

**“We are God’s work of art,
created in Christ Jesus to live the good life
as from the beginning God had meant us to live it.”**

Ephesians 2:10

March 12, 2024

Dear Sisters and Associates,

Paz e bem! Peace and all good things!

As you learned from our sister, Jeanne, in her letter of February 22, 2024, a Futures Task Force has been created and seven of us have begun building on the wonderful work that was done by the Committee that facilitated two years of reflection and action on Creating a Community of Hope. Following in those footsteps, we have been charged with carrying out another mandate of our 2021 General Chapter – namely, future planning.

Taking as our theme “Living into Our Legacy,” our hope is to find ways of embracing our PRESENT in its fullness. By that we mean embracing the *past* that is in our PRESENT, the *present* that is in our PRESENT, and the *future* that is in our PRESENT. This is what living into our legacy is all about – it is living the prayer we hear in the song *In Every Age* by Janet Sullivan Whitaker:

“Teach us to make use of the time that we have,
teach us to be patient even as we wait,
teach us to embrace our every joy and pain,
to sleep peacefully and to rise up strong.”

Ever since coming to the Congregation, whether as Sisters or Associates, we have been involved, consciously or unconsciously, in the ongoing process of *living into our legacy*. Individually and collectively, at different points in our lives, we have paused and pondered our lasting impact, taken account of the contributions we have made, and found ourselves wondering about the ways in which our very own being and doing over time will transcend our own lifetime. Evermore attentive to the legacies of our Sisters and Associates who have gone before us in faith, hope and love, we have become more mindful of the countless ways, tangible and intangible, they shaped the future, influencing generations to come in more ways than they - or we - could have ever asked for or

imagined (Eph 3:20). And so, as we think about the task before us, we hope to concentrate our collective energies as a Congregation in three ways through memory, attentiveness and expectation.

Memory: Remembering and Sharing What We Treasure (Our Past)

Attentiveness: Identifying and Embracing What Matters to Us Today (Our Present)

Expectation: Envisioning and Deciding What We Need for Decades to Come (Our Future)

In the coming weeks, we will be sharing with you many more details about things to come. But for now, in these months of March and April, as we move from Lent into the Easter season, we would like to invite you to begin living into our legacy by engaging in a creative and reflective process of storytelling, a key feature of every legacy.

If you ever listen to National Public Radio, you may have heard about the Six-Word Story. According to legend, Ernest Hemingway constructed the six-word story as part of a bet with his friends that he could create a meaningful short story about his life in just six words. This is what he wrote: ***“For sale: Baby shoes, never worn.”*** He claimed this six-word story was the best story that he had ever written.

For over a hundred years, the creation of six-word stories has proven to be a meaningful way of giving expression to what really matters most in one’s life and that which is worthy of remembering. We believe that in writing and sharing our six-word stories something about who each of us is at the core of our being – will emerge. In the process, we believe there is a good chance that we will surprise ourselves and one another with our six-word stories and what they reveal about the past, present and future - the PRESENT of our precious lives.

So, what will your six-word story be?

Along with this letter is a Guide Sheet for writing YOUR six-word story. Whether you are a Sister or an Associate, after completing your six-word story, you may want to share it with one or two other Sisters and/or Associates. If you participate in a Local Chapter, please be sure to bring your six-word story to your next meeting. We will send a prayer and process for Local Chapters and Associate gatherings in the very near future.

We look forward to knowing the stories of everyone – because each one has a part to play in OUR STORY and OUR LEGACY.

Lenten Blessings,

Living into Our Legacy Task Force

Sue Bruno, Mary Jane Griffin, Meg Guider (*chairperson*), Elaine Kerscher, Barbara Kwiatkowski, Darcy Mason and Jeanne Bessette (Central Administration Liaison)