

Proposal IV: We accept that our mission as Sisters of St. Francis of Mary Immaculate is moving toward fulfillment and completion.

Rationale:

- Our demographics make it clear that we will come to completion whether we name it or not.
- Naming it now says that we are in touch with reality.
- Like other congregations in the U.S., Canada and Europe especially, we have not had a new member in 10 years.

Hoped-for Benefits

- Accepting the reality of fulfillment / completion **now** gives us time to learn what all of our options are for future leadership – for instance, association / collaboration with other congregations for external leadership.
- Making this decision now – together – could give all of us the faith that we are in this together, that we are not alone among women religious, and that we have “done what was ours to do” in the time we’ve been given.
- Deciding this now, while we have the energy to put into planning our future, is preferable to leaving the decision to others to plan for us.

Proposal V: We are not actively recruiting new members in the United States, and if approached, we would respond that we do not have the capacity nor resources to accept new members but would encourage them to seek another congregation.

Rationale:

- From January to April of 2021, all of our sisters individually and in Local Chapters, were asked to reflect, study and pray about our ability to offer what would be required of a viable formation program to potential new members.
- Just over half of the Local Chapters came to the conclusion that we should stop our vocation ministry.
- We asked at the end of that time of discernment who among us would be willing to serve in vocation or formation ministry, who would undergo training for that ministry, and who would be willing to move from her home to a setting that would be an appropriate community for a new member, we receive not one single response.
- At our summer gathering in June of 2021, not a single sister raised any question or made any response to our inquiry about recruiting or accepting new members.
- Although our sisters in Brazil have also not accepted a new member in 10 years, they continue to choose to participate in vocation ministry. They will have to make decisions about their reality as well.

Hoped-for Benefits:

- We can turn our energies and prayers to the care of one another and our hurting world rather than hoping against hope for new vocations.
- Accepting this decision is part of our reconciliation with our coming to completion.