

Rejoice with me my sisters and brothers for thirty new college preachers were added to the family! During the week of May 24th, thirty students from Dominican Universities/Colleges or colleges with a Dominican presence gathered at Siena Heights University, in Adrian, MI for the 14th National ♦Preaching in Action♦ Conference. The participating universities/colleges included Albertus Magnus College, CT; Barry University, FL; Caldwell University, NJ; Dominican College, NY; Dominican University, CA; Dominican University, IL; Edgewood College, WI; Molloy College, NY; Ohio Dominican University; OH, Siena Heights University, MI; St. Catherine College, KY; and Yale University, CT.

These young people came together to learn about the Dominican charism of preaching and how that charism can be incorporated into their own lives and passed on to others. They were given the opportunity to experience themselves as preachers using the mediums of art, dance, drama, and music.

The conference began with a brief history of Dominic and the Order complete with an array of Dominican songs.

There was definitely a Dominican Spirit in the air! A presentation depicting ♦Dominicans through the Ages♦ welcomed some of our Dominican Saints to the conference. Mary of Magadala, Dominic, Catherine of Siena, spoke about their lives and their own call to preach in the early years of the Order. Joe Kilikevics, OP highlighted the Interfaith Mission of the Order by introducing the students to dance and song from a variety of different faiths. Michael Petro showed the young people how the four pillars of Dominican Life can help them become ♦Unparalyzed♦ in their everyday lives, so they can be ♦Free♦ for mission.

The next day Alandra Scott, along with Francesca Pisano, both current Dominican Volunteers introduced our young preachers to their ministries. Alandra ministers at the United Nations and Francesca at an organization which assists those who are victims of domestic violence. In addition, Attracta Kelly, OP did a presentation on Immigration and Judy Morris, OP on Human Trafficking. All the presentations were well received and certainly raised the consciousness of our young people. This year, for the first time, we added 15 minutes of contemplative time after each presentation. The students were told to take this time to write down what you heard, what you learned, and what you would like to bring back to your campuses. You could hear a pin drop in the quiet.

Later on that afternoon we took a trip to one of the ♦hot spots♦ of Adrian . . . The Spotted Cow Ice Cream Store. Both the students and their mentors had a great time.

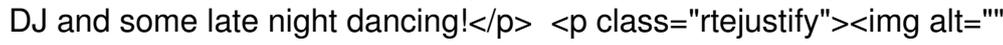
On the next day the participants were ready to put their ♦preaching into action.♦ They spent the day in immersion sites ministering: to the poor at Our Daily Bread (a soup kitchen), to the earth at the Permaculture Center on the grounds of the Adrian Motherhouse, to the elderly at the Gerontology Center, to people who are working to obtain housing for those in need at Habitat for Humanity, and engaging adults who are physically and mentally challenged at Hope Center.

Again this year, we added time for ♦Theological Reflection♦ before and after service. There was a wonderful sharing of stories, people, reactions, fears, attitudes, and underlying issues. Many of the students were so moved by their experiences that they made commitments to get more involved with their own communities back home.

Once again we had an ice cream social with the Sisters at the Adrian Motherhouse. The students loved the interactions with the sisters and we were hard pressed to

move them on to their next activity. A wonderful time was had by all!

Next up was an introduction to the other parts of the Dominican Family. Tables were set up like a college fair. The students were able to go around to each table and speak to members of the different groups as well as obtain some valuable information through brochures and other materials. The presenters included members of DYUSA, Dominican Volunteers, Associate membership, Lay Dominican Members, as well as religious sisters and friars. The students were full of questions around these topics. The day was concluded with a DJ and some late night dancing!

 Barbara Schwarz, OP concluded the week's presentations by awakening the participants to the Art of Preaching. Her interactive and hands on presentation was a great intro to the Preaching through the Arts day. Aneesah McNamee, OP, Nancy Murray, OP, Mary Jones, OP, Maria Goretti Brown, OP, Jessica Abejar, a former youth preacher, and S. Barbara presented additional break out sessions for the students to use their creative energies.

Highlighting the conference are the morning and evening prayer services prepared by the student participants. Students use their creativity, musical talents and gift of voice to lead the entire group in prayer which begins and ends each day. This is but one of the elements of the conference that students enjoy immensely and plan on recreating on their college campuses.

At the closing liturgy, which was attended by many of the Adrian sisters, each college group presented an action step which will be initiated by those who attended, in addition each student presented their individual action plan which is a vehicle for incorporating what they learned at the conference into their own lives and the life of their campus. It was moving to witness each student making a commitment to continuing the Holy Preaching. Each then received the Dominican Cross and were commissioned to go forth and preach the Good News to their fellow students.

 Upon leaving, these young people feel part of our Dominican Family and will forever be connected. Wherever they go, they will be preachers of God's love, God's peace and God's justice for all! Next year's conference will be held the week of May 23-28, 2017. For details on next year's conference go to [www.dymusa.org](http://www.dymusa.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2&Itemid=101)

by Gina Fleming, OP