During the Christmas season, we shared with you a series of videos showing how our Sisters spread love throughout the world. We hope these videos brought joy, love, and warmth to your heart.

Know that YOU bring joy, love, and warmth to our hearts every day. We continue to praise God for your faithfulness to our Mission and to our retired Sisters. Thank you for blessing us with your friendship and generosity.

We have much to share with you in 2020! Within the pages of this newsletter, you will be introduced to a few new friends. We will share an opportunity to honor or remember a loved one, and to learn about the enduring connections with our former Adrian Dominican Sisters.

Blessings to you and your loved ones throughout this new year.

With love and gratitude,

Amy Palmer, CFRE

P.S. If you missed our Christmas videos, you can still view them at www.adriandominicans.org/love.
The Adrian Dominican Sisters – working with Benefactors, Associates, Co-workers, and Partners in Mission – have an exciting future as they work together to live out the Adrian Dominican Mission. This future was discussed and celebrated July 31-August 4, 2019, at the Motherhouse during a special gathering, titled Embracing the Future / Encuentro con el Futuro / Pagyakap sa Hinaharap. It was a time, in the words of Prioress Patricia Siemen, OP, for “remembering, transforming, gathering, embracing, and deepening our Adrian Dominican story, Mission, and Vision.”

In her keynote address, Sister Teresa Maya, CCVI, Past President of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR), spoke of the need to let go of fears of fewer Sisters and to focus on the Congregation’s charism as a “guide to the future.” Rather than counting the number of Sisters, she urged participants to live out their charism fully in the present. She emphasized that the Dominican charism is not only passed on by the Sisters. “The Sister, the Associate, the lay co-minister, and alum are all charism carriers,” she said. “The more there is a relationship between you, the more the charism is energized.”

August 2 brought a greater focus on this sharing of the charism and the Mission of the Congregation as Donors, Co-workers, and other Partners in Mission joined the gathering. “It is exciting for us [Adrian Dominican Sisters] to envision a future where expanded partnering for Mission is more vibrant than ever before,” Sister Patricia said. “The urgent needs and cries of the world call all of us to respond – and we can do it more effectively, and with more fun, when we do it together.”

Erin Dress, Director of the Office of Human Resources for the Congregation’s Motherhouse, found Embracing the Future to be a “transformative experience.” Through her years of speaking to applicants and Co-workers about what it means to be a Partner in Mission with the Adrian Dominican Sisters, she felt she had a good grasp of its meaning.

“The gathering brought my perception of being a Partner in Mission into a much clearer focus,” Erin said. She understands more clearly that lay Co-workers at the Motherhouse and at sponsored institutions “want to do more than just earn a paycheck. The Sisters’ desire to ‘bring us into the fold’ and include us in their Mission was extremely evident during the gathering and in the time since. … I am excited to put those words into action as I move forward as a Partner who strives to seek truth, make peace, and reverence life.”

Sisters from the Our Lady of Remedies Mission Chapter, based in Pampanga, the Philippines, hosted their own Pagyakap sa Hinaharap at University of the Assumption, San Fernando, the Philippines, in October.

We invite you to view a video, filmed and produced by Scott Miller, Videographer, that captures the spirit and activities of Embracing the Future / Encuentro con el Futuro / Pagyakap sa Hinaharap. You’ll find the video on our YouTube channel at: https://bit.ly/3awCt39.
By Geraldine Walsh, Donor

The mutual reverence that my husband, Joe, and I share for the Adrian Dominican Sisters comes via Sister Helen Walsh, OP, my teacher at St. Dominic School in Detroit.

Sister Helen was always driven by her heart. Although she originally thought me a candidate for her Dominican Congregation, she quickly gave into love – especially when she realized the man I dearly loved was her younger brother.

On reflection, it’s clear that the values represented and taught to us by our parents and the Adrian Dominican Sisters form the core of our 50-year marriage.

My mother counseled all eight of her children to “do a little something each day for your neighbor.” She saw dignity and divinity in every single person. The Sisters reinforced this, teaching us we were part of the Mystical Body of Christ and to consider donating some of our precious pennies and nickels to help starving people in faraway lands.

At home, my parents relied upon us as a workforce in their small business. In school, we were challenged to develop our God-given talents for ourselves, but also for serving the vulnerable. Our values became rooted in love, awe, responsibility, respect, hope, and challenge.

Born on a Minnesota prairie farm, my mother loved the sun and Earth. On any glorious day she exclaimed, “Oh, this is a day worth living!”

While vacationing at the farm, we walked the land together as she rejoiced in its richness.

In school, Sister Helen introduced us to the lyrical writings of Jesuit poet Gerard Manley Hopkins. We memorized *God’s Grandeur*, which proclaimed, “The world is charged with the grandeur of God.” We embraced the Earth as God’s creation and one of our greatest gifts.

Joe and I support the Adrian Dominican Sisters because they have served and taught “all God’s children” their entire lives. They have sought social justice and venerated Earth – and challenged us to do the same.

The Sisters truly “seek truth, make peace, reverence life.” How can we not support them and their exceptionally worthwhile, ongoing Mission?

Do You Have a Favorite Story?

Do you have a favorite story of an Adrian Dominican Sister and what she means to you? Have you been influenced by an Adrian Dominican Sister who is your relative, teacher, co-worker, or friend?

We’d love to hear these stories and to share them in future publications. Please write your story and send it to Amy Palmer, along with a photo, at apalmer@adriandominicans.org or 1257 E. Siena Heights Drive, Adrian, MI 49221.
As our generous benefactors, you represent a wide range of people and interests – from parishioners and family members of Adrian Dominican Sisters to former students and current Associates. One group that has been gathering since the 1980s is comprised of former Adrian Dominican Sisters who, although they left formal religious life for various reasons, continue to live the Dominican charism as they reach out to others in our world.

Sister Mary Sue Kennedy, OP, as Director of Weber Retreat and Conference Center, organized one of the first formal gatherings of former Sisters in 1985. When Sister Jodie Screes, OP, became Director of Weber Center in 1986, she continued the practice.

“It was truly my favorite gathering of the year,” Sister Jodie said. “It was a sharing of values and a sharing of life.” The meetings usually involved a talk by the Congregation’s current Prioress and included some Adrian Dominican Sisters who were living at the Motherhouse.

Sister Jodie said former Sisters are “grateful for their education and grateful for the friendships,” including those with members of the “crowds” with whom they entered religious life. The “crowds” of both Sisters and former Sisters have continued to gather.

Sister Jodie said she gained a special love for many Sisters who ended up leaving the Congregation during her years in formation work in the 1960s. “Many novices left before [taking] their final vows,” she said. “It was always such a sadness, but the happiness is that they continued living out the Dominican charism,” which involves contemplation and preaching the love of God through service and action as well as words. One former Sister, she said, told her that she had been “vaccinated with the Dominican charism.”

Sister Jodie said she continued the gathering of former Sisters out of love for them and the way that they live out the Adrian Dominican Mission, “not only as mothers and wives and teachers and nurses,” but in whatever they do. She gave the example of one former Sister who went on to serve as Assistant Superintendent of Schools in Ann Arbor, Michigan. “It’s a real joy thinking of them and what they do,” she said. “But what they do isn’t as important as where their heart is.”

Amy Palmer, Director of the Office of Development, sends a monthly email to former Sisters, updating them on Congregation news. If you are a former Sister and would like to be on the email list for OP Connections, please contact Amy at 517-266-3480 or apalmer@adriandominicans.org.

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This Giving Tree holds special significance for the Sisters since it previously belonged to St. Joseph Academy, the first institution founded and sponsored by the Congregation.

Please know that all of your gifts make a great difference to the Adrian Dominican Sisters as they move forward in Mission.

For more information on donating for the Giving Tree, please see the order form included with this newsletter or visit us online at http://adriandominicans.org/WaystoGive/WishList.aspx