



**Re: Congregational Gathering
July 29 to August 3, 2024**

May 31, 2024

Dear Sisters,

“I have done what is mine to do, may Christ teach you what is yours.”

The planning committee for this summer’s Congregational Gathering recently met; thus, we are writing to let you know of our updated plans. As you know from our December 14 letter, our Gathering will take place in Allegany, New York and will begin on July 29 at 9:30 a.m. and end at noon on August 3, 2024. Please be sure to let us know if your plans for attending the Gathering have changed (Email: kristen.luther@fsallegany.org; Fax: 716-372-5774.

Having received and appreciated your feedback regarding the prioritization of “critical issues”, we have used this information to draft our goals.. The three primary goals for the Gathering are:

1. We will build upon our CARE training by generalizing the skills into our assembly dialogue.
2. We will explore our current and future realities, along with the “critical issues” facing our Congregation (e.g., Completion, Leadership, Vocation efforts).
3. We will introduce the proposed approach to our Chapter in 2025.

These goals will lead us into Chapter and beyond. In preparation for this Gathering, and to help us begin a visioning process, we are inviting you to prepare your hearts by writing a letter imagining yourself to be in the future and reflecting upon your hopes and dreams for the community and what you would want to say to all of us. This task is intended to till the soil for our visioning efforts by connecting us to our deepest longings for the future. Regardless of whether you

Women of Hope Embracing All Creation ◊ Serving God’s People in the United States, Jamaica, Brazil, Bolivia, and Mozambique

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are attending the Congregational Gathering or not, we are asking that every sister engage in prayer and reflection and prepare a letter as described in the attachment.

We are asking every sister who is attending the Congregational Gathering to bring your letter. These will be shared in various groupings during our time together; we hope that you will both desire, and be willing, to share your letter with one another. Recognizing that not everyone will attend the Gathering, we will be planning a process for regions to share these in small groups, as well. You will receive that instruction in a subsequent letter. Please have these letters written and ready to share by the beginning of our Gathering on July 29.

Soon, we will be sending information and forms for you to complete regarding your travel, transportation, housing, and dietary needs. We will continue to update you with any scheduling changes or additions.

Additional Information for 2024 – Please mark your calendars

July 28: Facilitators meet in Conference Room at 1:30 p.m.

July 29: Congregation gathers in Conference Room at 9:30 a.m.

August 2: Feast of the Portiuncula: 4:00 p.m. Mass followed by Festive dinner

August 3: Conclude Congregational Gathering at 12:00 noon

August 3: Facilitators meet at 1:30 p.m. for debriefing.

We know that everyone's time is valuable and limited, and we are very grateful for all that you are doing to make our Gathering worthwhile and successful. Let us continue to keep one another in prayer during our time of planning and preparation.

Blessings and All Good,

Committee Members: *Bernadette Schuler, Colleen Brady, Cindy Matthews, Judith Terrameo, Lilian Cristina Pinheiro, Pat Tyre, Margaret Magee*

Resource Persons: *Elaine Cote, Carole Ann Hoppe, Kathy Maire*

Coordinators of Housing, Transportation, Liturgy, Ambiance: *Melissa Scholl, Jo Streva*

Administrative Resource: *Kristen Luther*

Consultants: *Beth Lipsmeyer Dunn and Ted Dunn*