

**FROM THE LIVING INTO OUR LEGACY TASK FORCE:
FEEDBACK FROM THE FALL REFLECTION**

October 15, 2024

Dear Sisters and Associates,

Many thanks to each one of you for your prayerful and thoughtful participation in the most recent Living into Our Legacy Reflection (August/September/October). Attached please find the responses shared by the Local Chapters of Sisters and the Local Chapters of Associates.

We are most grateful for your feedback. For those of you interested in knowing what other local chapters shared, the feedback forms are included for your information.

Peace and all good things!

Barbara, Darcy, Jeanne, M.J., Meg and Susie

LOCAL CHAPTER – HERITAGE WOODS CONVENER, SUE BRUNO

Heritage Woods Local Chapter Meeting

9/11/2024

Convener and Secretary: Sue Bruno

Feedback from Part 1:

Care and concern for our world. We continue to be activist wherever and whenever we can.

Our role as Ecclesial Women is important and necessary. We do that here with our interactions with the laity. We have wonderful opportunities to educate people about our life and our life of prayer.

The laity here doesn't know much about our lives and we inform them.

As we look at numbers, we ask ourselves how are we present and being more Franciscan? How can we be present to other Sisters? We need to be aware of what is going on around us.

It's important we stay aware of and learn the spiritual paths of others.

The Spirit invites us to embrace change, but we need to acknowledge change is hard. Moving has disrupted my prayer life.

Being present to others who are far away from us is a goal. Take time to call and write other Sisters and Associates.

Feedback from Part 2:

Strengths:

Love, care and interest in each other. Writing cards when we can.

We show compassion and trust with one another.

We have each other, love each other and pray for one another.

The Congregation as a whole is very supportive of one another. We have the blessings of Community.

We are blessed with the Franciscan Spirit of caring for one another.

Our Franciscan Spirit is present to us when we care for one another and when the many hands help us and care for us.

Opportunities:

We need to continue to remember that we are Franciscans and that the poor and needy are a priority for us.

We are grateful to our leadership for researching other Congregations and we encourage them to continue this practice.

Recognize our need for grieving the loss of our presence in the world.

Amidst our grieving, we still can and are a presence in our homes, our communities and our world.

Weaknesses:

Lack of capable and able-bodied Sisters to help with the work of the Congregation.

We can't be fearful of this transitional period in our life.

We forget the power of prayer. We need to pray harder and more often.

We must recognize that we are all we have... we must be kind and patient with each other.

Threats:

We worry because we don't know where we are going.

The loss and deaths of so many Sisters recently.

What will be lacking in the World when we are all gone. What will our lack of presence mean to the world?

Fear of these changes and loss of hope that sometimes drifts into our minds.

LOCAL CHAPTER – ST. PATRICK'S RESIDENCE CONVENER, SUE BRUNO

St. Patrick's Residence Local Chapter Meeting

9/9/2024

Present: Paula Bingert, Grace Ann Rabideau, Marge Krieger, Odelia Kloc, Mary Jean Morris, Phyllis Pitz, MaryAnn Jerkofsky and Sue Bruno

Convener and Secretary: Sue Bruno

Feedback from Part 1:

We need to remember we are Ecclesial Women. We are gift to the Church and the people of God.

We want to embrace these changes but it's hard.

We share our Franciscan Charism whenever we reach out to someone in their need.

We all agree we are meant to be resources for the people around us.

Feedback from Part 2:

Strengths:

We have each other. "In prayer I heard God say to me, 'look up.'" In other words, look out and reach others, don't always think of yourself.

We help others, not in grand ways, but in little ways, like prayer.

I feel gratitude for our sisters, for our wonderful history, especially in Joliet.

Opportunities:

This is the time to get in touch with our legacy and share it with people. Here, we have many opportunities to share our stories of religious life.

Being here with my Sisters is a blessing and we are thoughtful with each other. This is a time to recognize that we are well taken care of here and to thank our Community for this gift.

Weaknesses:

We pray but we need to pray harder for our world. News is depressing. We can't help but we can pray to God for peace.

Whatever is going on with the Community, we must trust God, that God will be God and that we are on the right path.

Threats:

We need to be positive and believe that our leadership is following the guidance of the Holy Spirit. We do believe but we worry sometimes.

As an aside and we don't need to keep this in here, but Paula was able to come to this meeting because she now has a device which allows her to hear the conversation. This is the first meeting she's been to in a while. Before closing the meeting, she was asked, "how are you doing?" and she said loudly, "I'm glad to be here with you!" Priceless to be sure.

LOCAL CHAPTER VILLA FRANCISCAN CONVENER, PEGGY QUINN & ROBERTA NAEGELE

Date of Meeting: Sept. 18, 2024

Convener and Secretary: Roberta Naegele and Peggy Quinn

Group Members: Helen Zulka (until or if she moves), Roberta and Peggy

Feedback from Part 1:

It was just not her day to talk of such things. We shared our feedback.

Feedback from Part II: We tried hard to simplify what we try to accomplish with her. She was mostly quiet trying to find words to say "we are just expecting too much." We shared what we wrote to spark her thoughts. We thought we could get reactions or thoughts to the following, but eventually just let it be....and took her to lunch. We left the papers with her to reflect when or if she desired.

Strengths

Opportunities

Limitations/ Weaknesses

Threats

Living into Our Legacy - Where is the Spirit leading us?

LOCAL CHAPTER MARIANNE SAIEG, CONVENER

Date of Meeting: September 8, 2024

Convener and Secretary: Marianne Saieg, convener; Elaine Kerscher, secretary

Group Members: MJ Griffin, Meg Guider, Brigid Jacobs, Elaine Kerscher, Barb Kwiatkowski, Jane Nienaber, Marianne Saieg, Sandi Salois, Mary Fran Seeley

Feedback from Part I:

The group shared meaningful insights from the Summer Gathering. Key insights focused on legacy, Franciscan/Clarian charism, transformation. Members felt they experienced more deeply the call to consider our legacy... what will people remember about us? Are we loving, reconciling Franciscan women who reach out to others, who care for the earth and all people, who value our Franciscan/Clarian heritage and are living witnesses to the Gospel? Do we go out of ourselves to serve each other's needs, especially as our congregation becomes smaller? Many people have been inspired by what our sisters have done in the past, but do we realize how important it is for us to recognize others? As we move toward fulfillment/completion, we have the opportunity to empower lay women and men by recognizing their gifts and contributions. We're called to open ourselves to the power of the Spirit, to be open to a personal Pentecost. This is our time to follow the Spirit's call to transform our world, to bear fruit for the sake of the Gospel. This is our moment... for in the not too distant future our voices will be silent and our presence a memory.

Feedback from Part II:

At this moment in time, I think/feel/believe...

1. One of our greatest **strengths** as a Congregation is...
... we pray well and celebrate well together; Franciscan values are important to us

- ... our gatherings: we like to be together
- ... our shared history draws us together
- ... trusting each other and living our commitment to God through lives of prayer
- ... our belief in Franciscanism, being one with the poor, one with all creation
- ... our openness and trust in our leaders, in one another, especially at this time of deliberating the future
- ... our spirituality, our collaboration with Franciscan communities, relationships with others from past ministries
- ... our ongoing commitment to education across the lifespan: JCA, USF, San Damiano... our desire to move forward together

2. Our Congregation should take advantage of the **opportunity** to...

- ... work together with other congregations, organizations
- ... reach out; personal growth in Franciscan spirituality is important
- ... use our voice to speak out, especially for those who are poor, marginalized
- ... consciously share in preparation for our resurrection
- ... mentor with other Franciscan congregations as we look to the future
- ... take advantage of opportunities to reach out
- ... recognize the gifts of each sister, especially those at St. Pat's
- ... be open to the community; move out and be seen; opportunities to work with former sisters
- ... seriously consider what our legacy will be, what is our gift to the future, and then commit to making it happen in the time we have left

3. One of our most serious **weaknesses or limitations** as a Congregation is...

- ... not having members capable of serving in leadership
- ... sometimes we don't talk to each other
- ... we don't like to rock the boat
- ... being unwilling to be honest about where we are in this age/stage of our life and make changes

... sometimes we fear people, especially loud/insistent people; we don't trust each other

... trying to do it all; burdens get greater with time. Wish we could get enough help to support those who are really stretched... perhaps we need outside help

... shyness of being out in community

... from 1965 forward, we don't have a good history of our achievements/ accomplishments, in all kinds of areas. It's easy to forget if we don't record it

... our linguistic limitations regarding our relationships with our sisters in Brazil

... Potential Leadership

4. One thing that is a very real **threat** to our Congregation is...

... in the past we let people with strong voices keep us from doing things

... Donald Trump: his agenda would have an effect on us

... there could be an economic collapse that would be a real threat

... our unwillingness to embrace the act of completion

... hopelessness (for some people)

... being overwhelmed by realities beyond our control

... concern of politics on our future (Project 2025)

... some indifference ("nothing I can do about it"), leave it to leadership, we need to look outside ourselves. With our ministries, are we prepared to pass them on to someone else?

... fear of the unknown

Living into our Legacy – Where is the Spirit leading us?

The Spirit is leading us to keep listening and learning from one another as we go forward and to not run away from the call shared among us at this time. The Spirit is leading us to respect each other and be creative in our resolutions to unseen, upcoming hurdles in the process of passing on our legacy to be a spiritual heritage to others.

LOCAL CHAPTER CONVENER, SANDRA SUDKAMP

September 14, 2024
(Via Zoom)

Members Present: Sisters Anita Beloin, Sharon Frederick, Jaye Nelson, Alice Ann Harcharik, René Simonelic, Sandra Sudkamp, Kathy Salewski

Member Absent: Kathleen Bushur

Convener: Sandra Sudkamp, OSF

Scribe: Kathy Salewski, OSF

FEEDBACK PART ONE

We defined ourselves as ecclesiastical women and men of hope, unafraid and faithful doers of the Gospel, who balance contemplation with action, listening gently and with confiança (deep trust in God, others and ourselves) as we embrace personal and communal transformation! We live our Franciscan spirituality and values as witnesses of the interconnectedness of the universe, empowering others and dialoguing kindly.

FEEDBACK PART TWO

One of our greatest **Strengths** as a Congregation is ...

- Love for learning
- Personal and communal flexibility
- Living the Franciscan charism and values
- Care for each other and others
- Our education and knowledge (learned and lived)
- Our leadership team

Our Congregation should take advantage of the **Opportunity** to...

- Be visible
- Take new risks
- Networking
- Caring for the poor and powerless
- Networking with other religious
- Allow individuals to remain where they are, doing their ministries

One of our most serious **Limitation/Weakness** as a Congregation is...

- Our inability to accept diversity
- Individualism
- Our age range and energy level
- We do more inward looking than outward
- Diminishing health
- Few willing and able for leadership and ministry

One thing that is a very real **Threat** to our Congregation is ...

- Loss of hope
- Inability to accept diversity
- Becoming too comfortable
- Some still holding grudges
- Fear of the future
- Indifference
- Many of our active Sisters are too geographically spread out to have a Community base.

LIVING INTO OUR LEGACY - Where is the Spirit Leading Us

To accept the challenges we face -

- Allowing ourselves, individually and together to continue this dialogue
- Continue sharing
- Affirmation each other
- Nourish the "we" gentle listening to those still holding grudges
- Allow grief as signs of "coming to conclusion" become our reality

This inquisitive group would value hearing/seeing the Leadership Team's SWOT analysis, please.

Thank you for this opportunity to continue **Living into our Legacy** together.

LOCAL CHAPTER CONVENER, FAITH SZAMBELANCZYK

Date of meeting: September 13, 2024

Convener: Faith Szambelanczyk

Members: Geri Podobnik, Rose Marie Surwilo, Rosemary Huzl, Margaret McGuckin, Maria Pesavento, Lourdes Boyer, Kathryn Stimac, Janet Tucci, Faith Szambelanczyk

Part 1: Summer Gathering Experience

The over-all experience was very good!

- Gratitude for the time together/listening/learning
- Feeling of being on "same page" with most topics
- Energy regarding our future & openness to reality

Part 2: Living into Our Legacy

Strengths

- Diversity: Despite or because of diversity, we love & care for each other
- Spirit of prayer, honesty & true compassion
- Our Sisters and Associates
- We are still able to make decisions for our future

Opportunities

- Planning for the future... the time is NOW
- Time to provide "quality of life" for all
- Learning from other Congregations who are or have moved to completion
- Time to grieve, share & be open to change

Limitations/Weaknesses

- Facing the reality of Ageing/Need for assistance other than our Sisters
- Having a false sense of security
- Lack of dialogue re: important decisions/honest communication
- Realistic expectations of what we can & cannot do

Threats

- Being "Silent"/ do nothing
- Denial of our reality
- Age-ism (80 yr. olds are competent)

-Decisions being made for and not with individuals

The Spirit is moving us...

-To go forward... Unafraid

-Embrace change/have balance

-Live in Hope

-To be open to dialogue/communication (Leadership & each other)

-Acknowledge our gifts as Women

Final Comment: We are part of this Congregation, its reality and future. We need to participate in decisions both personal & Congregational.

LOCAL CHAPTER CONVENER, YVONNE WEIDNER

Date of Meeting: September 14, 2024

Convener and Secretary: Sisters Yvonne Weidner and Mary Rose Lieb

Group Members: Sisters:

Maria Bui	Carol Mecko
Mary Rose Lieb	Albert Marie Papesh
Leomarie Luecke	Phyllis Wilhelm
Joanne Marusa	Yvonne Weidner

Feedback from Part I:

Continue to be who we are and have been to the world, the Church and for one Another by living and sharing our Franciscan values, always centered in Jesus; by witnessing to the hope we have for the present and for our future.

Feedback from Part II:

Strengths

We mostly identified the same strengths - one's we have shared, heard, read before.

One strength that stands out: The spirit of joy, happiness, and gratitude that we experience and exude whenever we get together; where we minister; and when we serve, listen to and love all.

Opportunities

We have many opportunities to minister and serve among God's people – for and to one another but also beyond. We can be visible in our everyday lives, thus witnessing to our Franciscan values and the Kingdom of God. We can be a voice for the poor, marginalized, migrant. We can publicly stand up for democracy.

Limitations/Weaknesses

We are not finished. We may tend to suppress our feelings of loss, endings. Rather, we need to acknowledge and accept our feelings; trust in God and not give in to complacency.

Threats

Letting things happen to us. Not handling our true feelings. All may not feel that we are a community of hope; that we are living our legacy; that we should no longer accept/entertain interested/new people. This topic has never really been discussed among us, as a Congregation.

Living into Our Legacy – Where is the Spirit leading us?

We've always lived into our Legacy. It is who we (Joliet Franciscans) have been and are. It is all that we will be until the very last one of us is gone. Strong support for this statement: Brazil and many in the US are our continuing legacy. Do not give up HOPE. The Spirit will continue to lead us.

LOCAL CHAPTER ASSOCIATES #1 CONVENER, DARCY MASON

Date of Meeting: September 11, 2024 -Associate in person session

Convener and Secretary: Darcy Mason, Part 1 secretary: Margaret Benoit Part 2 secretary: Janine Hicks

Group Members: Carol Baranski, Margaret Benoit, Mary Braun, Josephine Collins, Janine Hicks, Pam Leddy, Darcy Mason, Marilyn McGowan, Diane Morrison, Ann O'Brien, Lolita Ranchero, Sue Rockett, Roberta Naegele, Ruth Rohan, Cheryl Shaw, Lynette Shea

Feedback from Part 1:

Important to see women in positions of power.

It is a time of change.

We share Franciscan values.

Even though our number of associates is not increasing, we will be strong together.

We must adapt to change- because there is nothing but change.

Feedback from Part II

Strengths:

Franciscan spirit allows us to share with others.

We allow the Holy Spirit to work in our lives.

Our many talents and gifts.

We volunteer together. Our committees are still going strong.

Opportunities:

Sisters and associates who have moved to new facilities are spreading joy to more people. Sharing their Franciscan spirit.

Zoom allows us to stay in touch.

The Holy Spirit empowers us.

Unity and a willingness to provide needed assistance/sharing.

Limitations/ Weaknesses:

Loss of Motherhouse and then OLA.

Ageing- physical and mental limitations. Living apart.

Sisters were lost during each move/transition.

Where will sisters living outside of Joliet get needed assistance?

Threats:

Loss of OLA as a center and place of caring/security.

Giving up, sadness, depression.

Living into Our Legacy - Where is the Spirit leading us?

We have to allow ourselves to grieve what is lost and then accept what we have and keep going.

We are not alone.

To be inclusive.

To be open to change and willing to adapt.

Wisdom in growing older.

LOCAL CHAPTER ASSOCIATES #2 CONVENER, DARCY MASON

Date of Meeting: September 14, 2024 -Associate Zoom session

Convener and Secretary: Darcy Mason, Charleen Walsh

Group Members: Patricia Abel, Genelle Diab, Jeanne Foley, Therese Griffin, Sheila Greuel, Elizabeth Bach Luong, Darcy Mason, Alie Phillips, Charleen Walsh

Feedback from Part 1:

Belief in the Spirit moving in our lives.

Let Go- Let God

Daily opportunities to do God's work, helping where needed.

Open to go wherever God is sending me.

Surrender to God's will. Deeper awareness of what God is calling us to do.

Acceptance and appreciation of what I have and who I am.

Live the values of St. Francis and St. Clare.

Embrace hope.

Taking who I am spiritually into the outside community.

Feedback from Part II

Strengths:

Prayer, mindfulness, following Francis, speaking up about social issues.

Encouraging others, listening attentively, serving on boards.

Staying connected with our sisters and associates, making phone calls, using Zoom, meet in person.

Opportunities:

Using Zoom as a tool for gathering through distances.

Videos keep us informed about events we are unable to attend due to distance or health.

Sisters and associates working together and supporting each other.

Limitations/ Weaknesses:

Looking at what we have lost or don't have instead of what we do have.

Loving apart.

Ageing.

Communication difficulties.

Threats:

Letting today's pressures influence our hopes and courage.

Let us remember Mother Mary's quietness, gentleness, and joy while recognizing depression threats.

Living into Our Legacy - Where is the Spirit leading us?

Remember we have strong leadership during these tumultuous times.

Remembering that we are guided and strengthened by the Spirit.

We are instruments we can spread hope and joy in our daily living to each person and through many circumstances.

Ongoing commitment to growth and to being aware of our deepening relationship with the Lord.

The Holy Spirit will open our eyes to what is before us-our reality.

LOCAL CHAPTER ASSOCIATES #3 CONVENER, DARCY MASON

Strengths - As a committed group, our faith and dedication will carry us forward...

Opportunities - We can serve the community and learn from each other where we are needed.

Limitations/Weaknesses - As we age, we have a fear of going beyond our comfort zone.

Threats - Losing hope.

LOCAL CHAPTER CONVENER, KATHLEEN ROSSMAN

Local Chapter Meeting for Legacy Task Force Discussion

Date of Meeting: August 30, 2024

Convener: Mr. Kathleen Rossman Secretary: Mr. Karen Berry

Group Members: Jeanne Bessette, Mary Kay Cmolik, Martha Eckstein, Theresa Fifer, Margaret Hoffman, Nadine Koza, Marie Miller

Due to lengthy conversation and lots of sharing, we did not get to Part 2 and have scheduled a future meeting to address Part 2. I will send those results at a later time.

We really wanted to share the "quiet part" after our silent reflection following the readings in the prayer service. Here is how members of our group responded to "Where have I felt the Spirit leading me during these summer months and how has this movement influenced my life?"

- Felt led into more political involvement, broadening contacts by working on a local candidate's campaign, taking part in an ad for that candidate, joining an interfaith group working on the election, contacting nuns on the bus about October arrival in my city, writing newspaper articles;
- Moved to see as a positive thought that we are going down together, but we are not leaving a vacuum;
- Felt led to do more downsizing, deciding what I can share with others from things I no longer need;
- Moved to be realistic about what I can still do, accepting physical limitations;
- Realizing my need to spend more time with people and being a good listener;
- Moved to work with my bishop to keep liturgy vital for the young people I minister to;
- Moved to realize that the Spirit is leading in all that we are experiencing;

Feedback from Part I: Sharing one or more insights from the Synthesis Paper that were most important to us

- Hold fast to hope because without hope, our efforts get paralyzed.
- Continue our environmental activism because the future of the Earth is in jeopardy.
- Offer Franciscan values to our ministries because Franciscan values are relatable, timely, needed... and they are what we are all about.
- It is important to realize life as we live it.
- Address the concept of right to life in broader contexts because pro-life is about many more life concerns than just abortion.
- We are Ecclesial women and need to be visible in the Church about embracing the whole spectrum of life.
- Need to embrace change and transformation as realities that cannot be denied.
- Show care and concern for our world.
- Dialogue kindly and model that to others because nasty verbal attacks when people disagree are rampant right now in our society.

Feedback from Part II: [Will be submitted in early October

Local Chapter Meeting Notes for Part 2 of "Led by the Spirit... Living into Our Legacy"

Date: October 4, 2024

We completed these sentences the following ways:

- 1) One of our greatest strengths as a Congregation is:
 - Our education and our encouragement to continue it and not grow stagnant;
 - Our lived experience in the Church pre and post Vatican II;
 - Our great history of women of courage and the legacy from our leadership;
 - Our supportive sisterhood and our genuine caring about each other;
 - Being ahead of the curve on many decisions;
 - Our current strong leaders and wise financial leadership;
 - The fact that we didn't split during tense post-Vatican II times;
 - Our informality, hospitality and respect for each other;

- We enjoy being!

2) Our Congregation should take advantage of the opportunity to:

- Challenge our Church hierarchy;
- Share our perceptions and experiences with Church leadership;
- Re-imagine who we are and how to finish up;
- Be a prophetic witness in our Church
- Use our energy for doing good;
- Be generous in sharing what we have;
- Shape the use of our Village creatively;
- Witness to the Paschal Mystery... new life along with the dying.

3) One of our most serious weaknesses or limitations as a Congregation is:

- Physical frailty and quickly aging;
- Lack of youthful energy;
- Getting disheartened and the possibility of losing hope;
- International legalities that will affect our Sisters in Brazil;
- Working things out with bishops and then having bishops changed.

4) One thing that is a very real threat to our Congregation is:

- Becoming discouraged, losing hope, losing a sense of purpose and losing identity
- The uncertainties of life (natural disasters, wars, health, national events);
- Choosing individual comfort and happiness over Congregation needs;
- Not recognizing and responding to our prophetic call and to the prophets of our times.

Living into Our Legacy – Where is the Spirit leading us?

- To ask what am I holding onto that keeps me from letting go;
- To continue to give even when we think we have given everything;
- To take one step at a time when we aren't sure where we are being led;
- To discern what to let go and how appropriate it would be to let go;
- To live more contemplatively as we transition from more active lives;
- To be more positive about the Church;
- To trust that we won't "sink in the boat" in a storm.

LOCAL CHAPTER CONVENER, DEBORAH GAUGHAN

Convener: Deborah Gaughan

Secretary: Sue Bruno

Date: 9/14/2024

Present: Lou Krippel, Peggy Quinn, Rita Vahling, Dolores Zemont, Mary Lou Marchetti, Clarita Schumacher, Deborah Gaughan, and Sue Bruno

Not Present: Lois Prebil, Roberta Naegele, Mary Ann Hamer

Feedback from Part 1:

Roll as ecclesial women has strong meaning for us. We continue to be recognized as a significant part of our Church. We are identified as Sisters in the Church, our voice still has meaning to others in the church; and we can sometimes take on a prophetic role. Being an ecclesial woman means a lot especially right now, as Joliet diocese is going through restructuring, and we can get involved with our parishes.

Our Franciscan charism is sorely needed in today's world.

Spirit of St. Francis is so needed in our world.

By living and creating a community of hope. It's a continuation of our work from last year. We need to forgive ourselves and acknowledge our mistakes and then we can better forgive others. We need to find balance in our lives between action and prayerful contemplation.

Sharing our Franciscan charism and creating a community of Hope.

Remember and accept change. We are aging; we need to learn to let go of some things.

We have to work at not being afraid and hopeless. Ants: Automatic Negative Thoughts, we have only the now to live in the now.

One member spoke of Grieving not being at the chapter. Be unafraid and faithful. Embrace changes. Hold fast to HOPE. Responding to the needs of others.

We have to speak from the heart. It requires openness, vulnerability and an understanding. Really find out where we are and what we believe. Listen to our hearts and the hearts of others. Care, love and acceptance. What can I bring to the world? What can my presence bring and give to the world?

Feedback from Part 2:

Strengths

Our leadership before and now are inviting us all to be on board with the realities of our present time as we plan and make decisions for the future of the Congregation and the care of our membership.

We have each other, we love each other. We are a prayerful community.

Our Franciscan faith. Our care for each other, our bond through prayer and lived experience. We each share over the years, our stories.

Total membership... our past treasurer generals have blessed us with their skills and our leadership past and present

Our care for each other, our bond through prayer and lived experiences which we have shared over the years.

We are committed, strong, well-educated, viable Franciscan Women in two countries with a great history and an expressed hope for wherever the future leads us.

Our sisters past and present and our associates. How we make people feel. My work is Loving the world. We are our greatest strengths

We are all learning Everyday what it means to support one another in different ways.

Our presence esp. in Joliet area. We are known.

Opportunities

Take advantage of the opportunities to build relationships everywhere.

To do the necessary grieving and lamenting about what is happening to us and most other Congregations as well so that we can healthily get to a place

where we are able to see the birthing of something new as a gift instead of a threat and utilizing the wisdom and guidance of LCWR, which our leadership is doing.

Need to take advantage of being a stronger presence to the church and to the Joliet Community.

To grow together through the Spirit and to let go in order to grow into the future. We need to share our feeling with each other.

We can speak up, use our Voice publicly, for the good of our Church, for the good of our society, for the good of all creation.

To fully live each day. Fr Salvador pastor. St. John's is a good example of that. He has breathed new life into that parish.

To identify how the laity can be more involved and assistance to all sisters.

To always listen to others hearts, in community, in grocery store, anywhere.

Within Congregation. Better communication between our

Administration to congregation and Congregation To administration.

Open sharing and communication to all. For example; We haven't had an OLA update.

Weaknesses

Fear and being judgmental of others

There are a very limited number of Sisters who are willing to serve in the kind of leadership needed at this unique time in history. Due to aging and health, our membership is challenged to accept our present limitations regarding active ministries and see our ministry in a new way and still meaningful way.

Lack of leadership, not everyone is on the same page.

Lack of open sharing. Communication about the village and I don't know stuff about OLA.

We could be more risk-taking; we're not public enough. We're often too careful.

Concentrate on what I cannot do as apposed to what I can do.

We don't have enough people to do the work of the congregation.

Lack of capable or willing sisters to help with the work of the congregation

Lack of confrontation loving and kind. Talking behind someone's back

Able and capable Sisters are not being asked enough to help out with Congregation needs.

Don't have enough people to take care of those in need.

Threats

Our age, not enough willing, capable Sisters to help with the needs of the Congregation.

Some of us are being insular or self-absorbed.

The outcome of our national upcoming elections. It could be that we lose medicare, Medicaid and even tax-exempt status and what that would mean for the overall care of all the Sisters in long term care.

Loss of hope and loss of too many sisters too soon

Fear of change or loss of hope.

Age and ageism. Our median age is creeping upward and that brings challenges to us as a whole and seem afraid of that. And we have to be aware of and eliminate ageism both within and around us. Ageism is discrimination against people based on their age. Like the other isms, it's so ingrained in our culture, we may not even notice it.

Fear of change and of losing hope in the future. Fear that we will run out of funds due to a government crisis.

Time and age gap between our sisters. Time gets away from us.

Our age. Ageism. We are not facing it in a positive way.

LOCAL CHAPTER BRAZIL

Meeting date: October 05, 2024.

Convener: Sister Maria Aparecida Gomes

Secretary: Débora de Castro Aves

Group members: Sister Maria Aparecida Gomes, Sister Maria das Mercês Alves Barbosa, Sister Margaret Alice Noser, Sister Débora de Castro Alves

First Part:

What resonated in our minds and hearts, in a synthetic way, was:

- We must preserve the movements of prayer in community and for each other, showing interest and appreciation of the activities, in front of the spaces of sharing life, prayer, leisure and communication among sisters.
- To experience the appeals of Pope Francis that consecrated life must have the joy of living and to witness this in a differentiated way in the spaces where we operate, with affective and fraternal listening to all.
- To experience the true heritage we received from our ancestors, in the face of the challenges of the journey towards the future thought by God.
- We need to appeal to creativity, intelligence and organize legal and bureaucratic issues, because our charisma does not die.
- We have mixed feelings about animating vocations, in the face of a scenario of discouragement and fulfillment of the mission.
- We need to convert ourselves to become new people, with new leadership and change what is necessary to continue towards the goal that God has prepared for us.
- Trust and selflessness in letting others continue the mission that Jesus gave us.

Second Part:

Strengths

Convinced of our consecration to God and heirs of Franciscan spirituality, of Mother Alfred and of the natural and local communities, we trust and share the welcoming spirit and solidarity with the less fortunate in the various pastorals, partnerships and movements in search of justice and peace.

Opportunities

The current reality of the congregation, of conversion, to live the calls of the gospel and the church in the world, sharing the gifts we have received from God in caring for the poor through the various spaces of action.

Limitations/Weaknesses

The decrease in the number of members of the congregation, with different human persons, who have difficulties in affective listening, in welcoming with creation, indecisive and attached to activism, to individualism that does not free up personal space to gather, to reflect in community.

Threats

To lose the essence of our consecrated life, not being a fraternal presence in this world that cries out for testimonies of hope and love, because we have entered the spheres of authoritarianism, clericalism, individualism, activism and consumerism, harming ecological living and the maintenance of missions.

Living into Our Legacy- Where is the Spirit leading us?

For an integral conversion of clearer awareness of what we are and what we must be, as sisters of all creation.

Local Chapter - Brazil
October 7, 2024

Portiuncula Community

Strengths:

To be women of prayer;

To be women of hope;

To be creative;

We will be together in our mission, especially in caring for one another;

We will have strength for the work;

We will be attentive to God's call to care for vocations, with special attention to each other's vocations.

Opportunities:

The meetings we have periodically for celebrations and assemblies help us to walk;

As a congregation, we feel that we have opportunities to work and serve according to each one's gift, in a particular way;

Limitations/Weaknesses

We still need to get closer as sisters;

To feel more support from one another in small everyday things and in more comprehensive work.

Threats

The intense activities we do daily can lead us to distance ourselves from fraternity;
We will not see each other as sisters.

Living in our legacy - Where is the Spirit taking us?

The Spirit moves us to understand that we really need changes;

We have autonomy;

We believe in each other more; 5

We believe in ourselves.