

## Associate Partnership Office

On February 8 and 10 we held Zoom sessions asking associates to provide feedback on the questions posed by the Chapter Preparation Committee. 16 associates participated. The bullet points below are a few highlights of the answers received.

### **What is part of your current work that is an invitation for the next five years?**

- Continue work in Associate groups – read books & discuss, participate in service, pray and support, and share in the mission and charism of Nano!
- Continue to develop ways for associates to support the Presentation mission and grow together in Nano's spirit of hospitality, including the Associate Scholarship, Fall Associate Gathering, service opportunities, education and formation of justice issues, and prayer and celebrations.
- Continue associate only gathering at Community Days because it fosters ownership. Continue to encourage associate attendance at Community Days to connect with sisters and to get to know each other better.
- Continued exploration of how we live the mission and charism as associates in our families, work places, parishes, communities while acknowledging that we don't all live the charism/mission in the same way.
- Provide more opportunities for service (1 & 2 days) because not everyone can spend a week at the border. "I really feel like I'm walking in Nano's footsteps if I'm doing service work."
- Some Sister/associate groups have been meeting through this Covid situation, while others do not feel comfortable. Some have difficulties participating via Zoom. Is it time to realign or reform groups?

### **What is needed to address the emerging desire of the congregation?**

- I still have confusion about the calendar year – what is the difference between Chapter/Pre-Chapter/Community Days/CARMA? Explain what Community Days is and why we would like associates there. State associates are invited/wanted/encouraged to come. Start at the beginning to explain how associates fit into Chapter.
- The community needs to be super transparent about what time associates can be at things. If it's not clearly stated when associate gathering begins, we feel like maybe this event isn't for us and we shouldn't attend. Our connections with sisters are so important to get people to events.
- Use the slow drip method of giving associates information all the time. It's hard to keep all the information straight from a meeting several years ago.
- Recently a letter was released to the list serve from the sisters to local representatives, can associates sign on? We've been associates for 21 years; we shouldn't have to ask to be included any longer.
- The associates might need their own Leadership team comprised of the Associate Co-Directors and volunteers from the group of associates.
- The future of associates might be more autonomous or self-driven as sister numbers diminish, but still connected.
- Continue deep faith sharing among sisters and associates, contemplative dialogue, and ongoing formation to facilitate greater understanding and deepening of the mission and charism.
- What did it mean when the April 21, 2021 letter came out and stated associates will need to step up?
- We always need prayer and it is so important to be supportive of one another. It is important to be in connection with the Sisters!
- How can associate leadership be integrated into leadership structure? Meet weekly/monthly with Leadership Team?

We plan to present a skit about the winding lanes of associates and how we echo Nano's footsteps in the winding lanes.

## Governance & Communication Promise Group

### What is part of our promise group's current work that is an invitation for the next five years?

- That associates are part of our conversations and understanding because together, sisters and associates are partners, formed and informed by our mission, our charism and the Gospel.
- As the committee focused on governance and communication, we see the need to:
  - Explore new models of governance. (*Joy gave an example of the PBVMS in California.*)
  - Learn from other communities how new models of leadership evolved.
  - Invite potential leaders to have an understanding of and ability to grasp the canonical and civil corporation, and the significance of balancing these important aspects of leadership.
  - The importance of our charism of hospitality and our current historical moment that calls us to a communal journey of transformation.

### What is needed to address the emerging desire of the community?

- Some found the question unclear. It is not their experience that there is a clearly articulated unifying understanding of an emerging desire by sisters and associates. Many more conversations are needed before we can identify and share the common ground of an emerging desire and what it may be calling us to be and do.
- Engage in creating our future.
- Mutual accountability is needed among associates, sisters and leadership.
- Explore what is deep and common; what is bedrock in us and articulate this as we journey together.
- Courage and commitment to do the inner work necessary for individual and communal transformation.

## Initial Membership and Vocation Ministry

### What is part of your current work that is an invitation for the next five years?

- Women are discerning and entering religious life.
- Young adults are seeking accompaniment in discernment, an integrated approach to faith and everyday life and ministry opportunities. How are we responding to this need?
- Collaboration with North America PBVM's has good momentum right now.
- Collaboration with other communities is happening and is essential.
- Communication is a key component.
- Vocation ministry is primarily external communication related to sharing who we are as Presentations and inviting women to join. Initial Membership is primarily internal communication related to ongoing transformation. Engagement of all members is important.
- Practices and policies related to vocation ministry and initial membership have recently been reimagined and will need continuous updates to remain relevant.
- Openness to transformation as a way of life for both new members and vowed sisters.
- Mutuality is valued.

### What is needed to address the emerging desire of the congregation?

- Assuming the emerging desire of the congregation is living the mission and charism with zeal as individuals and together, *intentional invitations* to participate in the mission and charism in a variety of ways (vowed life, associates, friends, volunteers, employees, etc.) are necessary.
- Explore new ways of living religious life inter-congregationally that mutually enhances both communities' mission and charism while simultaneously living our universal call to the charism of religious life.
- Openness to change our current models of internal community ministry. We need to start dreaming up and experimenting with different ways of robust vocation and initial membership ministries.
- Explore connections with vocation, initial membership, associates, justice work, communication, and development
- A culture of intergenerational encounter. Creating opportunities for sisters and young adults to be together for faith sharing, prayer, discernment, conversation, service and building authentic relationships.
- Embrace personal and communal work on anti-racism, white privilege, and interculturality so that there is openness and welcome for women of diverse cultures
- Quality of presence with one another. Strengthen our sense of commitment to being in this together through intentional conversations about the things that are at the heart of our lives as vowed women.
- Vulnerability
- Belief and trust in the work of the Holy Spirit

## Justice promoters

### What is part of your current work that is an invitation for the next five years?

- Our IPA directives are a priority for us. We'll respond to IPA Assembly directions.
  - Until at least the next IPA Assembly, Women and Children will probably remain the focus: Health care, Economic Disparities, Housing for possible topics if we continue the style presently in use.
  - Continued use of See, Reflect, Act.
- After gathering feedback from the Community on our work throughout 2021, the team will make adjustments on how we engage all in Justice Work. Keeping justice as our lens is so important as our group goal, always understanding that the issues are ongoing and ever changing.
- Chapter and IPA Assembly in 2023 may affect our focus and influence us to change. But our current plan is still desirable.
  - We'll maintain our focus and retool as needed after IPA in 2023 and Chapter in 2023.

### What is needed to address the emerging desire of the congregation?

- Our group had a very difficult time with this question because we are unclear on
  - What is the emerging desire of the congregation??
- Our simulations will follow the emerging desires.
  - Looking outward to a greater community and inward to the PBVM Community—both are important.
- Need to look at our resources and assess how we use them to work for justice and solve issues for the poor. Let's examine how this goes to benefit the needs of women and children in our desire to share as Nano did.
- Some questions our group has about every change in leadership and how they form working groups:
  - Do our various congregational groups intersect?
  - Are they coordinated with one another?
  - Are the Justice Promoters clearly defined in the congregation?
- Our JP group is a consistent group, linked with IPA, that continues through various leadership terms. So, we need to be clear about what we do and then do it.
- Perhaps that is our emerging desire: to understand how these groups work together. Communicate better between groups.
- With a new chapter upcoming, all the promise groups configuration could change. But the Justice Promoter group is constant.

## Nonviolence Promise Group

- Our Nonviolence Promise Group has determined that our work promoting nonviolence needs to continue the next five years and beyond. Our reflections draw us to the Laudato Si Action Platform and how our Community will advance the seven goals in support of our Charism of Hospitality. Embracing the Laudato Si Action Platform in collaboration and partnership with others beyond our own Presentation circle, we respond to our interdependence on one another.
- Lack of Earth's resources and fulfillment of basic needs has and will create conditions for violence, because violence is what we do when we don't know what else to do with our suffering. To eliminate any kind of suffering is to promote nonviolence.
- Therefore, we support the seven goals of the Laudato Si Action Platform in worldwide efforts to care for Earth, and we will use these themes for our future conversations and actions.
  - 7 Goals of the Laudato Si Action Platform:
    1. Response to the Cry of the Earth
    2. Response to the Cry of the Poor
    3. Ecological Economics
    4. The Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles
    5. Ecological Education
    6. Ecological Spirituality
    7. Community Resilience and Empowerment
- Indeed, our circle extends to all of Mother Earth who is in desperate need of nonviolence and compassion.

## Partnerships and Resources Promise Group

### What is part of our current work that is an invitation for the next five years?

- Hinges on feedback from Plante Moran, Associates, Employees, Strategic Planning committee, Vital Living and Members Well-Being working group, Ongoing formation
- Ignite Creativity and imagination
- Invite promising partnerships to assure sustainability of our mission
- Provide ways for best possible care of Sisters, care for the Earth, and enrich the environment
- Gelling together Promise groups as focuses seem to complement one another as Radical Hospitality is umbrella
- Look at the challenging signs of the time—food scarcity, health care, housing, homelessness, women and children. Racial injustice

### What is needed to address the emerging desire of the congregation?

- Name the emerging desire of the congregation
- Define mission, ministry, legacy, charism
- Deeper conversation about topics that really matter
- Make Charism (Radical Hospitality) **come alive** as Nano did and make a difference in society.
- Work on really expressing our feelings
- Deep listening
- Ongoing formation—learn about current events and needs
- How engagement and transparency apply to us individually and as a community/
- Collaborate and encourage one another

**Cherish Yesterday**

**Live today**

**Dream tomorrow**

## Radical Hospitality Promise Group

### Summary of our discussion

- **Our current work**
  - Since involving members of sisters and associates of the Presentation congregation in our conversation on racism through Thursday evening Zooms called “Let’s Talk about Racism,” the Radical Hospitality Promise Group has become focused on engaging with **how to become anti-racist** by dialoging with others, both white and people of color.
  - During 2021, we had guests who joined us to tell us about their experiences of living in a white dominant culture, living in the U.S. as families with children of color and white parents, or living in the U.S. as immigrants from other cultures. This has strengthened our commitment as a Promise Group to explore the ongoing task of “Dismantling Racism” in our own lives, within the Dubuque Presentation Congregation and beyond. We have begun a Fact Finding phase in 2022 to learn from other organizations (educational, religious, civic or non-profit services and more)
    - What their group has done to address racism in themselves and in the local community
    - What their group has done to deal with white privilege, white supremacy, dominant culture
    - In encouraging anti-racism if they involve others (individuals or groups) beyond their own members or constituents
    - What resources they have found most effective in stirring hearts on the issue of anti-racism
    - What suggestions they have for us as a religious community as we grapple with the issue/topic of racism
    - What interest they may have in collaborating with us to offer to the wider Dubuque area
- **As a Promise Group, we invite all Dubuque Presentation Sisters and Associates to become integrally involved in**
  1. a process of addressing anti-racism through an ongoing experience of addressing our own personal and systemic racism (such as the Crossroads Anti-racism Training)
  2. a collaborative process with persons of color and others from organizations, individuals, groups in this area to invite the wider community to participate in anti-racism training
- **To address the emerging desire of the congregation we need to collaborate and network to**
  1. Continue to self-educate and share education about anti-racism and equity for persons of color and name our personal, communal, national, institutional and systemic racism.
  2. Continue to connect with individuals and groups at the grassroots and wider community level to collaborate in dismantling racism and admit that we do not own everything for ourselves but see we share in the process.
  3. Take steps to invest time, energy and resources to become anti-racist: Engage with professionals who can assist us in the process of dismantling our racism; invite others to collaborate with us.
- **In a skit prepared by three members of the Radical Hospitality Promise Group, we will present in April a call to continue to work on anti-racism and equity for all.** Continuing as a congregation to widen our tent, we stress that we are not, and may never be, finished with this, it is a life work; we need to collaborate with others, while getting to know our own attitudes and trying to understand people who are living with and under systematic racism.