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MISSION STATEMENT
Affirmed by Chapter 2005 • Reaffirmed by Chapter 2015
We, Sisters of Saint Dominic of Caldwell, are a community of vowed women religious responding to God’s call and united in our quest for the unfolding revelation of God. We preach the Word of God through our lives of contemplative prayer, study and ministry in response to the needs of our time.

VISION STATEMENTS 1995
Reaffirmed by Chapter 2015
We will reclaim our passion for contemplation, and choose this as our lens through which we make decisions, live our lives, minister, and perceive our world.

We will hold the promotion of Justice as top priority in every area of our Congregation.

We will commit ourselves to deepen our studying, living and teaching the mysteries of the universe and the sacredness of all creation.

We resist the ongoing devastation of our planet by a contemplative scrutiny of our use/abuse of Earth’s gifts.

Dear Friends,

One of the more pleasant tasks of my office is to maintain communication with you for all the sisters. Most of the time, what the sisters wish to communicate is gratitude. In recent years, gratitude for knowing you as a student, a teacher, a colleague, or a friend has been augmented by gratitude for the ways that you are enabling the mission of the Caldwell Dominicans to flourish, even in places where we can no longer be present. Often you make this possible by replacing us professionally in classrooms and parishes. More often, it is your monetary donations, which empower us.

In today’s issue of The Flame, we celebrate the 140th Anniversary of Saint Dominic Academy, Jersey City, the Congregation’s oldest ministry. Sisters who had been students, teachers, or administrators at the Academy throughout the years were interviewed independently for this article. All were unanimous in their praise of the “SDA spirit” which one former principal did not hesitate to call “an aura” which unites people from fourteen decades of frequently dramatic change. For example, with only two sisters left on its staff, Saint Dominic Academy, now energized by a talented, dedicated, multicultural staff of lay professionals, demonstrates how a ministry, sponsored and supported by the Dominican congregation, can continue our mission beyond our physical presence.

Your generosity to the Caldwell community sustains our mission to the students and faculty at Saint Dominic Academy, Lacordaire Academy, Mount Saint Dominic Academy, Caldwell University, Saint Catherine of Siena Convent and Healthcare Center and Genesis Farm. In their name, “Thank you.”

Gratefully,

Sister Patrice
Patrice Werner, OP
Prioress
ASSOCIATE CORNER

ASSOCIATE KATHRYN RICHARDS

Shares Her Calling

Curved along the western border of the campus that houses the Motherhouse of the Sisters of Saint Dominic is a low lying building, unimposing but vital and enduring. It is the Saint Catherine of Siena Convent and Healthcare Center—home to retired and convalescing sisters. At Saint Catherine, life is enriched by the talents of its activities director and Caldwell Dominican associate, Kathryn Richards.

Kathryn, an intelligent, friendly, gracious, and very approachable woman, spent the first 25 years of her career in Catholic publishing at Pauline Books and Media. Then making what some might consider a 180 degree turn, Kathryn decided to step into the health care arena. She became a certified activity director, a certification granted by the National Certification Council for Activity Professionals (NCCAP) and took a position working in an assisted living facility in Warren, NJ. She was on staff there for ten years before coming to Saint Catherine eight years ago.

About her decision to become an activity director for seniors Kathryn says, I love my work with senior adults and I consider it my calling. I have been an activity director for eighteen years and nothing gives me more satisfaction than helping to make every day a celebration of life for our elders.

Proof that it was an excellent decision and choice for Kathryn was the honor she received in 2006 from the New Jersey Department of Health and Human Services. She was given the Best Practice in Assisted Living Award for outstanding activity programs. In addition to that, in 2018 Kathryn won the National Nursing Care Contest for her paper describing the Senior Creative Art Camp Program that she held for Saint Catherine residents.

A very significant part of Kathryn’s “calling” is the recognition that the sisters’ spiritual life is a high priority for them. Working at Saint Catherine gives her an appreciation of the depth of dedication by women religious who “share a legacy of caring and commitment.” Kathryn formalized her connection to the sisters by becoming an associate of the Sisters of Saint Dominic in 2012 and has been named as the mission designee for Saint Catherine.

As an associate, Kathryn has a special bond with the sisters, which makes travelling with them on their life’s journey a very personal experience. She sits with them when they are ill, prays with them, supports, and comforts them. When the end of the journey is near, she is present for the anointing and final rituals, then accompanies the beloved elder to her resting place. It completes what Kathryn describes as a celebration of life lived fully and joyfully.

These are the elements that make Kathryn refer to her job as director of activities a calling. As she lives it, her calling reflects the beautiful words of Thomas Merton: Love is our true identity. We do not find the meaning of life by ourselves alone—we find it with another.

Mary Lanni, OPA

Sisters Mary Amelia Cetera, OP, Rita Calabrese, OP and Kathleen Boyle, OP showing their Valentine’s Day art creations made in their activities class.
Both change and the changeless were apparent during a recent visit with some of the school’s current administration. Under lay leadership since 2006, everything and everyone in the building seems planned to support a style more collegial than authoritarian. To reach the office of the Head of School, she must encounter many students. Nestled among them, her small space accommodates an inviting conference table. We were not surprised when Sarah Degnan-Moje did more listening than speaking as her team explored our thematic question: What exactly is it about SDA that has inspired and/or survived as the Academy’s fundamental identity?

Mary Murphy spoke as a parent who had evaluated girls’ schools in three counties before choosing SDA for her daughters: “There’s no other school quite like it.” “But what makes it different?” Andrea Apruzzese, Director of Admissions, offered a composite picture of the difference: “The school is very diverse, in race, ethnicity, socio-economic levels. The girls don’t care about any of that. Here all a girl sees is another girl. She doesn’t see that the color of her skin or her accent might be different. Every girl accepts every other girl for who they are. Whatever talent or need she brings to the table they embrace it.”

Below left: Mary Murphy, Director of Advancement and daughters Julia ’19 and Erin ’20
Right: Andrea Villani Apruzzese, ’75, Director of Admissions, Sarah Degnan-Moje, Head of School, and Mary Murphy, Director of Advancement
Below: SDA’s finest!
Was she describing an ideal or a reality? In a separate interview, two students independently confirmed its reality when they named the factors that had attracted them to enroll: “a multi-cultural environment” and “the absence of racial-ethnic conflict.” Our inquiry continued to question, where did this very desirable student attitude come from? “In the spirit of the anniversary,” Andrea suggested, “perhaps from the women who founded the Academy. They themselves were immigrants, women who experienced all the stress of adapting to a strange language and culture.” As our speculation continued, a composite profile of the quintessential academy population emerged: enthusiastic, resourceful, willing to assume responsibility, ready to take on a challenge, stick with it and follow through. The Academy’s history suggests that its leadership were often role models for this profile. The 2019 student body is a daughter who resembles her grandmothers. Not every student exhibits these virtues, of course, and like all adolescents, they have their problems. But as Sister Mary Lou Bauman, OP, points out: “A student with a problem is not the same as a problem student.”

**Empowering Women for Leadership Since 1878**

Throughout the years, the administration has quietly struggled to keep tuition affordable and to make faculty salaries – eventually – equitable. Over the past quarter century, several factors external to the Academy have negatively impacted enrollment: a reduced Catholic population with consequent disappearance of the parochial school system, the escalating cost of education, an increased preference for co-ed schools, competition from a variety of publicly-funded options. At the age of 140, SDA has survived as the sole Catholic secondary school for girls in Hudson County.

Why has she survived? This brings us full circle to the question with which we began: “What makes SDA unique?” On the basis of purely “anecdotal evidence,” it seems safe to say: a quasi-genetic endowment of spiritual assets, embodied in the immigrant founders of Saint Dominic Academy is somehow transmitted to its students through teachers and administrators who welcome challenge as opportunity. To which we add,

*Saint Dominic Academy has been faithful to its mission, welcoming immigrants from every nation and growing with them as one family of God. And to generations of their alumnae they confidently bequeath that mission.*

*Right:* Sister Mary Lou Bauman, Dean of Students

*Below, left to right:* Gabriella Playa, Adele Maudin, and Megan Dunne.

*Far Right:* Ms. McKenzie’s foreign language class.
For its first sixty years, the Academy’s putative grandmother exhibited extraordinary resourcefulness in pursuit of physical facilities. The original school moved rapidly from a downtown Jersey City convent to an uptown “mansion” on Bergen Avenue, then to three adjacent houses on Bentley Avenue, until finally on March 7, 1942, a re-purposed men’s club at 2572 Boulevard became the Academy’s permanent address. Today’s oldest living alumnae vividly remember themselves as high-spirited freshmen marching down the Boulevard transporting every book in the library to the spacious “new building.” Floor plans of the old Carteret Club reveal how a convent, classrooms, offices and closets were carved out of spaces like pool, handball courts, and bowling alley. Nearly eighty years later, “Student Ambassadors” showing the chapel to visitors are delighted to point out that the room was originally a bar.

In the decades after the end of WW II, mounting enrollments demanded space to accommodate this blessing. A teacher from the sixties remembers the principal, Sister Julia Marie, almost in tears, exclaiming: “250 registrations! Where will we put them all?” Enrollment continued to grow until it peaked at 600. In 1978, the principal made a bold decision. Knowing she could count on the legendary resilience and cooperation of the Academy faculty, she invited the sisters to move out so that the convent space could be converted into classrooms. (Madonna Hall, of course, remained serenely undisturbed.) Throughout the eighties, the need for a larger building intensified from desirable to urgent. On June 12, 1990, after strenuous and enthusiastic fund-raising by Jane Albert and the alumnae, Sister Bettyanne Schultz broke ground for Alumnae Hall, which opened in September 1992. This addition on Fairmount Avenue finally accommodates: contemporary media center and science laboratories, flexible space and facilities supporting a faculty and curriculum that routinely graduates classes with 100 percent college acceptance. Since the opening of Alumnae Hall, the 2015 donation of the Jersey City Women’s Club on Fairmount Avenue, now known as Siena Hall, has added another “flexible space” off-campus which students, faculty, and parents enjoy for extra-curricular and social events.

Despite the need to practice and perform in off-site facilities, a remarkable athletic program adorns the walls and halls with championship plaques and trophies, demonstrating how athletes in this school without a gym do not depend on state-of-the-art facilities. At the same time, yearbooks supply ample evidence that staff and students have recognized the more urgent imperative to deepen their intellectual and spiritual space by turning their focus outward. Joseph Napoli, teacher and director of their nationally acclaimed Glee Club, has brought them to the experience of multiplying joy by sharing it, everywhere from Journal Square to Carnegie Hall to Lincoln Center. Since the sixties, when religious men and women could be seen marching for peace and demonstrating for justice, a sense of responsibility for the world beyond school has emanated from the religion department. Spiritually-motivated extra-curricular activities have proliferated, e.g., clubs devoted to supporting Amnesty International, Habitat for Humanity, and the Committee on Social Concerns. Peer Ministry now takes responsibility for planning liturgies, a sister serves as Campus Minister (without a campus), and Dominican Youth in Action are learning to preach. Eventually, as the ranks of the sisterhood diminished, student activities offer a clear reflection of the slow transition to lay leadership in the Church. Among those most “empowered” to assume those responsibilities are the graduates of Saint Dominic Academy.
THE COMMISSION ON GLOBAL ISSUES UPDATE

The work of the Commission on Global Issues (CGI) is aligned with that of the North American Dominican Justice Promoters and the Northeast Dominican Sisters in Committed Collaboration (OPSCC).

Currently 20 sisters and associates meet bi-monthly as a full commission while sub-committees meet in alternate months. Subcommittees focus on specific areas, such as economics, immigration/migration, human trafficking, and peace and security for all. Together with the Lumen Center, the commission co-sponsors a monthly holy hour for peace. It bi-annually presents our community’s peace award to an individual or group who is recognized for their work on behalf of justice and peace.

The committee on Economic Justice has studied the impact of today’s widening gap in personal income, tax laws that favor the rich, the diminishing middle class, and those who depend on government programs to survive. Current actions include developing a curriculum in economics for third-grade children with a focus on poverty. A pilot study will be initiated shortly in two schools. The experiences chosen relate to this age group through children’s literature and activities. This group has also raised awareness on fracking, its effects on our environment and water supply, and the construction of a second gas compression facility in a neighboring community.

The Immigration/Migration committee has participated in a fund raising effort in collaboration with the OPSCC for the needs of shelters that service immigrants at or near the border. (For additional information, confer with the article, “Dominican Sisters in Committed Collaboration.”)

Human Trafficking committee members recently presented a program at Caldwell University on the issues of modern slavery. This educational outreach alerted youth, young adults, and the public to this evil in our society. The group networks with other organizations and participates in the work of the NJ Coalition against Human Trafficking and the Sanar Institute, which, among other things, works to reduce the impact of trauma caused by human trafficking.

The Peace and Security for All committee has focused on the issue of racism in our society. A study group has been formed and includes persons who have chosen to come together on a regular basis to discuss readings and widen personal understanding and appreciation of people’s rights, opportunities, and equality.

CGI is very active in the work of First Friends of NJ and NY by participating in an annual grant program of the OPSCC. Grant monies are used to assist in providing legal fees and/or bond monies for undocumented detainees. The entire community supports this work by collecting materials for detainees. Sister deMontfort Kinchellagh has been a member of their Board of Trustees and helps organize the annual dinner gala in New Jersey.

The realities of global warming impact each of these concerns and CGI takes action when called upon to educate, advocate, and participate in a variety of ways to limit this dilemma. CGI members collaborate with the Universe and Creation Committee in fund-raising for charities during Advent and Lent, host a film festival in July, support the work of one another when called upon, and keep communications open and updated through the use of social media and our in-house newsletter.

Our own vision statements, as well as the following words, impel us to continue our work of peace and justice. One cannot proclaim the Gospel of Jesus without the tangible witness of one’s life. Pope Francis

Sister Mary John Kearney, OP

Live radio broadcast with Sister Simone Campbell, SSS, Director of Network, and individuals from Jesuit Communication Group.
Dominican Sisters in Committed Collaboration:

UPDATE FROM THE JUSTICE COMMITTEE

It has been my honor to serve as the Caldwell representative to the Dominican Sisters in Committed Collaboration (OPSCC) Justice Committee. Representatives of the Dominican communities of Amityville, Blauvelt, Caldwell, Hope, Maryknoll, and Sparkill work together with Sister Didi Madden, who serves as the Justice Promoter of the OPSCC. The group meets several times during the year to identify justice issues that can be collectively addressed, which we then share with our local communities.

For the past two years, we focused on awareness of racism in our country through group study using books, articles, and film. A woman from Nigeria and one from Pakistan shared their experiences as victims of racism, which had a profound impact on us. Each Dominican community then held an event on the reality and evils of racism. Our community took the issue to heart and continues to explore ways to eradicate it.

Asylum seekers have also been a focus for the group. The OPSCC grant committee awarded First Friends of New Jersey and New York a grant to provide bond money and legal fees to some undocumented detainees. Members of each community also collected folders, postage stamps, greeting cards, and phone cards for the Stamp Out Despair Campaign. A number of us support and attend First Friends annual fund raising dinner.

Through our Advent fundraising, we assisted asylum seekers at our southern border and sent supplies to those agencies assisting migrants. A number of sisters volunteered to help at the border. Recently from our own community, Sisters Donna Marie O’Brien, Mary Pat Reid, and Pat Stringer went to Tucson, Arizona. There they helped to prepare meals, shopped for supplies, worked in the laundry room, and did whatever was needed to welcome those recently released from detention centers.

In 2017 the OPSCC began to suggest Actions for Justice. Every Tuesday an email is sent to members of each community describing a justice issue and suggesting an action.

As always gun violence is a major concern. We have signed many petitions and made numerous phone calls to promote nonviolence. After the shootings in Parkland, Florida, we held a postcard campaign asking congressional leaders to pass legislation to reduce gun violence. As the problem persists we remain attentive for future opportunities to assist efforts to reduce violence caused by the misuse of guns.

Sharing with the other justice representatives in the work they are doing in their own communities, in addition to the goals of OPSCC, has been an enriching experience. Palestinian rights, voter registration, shelter for pregnant teens, care for Earth, and limiting global warming signal just some areas of concern and involvement. I am most grateful for the opportunity to participate in the promotion of justice. Our Lord asks us to be sister and brother to each other and we depend on the Lord’s support in our efforts and on our journey.

Sister Danelle McCarthy, OP
The Sisters of Saint Dominic are grateful to all those who have given in memory of a deceased family member, friend or coworker. The following list includes deceased individuals whose friends and family named us recipients of memorial gifts during 2018.*

*If a name was inadvertently omitted, we apologize for the oversight as this was not intentional. Please let us know so that we may include your loved one in a future issue.

Mrs. June Dwyer Castano
Mrs. Grace Clark
Capt. Paul Hendricks
Mrs. Dorothy Anne Howland
Sister Vivien Jennings, OP
Sister Catherine Therese Jewell, OP
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We Remember
Those Who Have Gone Before Us.

We are grateful
We hold all of our donors and their loved ones in our hearts and prayers.

The following list includes estates from which the Sisters of Saint Dominic received bequests during 2018*:

Ms. Judith A. Barrett
Mr. James J. Capone
Ms. Dolores Layko
Mrs. Donna M. Marquart
Mrs. Lucille Murdock
Mr. Frank J Roettinger, Jr.
Miss Pauline Stetz
Ms. Maria Vanzaelein
Mrs. Elvira S. Winters
On February 18, 2019, two dear sisters of the Caldwell Dominican Congregation, Sisters Marie Murphy and Catherine (Sherry) Reilly left us on earth and passed into God’s loving embrace. Both lived in St. Catherine Healthcare Center, their rooms just a few doors apart. They joined the Dominicans in Caldwell years ago to live as faithful Dominicans, not knowing where it would lead. Life in community is not a destination. It’s a journey. Challenges arise to discourage even the bravest among us, but encouragement comes in traveling together! Whether counseling bereaved spouses or unraveling the red tape of medical insurance, whether knitting prayer shawls or painting ocean scenes, Sherry and Marie added their unique talents to the sometimes difficult terrain of our lives. Beauty, compassion, laughter, hospitality – all gifts from these lovely women to our lives!

Both cherished their Irish heritage and often joined in praying or singing the Irish blessing:

*May the road rise to meet you, may the wind be ever at your back.*

*May the sun shine warm upon your face.*

*May the rain fall soft upon your fields.*

*And until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of his hand.*

We pray that with and for them now!
Sister Marie Murphy, OP

Sister Marie Murphy (Sister Leo Marie), OP, 94, died on Feb. 18, 2019, in St. Catherine of Siena Healthcare Center, Caldwell, N.J. A woman of kindness, compassion, gentle smile, and a joyful spirit, Sister Marie served God and the congregation faithfully for 72 years.

Born in Bayonne, N.J., Sister Marie first learned of God’s love for her from her parents, Leo and Mary Murphy. Her concern for and care of her cousins lasted a lifetime!

Sister entered the Dominican Sisters of Caldwell on Feb. 27, 1947; received the Dominican habit on Sept. 5, 1947; made first profession on Sept. 6, 1948, and final profession on Sept. 6, 1954.

Sister Marie earned her BS in social studies and art history from Caldwell University. She was a devoted elementary school teacher in Bridgeport, Connecticut; Mobile, Alabama; St. John’s, Jersey City, Lacordaire, Upper Montclair, and St. Paul the Apostle, Irvington. Sister taught religion, typing, and art history at Mt. St. Dominic Academy in Caldwell and was treasurer for Mt. St. Dominic Academy Grade School.

Most of us remember Marie’s compassion for us as we tried to navigate Social Security issues and medical insurance. She coordinated all those complexities with smoothness and grace. She simply took our paperwork with a smile said, “Don’t worry, I’ll handle it!” And she did. What a gift!

We will never know the extent of her attentive kindness – taking care of all sorts of “little things” that pop up in any organization, even convents! We only realized how much she did after she moved to St. Catherine’s.

Her love of the ocean spanned her lifetime and for her was a meeting place between her and God. Who knows the secrets they shared – but we all can attest to the ocean’s work at enlarging Marie’s heart! Ocean scenes were among her favorite subjects as she painted those lovely pieces.

Marie was a walker – frequenting the shops in downtown Caldwell. There she met so many people for whom her cheerful presence embodied the Good News for them. As she lived in St. Catherine’s during her last years with us, her wave and smile welcomed people as they exited the elevator or looked up to the balcony in chapel. Her quiet joy was infectious.

Sister Marie exemplified the Gospel message to love one another as God loved her. In each ministry she brought God to those who benefitted from her common sense, joy in living, and deep concern for their well-being.

Sister Catherine Therese Jewell, OP

A woman of wisdom, kindness, patience, and unending gratitude, Sister Catherine Therese Jewell, died on November 9, 2018, at St. Catherine of Siena Healthcare Center. She ministered faithfully for 75 years.

Sister Catherine Therese was one of six children born to Kathleen and Peter Jewell in Wharton, New Jersey. She first learned of God’s love from her parents and was forever grateful that she was blessed with a caring family. She loved life and enjoyed sharing stories about family and friends.

Her joy for life ran deep. There was always “room at the table” for someone to sit and chat, share a meal, or talk about a good book. Her life was not about her own happiness, but about what she could do for others to encourage, support, and call them to enjoy life, as well as to have a deep faith in God.

Sister entered the Dominican Sisters of Caldwell on August 30, 1944, received the Dominican habit on September 3, 1945, made first profession on September 4, 1946, and final profession on September 4, 1952. She earned her bachelor’s degree in English and education from Caldwell University and certification in administration and supervision from Kean University.

A devoted elementary school teacher, Sister Catherine Therese taught in the following parish schools: St. Aedan, Jersey City; Nativity, Midland Park; Sacred Heart, Dover; and St. Mary, Wharton. A skilled administrator, Sister Catherine Therese was principal at St. Peter the Apostle, Parsippany; Blessed Sacrament, Bridgeport, Connecticut; St. Aedan, Jersey City; and St. Paul the Apostle, Irvington. She was known as a thoughtful, generous, hard-working, and dependable teacher and administrator.

Sister Catherine Therese also served as librarian at Paul VI High School, Clifton. In her later years she volunteered to be receptionist at Marian Manor, Caldwell. Wherever present, she was a preacher and teacher of truth, a woman immersed in God’s Word, a woman in love with God’s creation; she was truly Dominican. We will miss you, Catherine!
For the gift of your treasure...  
For the gift of your friendship...  
For the gift of your prayers.

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Every attempt has been made to include the names of all those who have participated in making our missions a success and in providing care for our Sisters who reside at Saint Catherine Convent & Healthcare Center. We would like also to thank those of you who may have sent us a holiday gift that was not recorded in time for this publication. And we regret any unintended omissions.
Father Anthony Randazzo, pastor of Holy Trinity Parish, Westfield, NJ, refers to himself as the *Happy Pastor*. The source of that happiness as Pope Francis describes it, comes from living the Word of God that is ever new and needing to be shared with others.

Father’s preaching skills are well-known, so it isn’t surprising when the Lumen Center announces that he’ll be back for another workshop the response is gratifying.

Father Anthony comes with a variety of spiritual experiences. He often invites workshop and retreat participants to consider deepening their prayer life by taking up the practice of yoga. “If yoga is giving me a sense of peace,” he said, “then I am able to somehow help people come to their own inner peace.”

He deeply believes in the idea of “pilgrimage,” even if it is only within one’s neighborhood or town. Father asks, “Who and what have we missed by not walking about and observing our surroundings?”

He is a strong supporter of and engaged in many ecumenical activities as a way to give thanks as one people of God. He’s no stranger to community action, stating, “We want to serve people in the best way.”

Father Anthony makes everyone feel more at home with themselves when they are in his peaceful presence.