

Invitation Packet

Discernment of Congregational Leadership

January 20, 2025

Introduction

This packet is intended to orient and guide you through the process of “inviting” sisters to discern the call to serve in a new approach to leadership and governance. This is for each individual sister to complete. Enclosed in this packet you will find the following:

- ✓ “Desired changes in our emerging future” (or hard copy)
- ✓ “The Art of Reframing” (or hard copy)
- ✓ A link (or hard copy) to the summary and synthesis of the recent January Regional Gatherings (raw data available on the portal)
- ✓ Three invitation forms for Leadership
 - For those sisters working with hard copies, instead of email, you also have three envelopes (one for each invitation form) and one manila envelope (for returning all forms). Please be sure to put the name of the sister who you are inviting on each envelope.

Invitation Parameters

- ✓ Currently, any sister perpetually professed for four years, and in sufficient health to undertake responsibilities, is eligible to be elected for Congregational Leadership (see C76, C84).
 - New approaches to Congregational Leadership may emerge that include sisters in a variety of ways.
- ✓ You may invite up to **three** sisters to discern the call to serve in elected leadership.
- ✓ You do **not** have to use all the invitation forms. *If your discernment genuinely leaves you with fewer names to invite, stay with the few you **discerned well**, rather than fill out more forms without sufficient clarity.*
- ✓ Do **not** indicate any position (e.g. Congregational Minister, Councilor, etc.).

Orientation to Invitation Process

The purpose of submitting the invitation forms is to *initiate a dialogue of discernment* for those you are *calling* forth to discern leadership and to further the possibilities of a new paradigm for governance we are developing. As you consider whom to invite, we would encourage you to:

- ✓ Emphasize prayer, dialogue and a discerning process that listens to the *Spirit's call* for who might best serve our Congregation with the competencies needed for elected leadership.
- ✓ This is your *personal discernment*. You are encouraged *not* to talk with the sisters you might invite ahead of time to ask if they are open to leadership. You are encouraged to talk with them as a follow-up to completing these invitation forms so the feedback is face-to-face as well as written.
- ✓ Invite sisters you believe have skills to *help our Congregation move forward in creating and living into a new paradigm* as well as *partnering in our ongoing Journey of Transformation*.
- ✓ Invite sisters who appear to have the *gifts and competencies needed at this time* in our Congregation (rather than those with gifts for another time and place).
- ✓ Invite sisters with whom *you are willing to partner* in carrying forth our mission and whose skills could inspire and empower us to become more engaged and effective members.
- ✓ Invite sisters you believe could *best serve the Congregation* (rather than sisters you might wish to affirm in some way, or fear would be hurt if you did not invite them.)

Steps in the Process

Step One Beginning Reflections and Prayers

Use the following materials as touchstones for your reflection and prayer:

- “The Art of Re-Framing”
- “Desired changes in our emerging future”
- “Summary and synthesis of the January Regional Gatherings”
- Your own personal reflections, notes and materials

Step Two Search from among our eligible sisters

Search for those sisters who might have the essential competencies needed to forward our Congregational efforts and lead the Congregation for the next four years. Do not try to make a name fit; rather, let the names come to you. Hold these names lightly.

Step Three Listening and discerning

Listen to what all of the sisters have said is important during prior Gatherings. Reflect upon your recent efforts and conversations and use this to stimulate new perspectives and enlightenment. Listen for the names that surface within you and hold them lightly.

Step Four Complete the Invitation Forms

Reflect upon your experiences and the names of sisters whose gifts are needed at this time in our history. Search for the congruence of *your desire*,

the desire of your sisters and the Spirit's call. Complete the invitation forms, understanding that the more *specific* your comments, the more it will aid those who receive them.

Remember to use descriptive, not evaluative, labeling, or judgmental language. Use “*The Art of Re-Framing*” handout to help you write your feedback in ways that are helpful, not hurtful.

Step Five Send in the forms.

- **The deadline for forms to be received from all sisters is February 7.** Marcilene in Brazil, and Carole Ann Hoppe in the United States, will *receive* these forms by February 7 (not “sent” by February 7). We cannot assure that any forms received after this date will get to the sister.
- **If you are inviting a sister into discernment who resides in Brazil ...**
 - ...and you live in Brazil, send your email to Marcilene: 0182msb@gmail.com
 - ...and you live in Bolivia, Jamaica, United States, you must complete a form by email and send it directly to Marcilene: 0182msb@gmail.com (contact CPC if you need assistance)
- **If you are inviting a sister into discernment who resides in Bolivia, Jamaica or United States ...**
 - ...and you live in Brazil or Bolivia, send your email directly to Carole Ann Hoppe: cannahoppe@hotmail.com
 - ...and you live in Jamaica complete the forms and hand deliver these to Gwen by January 27.
 - ...and you live in the United States, complete the form and priority mail/FedEx, or hand-deliver these to Carole Ann Hoppe. If you live in Florida, you may wish to coordinate sending in your invitations as a group.
- Write your invitations in your own language. These must be typed if your invitations are to be translated. Any translation needed will be done on the receiving end. In other words, if you receive an invitation in a different language, you are responsible to translate it. Help will be available as needed.
- Please make a copy of the invitations you are submitting for your own records and subsequent work.

Forms and Letters Distributed in Mid-February

In mid-February, the invitation forms will be compiled and distributed to the sisters for whom they are intended, and two letters will go out. Sisters who are invited to the Discernment Retreat will receive a letter describing their preparation for the first Discernment Retreat. At the same time, the Congregation, at large, will receive a letter informing them of sisters who received three or more invitations to participate in the Discernment Retreat. The *number* of invitations each sister received will NOT be published.

Discernment Retreat: March 6 - 8, 2025 at (Brazil and Tampa)

Note the change in dates from the retreat, March 6 – 8 (not March 6 – 9 as originally published). Any sister who receives **5** or more invitations is **expected** to come to the Discernment Retreat. Sisters receiving 3 or 4 invitations are **encouraged** to attend. You may wish to discern with others (e.g., those who invited you, other sisters, spiritual directors, etc.). Sisters receiving 1 or 2 invitations will **not** attend.

We are asking anyone who has questions or concerns about participating in the discernment retreat to please contact any member of the CPC.

Leadership Invitation Form

To: _____ From: _____

Please be sure to put the name of the sister who you are inviting on the outside envelope

I am inviting you to discern the call to serve in leadership because you would inspire me to become a more engaged and empowered member. If you were chosen for leadership, I believe we could build a strong partnership in shaping the future of our Congregation.

I believe that you have the following competencies to offer the Congregation, and I hope that you will consider these as you discern the call to serve in some capacity in leadership (elaborate and describe; do not use labels):

As you discern the call to serve in leadership, I invite you to reflect upon the following challenges and questions I have for you (do not use labels; describe and elaborate):

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