassionate reaching out to help our sisters and brothers in need throughout our world (and right in our own backyard!).

SISTER MARGARET PALLISER, OP

Sister Margaret has a doctorate in sacred theology from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome and is a member of the leadership team at Sparkill.



MISSION ADVANCEMENT HIGHLIGHT

SPOTLIGHT ON THE SISTERS IN THE MISSION ADVANCEMENT OFFICE

Each day, you'll find our Sisters corresponding with our benefactors, processing your kind donations, and working at many of our special events. Please meet the Sisters of our office:

(Left to Right, Back Row):
Sister Mary Shea, OP, Sister Frances Dryden, OP, and Sister Virginia Chiambalero, OP

(Left to Right, Front Row):
Sister Margaret Strychalski, OP, and Sister Carolyn Wolfbauer, OP





*“Art is a special
form of preaching
and the oldest form
of communication.”*

- Sister Elizabeth Slenker, OP
in her studio, 2017

Custodians of Beauty

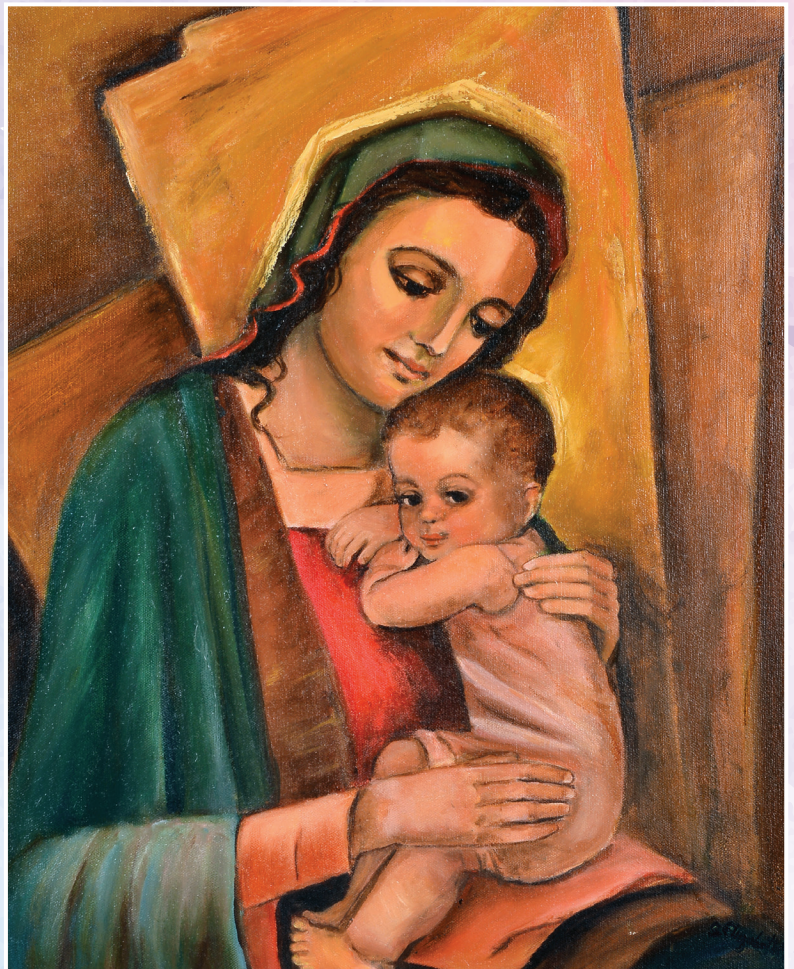
ARTISTS IN OUR COMMUNITY

SISTER ANN EIGENBAUER, OP

One of the many charisms with which God has blessed the Dominicans is creativity. Beginning in the early 15th century with Blessed Fra Angelico, the pursuit of beauty through making art has been a hallmark among Dominicans. Today it continues to flourish among the artists of the Dominican Institute for the Arts and within our community at Sparkill.

Decades ago, the Sparkill Dominicans recognized the importance of the role of the artist by providing stipends for those who wished to focus on their art as a full-time ministry and even providing opportunities to study art in Italy. After having worked full-time in the classroom or in social service ministries, several Sisters began to devote themselves to making art full-time. Others continued in full-time ministry and made art as an avocation.

The ways in which our Sister artists have served humanity are as diverse as the works of art they have created. Sisters developed their talents in painting, sculpture, metal work, manuscript illustration, fresco, and design. At the same time, they devoted themselves to a broad array of human services, such as nurturing orphaned children, providing homes for adults who would otherwise be homeless, and working with those residing in prisons. Still others have devoted their lives, as well as their art, to serving in parishes and on reservations in Montana.



SISTER ELIZABETH MARIE MCCARTHY, OP | 1960

Generations of our Sisters brought their artistic talent into elementary and secondary schools and colleges. They also found inspiration in the classroom, just as I did. My greatest joy has been instilling a sense of wonder in my students.

I am pleased to report that the tradition of teaching art continues in our high schools, Aquinas and Albertus Magnus High Schools.

The value of the arts is an important concept in Catholic thought. Our most recent popes have written about the spirituality of artistic practice. In his "Letter to Artists" (1999), Saint John Paul II encouraged the growth of the arts because the arts play a key role in the awakening of humanity. He called the fruits of the artist's pursuit "epiphanies of beauty," which are a "bridge to religious experience." Pope Benedict XVI continued to expand the conversation about the role of the artist in the Church; he called artistic beauty a "path to God."

"Custodians of beauty, heralds, and witnesses of hope for humanity."

– Pope Francis

Pope Francis calls the life of the artist a vocation. At a ceremony in 2016, Francis described artists as "custodians of beauty, heralds, and witnesses of hope for humanity." He continued by saying that "beauty, under the care of artists, has the ability to transform even the everyday lives of men and women."

The stories of the artists in our community are too numerous to share within these pages. In this issue of *Weavings*, we are sharing images of their art, hoping that you will come to know them through their works. We look forward to launching our new website in 2019, where we plan to create "artist pages" that will share both their art and their stories.



SISTER LORETTA BUTLER, OP | 1985

ST. DOMINIC'S MIRACLE



SISTER EMILY THOMASINE AZZOLINO, OP | 1969



SISTER M LOYOLA REYNOLDS, OP | 1929



SISTER KATHLEEN KANE, OP | 1965



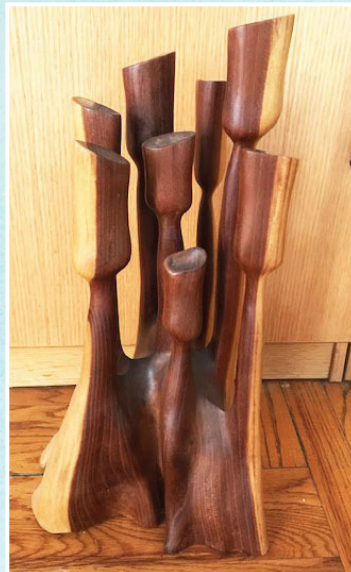
SISTER PAULINE BLANDINA, OP | 2002



SISTER ADELE MYERS, OP | 2007



SISTER LILLIAN MCNAMARA, OP | 2002



SISTER ELIZABETH HASSELT, OP | 1985



SISTER ROSE MARIE MORRIS | 1990



SISTER ELIZABETH SLENKER, OP | 2010



SISTER ANN MARIE SANTEN, OP | 1995

Sparks of Light Awards Dinner

A spark of divine light is within each of us! – Pope Francis

ON OCTOBER 30, we hosted our fourth annual Sparks of Light Dinner at The Rockleigh in New Jersey. We were honored to present our Veritas Awards to Dr. Kuo York Chynn and Dr. Mary Beth Quaranta Morrissey whose lives embody the highest ideals of the Sparkill Dominicans. We also celebrated the 60th anniversary of our ministry in Pakistan. Fourteen of our women who have been missioned to Pakistan were able to be with us that evening for the tribute which began with a viewing of our new

video, *Living the Beatitudes in Pakistan*. Everyone was inspired by the eloquent words of renowned ethicist Dr. Joseph Finn about Dr. Morrissey. Dr. Emil Chynn spoke lovingly of his father's journey as a refugee, immigrant, pioneer in neuroradiology, and Catholic philanthropist. Our Master of Ceremonies William Mooney captured everyone's heart at the close of the evening when he asked all our guests to join hands and spend a quiet moment reflecting in gratitude upon the love the Sisters have brought into the world.





SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR

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Emil William Chynn, MD, FACS, MBA, Kathleen Morrissey,
Kerianne Morrissey, Mary Breda Morrissey, MD

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Ellen Crehan Corwin & Steven J. Corwin, MD, Diane & Gerard Farley,
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We wish to express our gratitude to:

Joseph & Virginia Ripp for sponsoring our dinner
Gabelli Asset Management for sponsoring our cocktail reception

View the digital journal, honorees' biographies, *Veritas* Award information,
and photos from the event at Sparksoflightawards.org.

A Children's Rosary Procession

For centuries, people have sought the help of the Blessed Mother through praying the Rosary. And for centuries, the faithful have had their prayers answered through the intercession of Mary, who never fails to comfort the hearts of those who reach out to her.

On October 24, a group of students from St. Paul School in Valley Cottage, NY, visited Dominican Convent to join our Sisters in honoring Our Lady of the Rosary during the month of the Rosary. The students were divided into groups of five. Each of those groups wore brightly-colored ribbons, which represented the Mysteries of the Rosary. As they entered the Our Lady of the Rosary Chapel, the children formed a very special, very beautiful Rosary Procession.

One of the Sisters explained to the children that the tradition of a procession is an “age-less” activity. They learned that processions were held in the very early Church and that they continue today as a joyful form of worship throughout the world.

This Rosary Procession was led by 4th graders, with the 1st graders following in perfect step. Many of St. Paul's parishioners made donations to pay for the bus to bring the children to Sparkill and to celebrate afterwards with an ice cream party.



ABOVE: Students from St. Paul School

BELOW: Stained glass window from Sacred Heart Chapel on grounds of Dominican Convent





DR. J.T. VINCENT LOU LECTURE

The Dr. J.T. Vincent Lou Lecture is made possible because of a generous gift from Dr. York and Noelle Chynn that enables the Sisters to offer educational forums on social justice topics at Dominican Convent.

AN EVENING WITH DR. ELIZABETH JOHNSON, CSJ



“Is God’s Charity Broad Enough for Bears?” This title, selected by Dr. Elizabeth Johnson, CSJ, for the second Dr. J.T. Vincent Lou Lecture on Catholic Social Teaching, grew

out of her reading of John Muir’s moving reflection on the life and death of a majestic bear. Dr. Johnson invited the more than 150 guests at Dominican Convent to expand their understanding of the place of humans in the context of all creation.

Dr. Johnson drew on multiple sources that included the encyclical of Pope Francis, *Laudato Si*, which speaks of one common home and one universal community of life; the Bible, with particular focus on the last four chapters of the Book of Job that render the reader speechless before the majesty of God’s creative power; and science, which supports visions of an expanding universe and the cosmic origins of all creatures. She stretched our imaginations by asking us to consider how God’s love encompasses all of creation. She suggested that answering the title question affirmatively leads us to reconfigure our paradigm of creation from a pyramid of creatures in descending order, with humans at the top, to a circle in which all are kin.

Sister Margaret Palliser, OP, began the evening by introducing Dr. Johnson, citing her numerous accomplishments and awards. Following a period of questions and answers, she brought the evening full circle by quoting John Muir, “And into the forest I go, to lose my mind and find my soul.” Sister Margaret concluded that Dr. Johnson blew our minds, and we found our souls!

Please visit our website for the link to this presentation in its entirety.

SISTER LESLEY BLOCK, OP

PLEASE JOIN US FOR OUR NEXT LECTURE ON MAY 2, 2019 WITH:

Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R.
Archbishop of Newark

Softened Hearts: Catholic Identity in a Polarized America

Does political affiliation trump everything, including the Catholic Tradition? Cardinal Tobin will reflect on the harsh treatment of immigrants and other marginalized groups to illustrate the dilemma, and then draw on the teaching of Pope Francis to point to a way forward.

7 P.M. • DOMINICAN CONVENT • SPARKILL, NY

Making a Difference through

Sisters respond to needs in their communities



If you were to ask Sister Martha Marie Jaegers, OP, about her ministry, she would say demurely, “I teach adults, most of whom have not completed high school or who have come from other countries and need help with our English language.” Her students range in age from 17 to 70 plus. And a few come because they just want to keep learning as much as they can ... whether the task is easy or challenging.



Sister Martha teaches in the Adult Education program of St. Louis Public Schools; her classroom is provided by the Regional YMCA as part of its community literacy programs. Her classes fluctuate in size from ten to twelve students. Often the students drop out because they need to care for family members, have a job that interferes with the class time, or they become homeless. Overwhelmed and discouraged, they simply stop coming. Those who stay in the program possess a wide range of abilities. Sister Martha does the best she can with each person. In return, she learns as well. “They are often my best teachers.”

One young man was tempted to give up. However, he stayed and earned his high school equivalency certificate. He told Sister Martha that she made him believe he could do it. He is now proudly attending a community college.

Those who stay in the program possess a wide range of abilities. Sister Martha does the best she can with each person. In return, she learns as well.

A member of the Intercommunity Environmental Committee in St. Louis, Sister Martha is very concerned about our environment. She brings the topic of the environment to her classroom and has encouraged recycling in the entire YMCA building. A colleague has joined her efforts. When people work together for the common good, great things can happen.

SISTER MARIE ANGELIQUE DRYDEN, OP

Education

For most people, summer means days at the beach, shopping, sleeping in late, and/or taking in a good movie. For **Sister Mary Joyce, OP**, it means teaching outside the classroom by tutoring students, both young and older. Tutoring can be an effective intervention, depending on what is causing the struggle in the first place. For example, a child might be struggling in school because something interrupted the delivery of academic content the first time around, or perhaps the content was missed altogether—either way, tutoring is an ideal solution.

Sixty years of educating and guiding students from grade school through college have honed within me an insight into how to help those in need. Today, I work with children in grade school who need to sharpen their mathematics skills, as well as older students who are learning English as a second language. Decades in the classroom have prepared me to help them all.

Of all the grades that I have taught (including three years as a guidance counselor at Albertus Magnus High School, St. Edmund High School, and Holy Trinity High School), 4th grade was my favorite to teach. These children are eager to learn. I found that music and scripture could be intertwined, and lessons were easily absorbed while I played the guitar.

My life as a teacher came full circle when, by chance, one of our nurses at the Motherhouse mentioned that she had several friends whose children needed an “extra hand.” Coincidentally, I found that these young students attend the grade school where I taught. My life as a tutor brings back many happy memories, as well as the reward of helping individuals learn and grow in confidence.

SISTER MARY JOYCE, OP





What keeps *you awake* at night?

Simple words, but not so simple for me these last few months. The arrival of a very thick binder containing 20 years' worth of minutes from NDAD (National Dominican Associate Directors) was the start of a flurry of discussions, planning sessions, and intense preparation for the 2018 annual NDAD meeting. Sparkill was to be the host. We told ourselves: We can do this. After all, we are very “social.”

The theme of justice was set and our guest speaker, Amityville Sister Margaret Mayce, OP (the Dominicans' NGO Representative to the UN), accepted our invitation to speak on “The Dominican Call to Justice.”

On October 25 our guests began to arrive. Associate Directors came from the Dominican congregations of Tacoma, Sinsinawa, Springfield, Racine, Peace, Adrian, Grand Rapids, Blauvelt, Caldwell, Hope, Amityville, and Sparkill.

What a joy to have all these Dominicans under our roof. We shared our hopes and dreams for

our future as Associates, as Dominicans. We wondered what is next? Where do we fit in this Dominican picture? We laughed over the stories we told, we enjoyed wonderful meals together, and, of course, we prayed.

After hearing Sister Margaret's challenge to us to embrace the Dominican call to justice, we especially contemplated her words, “What keeps you awake at night?” These words took on a much deeper meaning when we looked at them in light of our Gospel beliefs and our Dominican call to work for justice and peace for all God's people.



As our Sparkill Dominican Associates continue to think globally, we have been acting locally. In October, our St. Louis Sisters and Associates were very busy with their “Sweet Babies Project,” providing newborns and mothers with those early day necessities. In New York, our Sisters and Associates launched their much-anticipated Pajama Program, a nationwide endeavor to collect new pajamas and books for children in shelters, foster care, and programs that provide care for families having difficulties. Both efforts were a huge success. We are now looking forward to our next projects.

We have been blessed, and we pray that our world will be blessed with peace and justice for all our brothers and sisters. We hope that, as we continue to respond to our Dominican call to justice, there will be less to keep us awake at night this time next year.

ELLEN O’SULLIVAN
Sparkill Dominican Associate





DOMINICAN CONVENT
OF OUR LADY OF THE ROSARY
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Save the date!

22ND ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT



Dominican Sisters
of Sparkill



MONDAY, MAY 6, 2019
PATRIOT HILLS GOLF CLUB, STONY POINT, NY

*Art continues
to flourish*

in our high schools —
Aquinas High School (Bronx,
NY) and Albertus Magnus
High School (Bardonia, NY)

