

October 30, 2025

Dear Sisters,

We write in hope that you are being nourished by the fruits and gifts of another autumn. Four months have passed since we gathered in Joliet around the biblical theme: *Wherever You Go, I Will Go*. We promised further reflection on the topics we opened up together: **Care of Mission**, **Care of Resources** and **Care of Members**. We also promised that we would share the beautiful graphic charts created by our artist friend, Sunny Ben Belkassem.

You are receiving the following items in this mailing:

- This Cover Letter
- A Self-Reflection on My Current Living Situation
- A Booklet for Both Personal Reflection and for Local Chapter Conversations
- A Sheet to Be Returned by Local Chapter Secretaries

Additionally, sisters who are living independently will receive a form called [Planning My Move from Independent Living](#). If YOU receive this, we ask that you complete it and return it to S. René Simonelic by December 5, 2025.

It is our hope that all of these materials – along with the opportunity to meet and talk with the supportive members of your Local Chapter – will form a valuable base on which you can continue to engage in planning for your own future while enabling you to live your best life!

We ask that Local Chapter Conveners schedule a meeting well in advance of December 5th so that you can meet our deadline for the items that need to be returned. The prayer for your meeting is included in the booklet.

Just to let you know, we are already thinking ahead as we work on processes and opportunities to welcome your involvement in several important topics. Among these are Legacy Planning and Philanthropy; learning more about the eventual transition to an Appointed Leader; and planning for our next General Chapter in 2027. We know you will stay tuned so you can tune in!

Peace and all good!

Your sisters,

Jeanne Bessette, OSF
President

René Simonelic, OSF
General Secretary

Peggy Quinn, OSF
Councilor

Sue Bruno, OSF
Councilor

MJ Griffin, OSF
General Treasurer

Joliet Franciscans

Self-Reflection on My Current Living Situation

Instructions: Please spend time with this inventory **before** you fill out the form for Planning Moving from Independent Living. Please review each statement and place a ✓ in the box if it describes your current reality. Leave it blank if it does not. This is for your personal reflection. You may share it with a trusted companion if you choose.

A. Daily Living

- ☐ I am able to prepare my own meals regularly.
- ☐ I can manage my medications without reminders or assistance.
- ☐ I handle my finances and pay bills on time.
- ☐ I am able to schedule and attend my own appointments.
- ☐ I have reliable transportation for my needs.

B. Support System

- ☐ I have family, friends or nearby Joliet Franciscan sisters I can call on in an emergency.
- ☐ I have someone I trust to talk with about my health or future.
- ☐ I feel connected to the congregation spiritually.
- ☐ I am able to travel to congregation meetings and social / spiritual events.
- ☐ I know who would help me if I could no longer live on my own.

C. Health and Safety

- ☐ I feel safe in my current home.
- ☐ I can move around my home without risk of falls, including managing stairs.
- ☐ I do physical exercise as appropriate for my current state of health.
- ☐ I am prepared for the possibility of a move if needed for health or safety.
- ☐ I have begun to declutter or prepare my home for a future transition.

D. Spiritual and Emotional Well-Being

- ☐ I have daily practices that nourish my spirit.
- ☐ I feel that my dignity and independence are respected.
- ☐ I know what personal items or rituals are most important to carry with me if I move.
- ☐ I have identified someone to speak with about my wishes if my health declines.

E. Looking Ahead

- ☐ I have thought about what steps I will take if my needs change.
- ☐ I feel prepared to ask for help when I need it.
- ☐ I trust that my community will support me through transitions as is reasonable.

Open-Ended Reflection

Please take a few moments of prayerful reflection on the questions below. You may write your thoughts or simply hold them in your heart.

- What does “independence” mean to me at this stage of my life? Is it compatible with my vows as a Joliet Franciscan?
- In what ways do I already experience the blessing of interdependence with other Joliet Franciscans? Other people?
- How do I hope to be cared for — physically, emotionally, and spiritually — in the years ahead?
- What is one small step I feel called to take now to prepare for the future?
- How do I invite God’s grace into this season of transition and reflection?
- What personal items, rituals or relationships are essential for me to carry with me when it is time for me to transition to my next living arrangement?

Wherever You Go, I Will Go

Forward Together

June 19-20



Care of Mission



In Care of Mission Reflection Questions

How am I living my mission as a Franciscan woman today, especially in my “Third Act”?

How do I see our sisters living our mission?





Space for Personal Reflection:



Care of Resources





IN CARE OF RESOURCES REFLECTION QUESTIONS

What invitation do you hear from the spirit (or from the Congregation or from this community) in regard to resources?

What conversations might you need to have with the leadership team to move forward with clarity or peace?

What small, faithful step could you take to move from reflection into action?

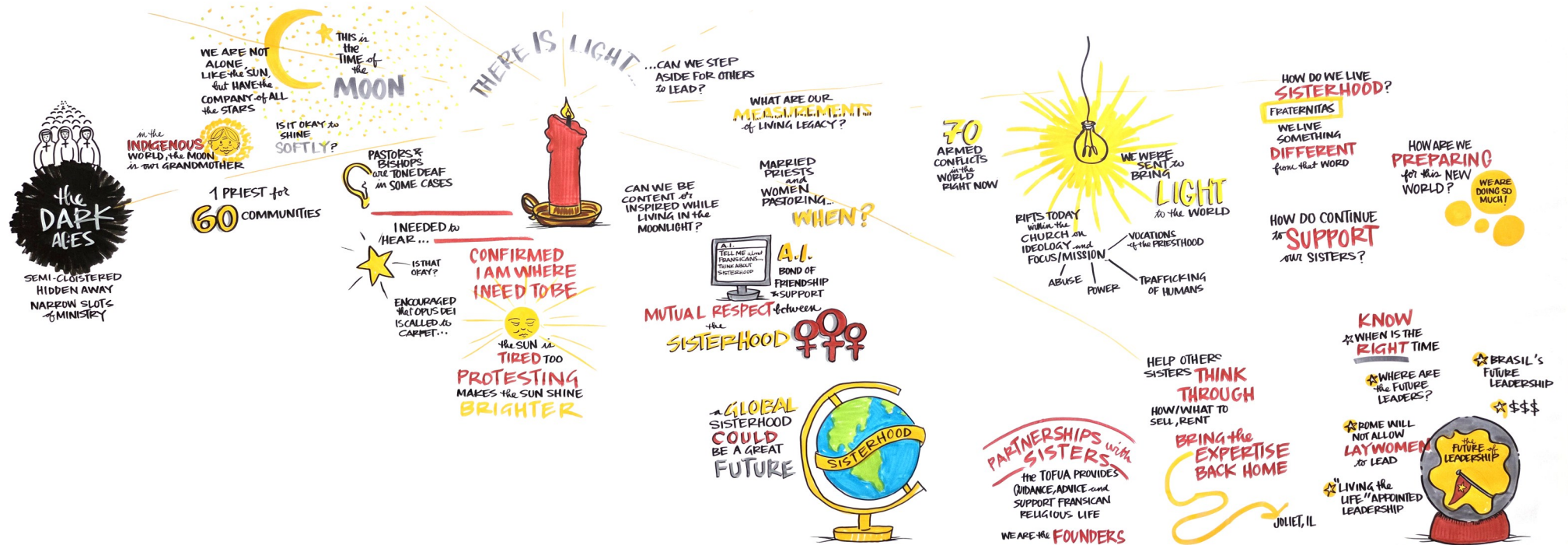




Space for Personal Reflection

Start of the Values Conversation

Summer 2025



Local Chapter Prayer

Reading 1

**With uncertainty comes opportunity.
When the path ahead is not clear and
The destination difficult to make out,
it provides opportunity to re-imagine,
To reshape, to be flexible and nimble.**

And so we pray...

For the Care of our Mission: Though the destination is not clear, we pray that we may use this opportunity in our lives as sisters to re-imagine, to reshape and to be flexible and nimble in our minds and hearts to live meaningful lives in this day and time. Let us listen to the Spirit, the world, to ourselves, to each other and to fellow religious in order to build the Kingdom among us and the Kingdom to come.

Reading 2 I want to say something to all of you who have become a part of the fabric of my life. The color and texture which you have brought into my being have become a song and I want to sing it forever. There is an energy in us which makes things happen when the paths of other persons touch ours and we have to be there and let it happen.

And so we pray...

For the Care of our Resources: For 160 years, we have become a song and we want it to sing it forever. How is it that our song can continue to give energy to the Franciscan Gospel values in the years to come. Help us to see the big picture and work now to plan meaningful uses of our resources.

Reading 3

Wherever you go, I shall go.
Wherever you live, so shall I live.
Your people will be my people,
And your God will be my God too.
Wherever you die, I shall die,
And there shall I be buried beside you.
We will be together forever, and
Our love will be the gift of our life.

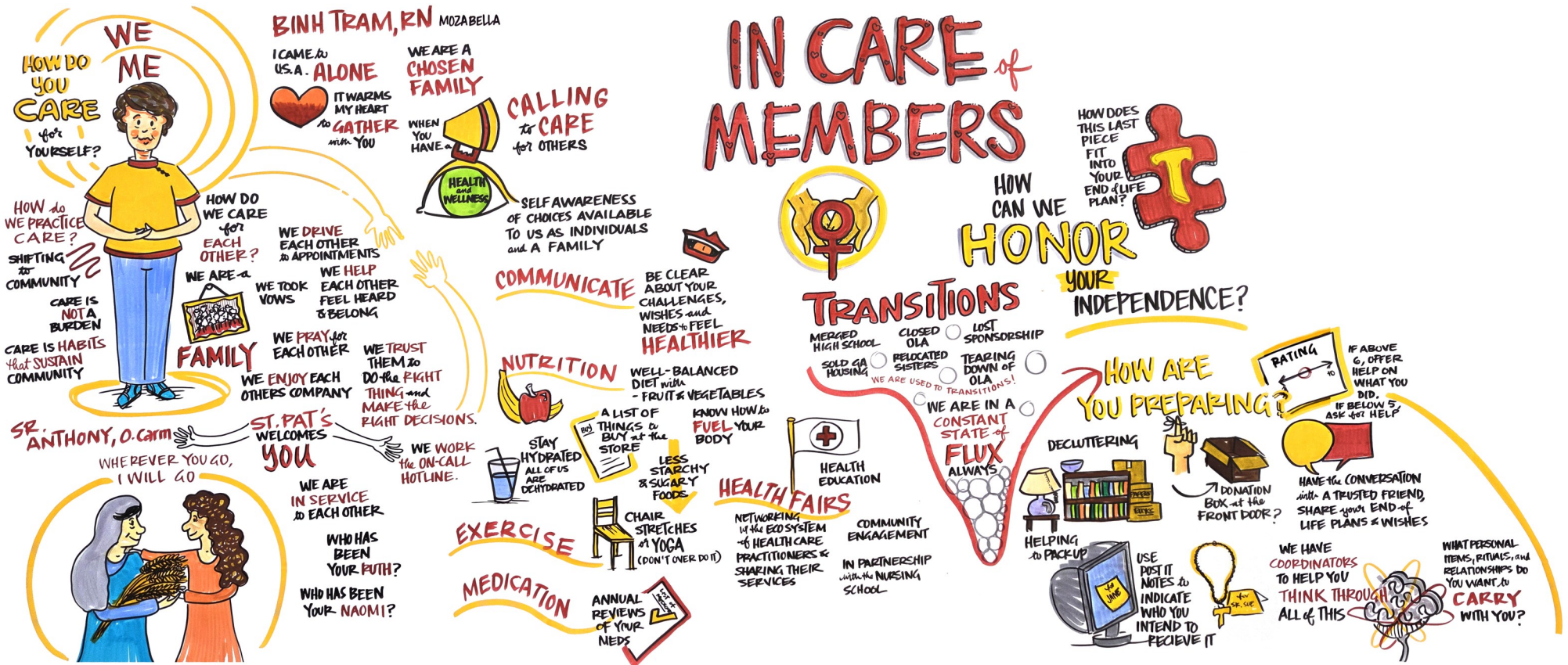
And so we pray...

For the Care of our Members: The story of Ruth and Naomi is about faithfulness, loyalty, service, and love. Let us have heartfelt sharing about how we can remain faithful and be of service to each other in this time. Inspire us to reimagine our relationships and community. Teach us how to let our love be the gift we give.



Care of Members

Review of Summer Discussions



Questions for local chapter sharing at greater depth.

**How do I hope to be cared for—physically, emotionally and spiritually—in the years ahead?
(at the end come up with a common answer from the group about your discussion)**

What personal items, rituals or relationships are essential for me to carry with me when it is time for me to transition to my next living arrangement?

Forward Together



Local Chapter Response Sheet

(Share a common answer from your group for the questions)

1. How do I hope to be cared to—physically, emotionally and spiritually in the years ahead?

2. What else would you like the Governing Board to know?

3. What else would your group love to talk about together as local chapter or congregation.

Return to Renee Cipriani by December 5, Friday.

Planning My Move from Independent Living

Joliet Franciscans

Autumn 2025

Sister's Name

Instructions: After our congregation meeting / summer gathering in June of 2025, sisters expressed a desire to follow up by doing some of their own reflection, planning and conversation. Once you spend time on the Self-Reflection on Independent Living worksheet, we ask you to very seriously consider, articulate and share your hopes for where you will live when you need the next level of care – whether it is supportive living, assisted living or skilled care. We ask you to send a copy of **this** form to your Coordinator and to the Governing Board (Sr. René Simonelic).

We ask that you review the sections in our [Policies and Procedures](#) manual pertaining to [Care of Members](#) and [Governance](#).

When I move from Independent Living to Assisted Living or Skilled Care,

☐ I plan to move to a facility or residence near Joliet approved by the Congregation.
(Jump to last section.)

OR (for those planning NOT to move near Joliet)

☐ I hope to move to a facility or residence in or near _____, realizing that this, too, must be approved by my Coordinator in consultation with the Governing Board.

- I have begun to consider or seek my next residence when the time comes.
Among my possibilities are:

- I know that this residence will meet the congregation's expectations regarding affordability, i.e., Medicare reimbursement.
- I know that this facility has at least a three-star rating.

- I realize that if I choose to live away from Joliet in my next residence, a Coordinator or member of the Governing Board may not be able to meet my needs with her physical presence.
- The kinds of needs the congregation currently attends to for sisters living in residences / facilities near Joliet are:
 - Help managing doctor appointments and transportation
 - Assistance with shopping (personal products, clothing, phones, etc.)
 - Management of medical needs (hearing aids, glasses, durable medical equipment not provided by the residence, etc.)
 - Attendance at care conferences as required
 - Advocacy on a sister's behalf with the staff at the residence (footcare, medication management, hair care)
 - Hospital visits
 - Accompanying sisters at the emergency room as needed
- **The person(s) who can and will meet these needs are:**

For ALL Sisters to Complete:

- **What personal items, rituals or relationships are essential for me to carry with me when it is time for me to transition to my next living arrangement?**

Additional Notes for Coordinator and / or Governing Board:

Signature

Date

Please send a copy of this form to both your Coordinator and Sr. René Simonelic by December 5, 2025.