

“Emerging Future” Large Group Sharing Responses from LCWR 9 (April 2021)

Identity / Culture / Charism / Interculturality

- How do we work with diversity within in the church? We are a Vatican II church...
- Leaders of religious orders will be younger and coming from the global south rather than European / American countries
- Congregations have different experiences: international, diocesan , where they are geographically situated
- How do we maintain our own integrity and charism in the midst of the common call? For instance, a congregation may have one foot in their (eg Dominican) charism and one foot in the common call.
- How do we cultivate religious life as a common call?
- “Fulfillment” or “completion” are conversations that differ community to community. It is energy intensive work to address how charism lives on through legacy while caretaking and providing for the future.

Collaboration

- It takes humility, mutuality, trust to collaborate well.
- “I wish we could talk to our foundresses as they moved into something new...” How do we encourage our new common call? We’ve done this before (after Vatican II)! We have vision, history, and experience to use in this moment as well.
- We need ongoing development of collaboration – this is the core of what we have always done in our communities and ministries. We can’t go it alone – need to collaborate with others and talk together in areas of racism, future, resources, ministry, etc.
- If we don’t collaborate, we’re probably polarized.
- Common call belongs to us all; charism belongs to the congregation.
- What does collaboration in governance look like ? Even in terms of canon law?
- What will be the focus of leadership in the future – not in terms of who but in terms of how – administrative tasks can be delegated; responsibility can’t.
- Younger sisters don’t want to spend the rest of their lives doing administration. How can they be freed for mission?

- When, why and how did leadership become so tied to administration?
- Collaboration should also be with broader groups – civic, ecumenical, etc. This is a growing edge for us.
- Intergenerational collaboration is important.
- Imagine a forum with sisters under the age of 80 in 10 years, among congregations in LCWR 9.

Younger & New Members / Interculturality

- Dominican Sisters Conference example: The Elizabeths (over 70) and the Marys (under 70) gathering; Elizabeths support/mentor Marys into the future; Marys continue relationships with Elizabeths for support. How can this help shape a mutually supportive, intergenerational future?
- How can congregations in “fulfillment” continue to support religious life? Suggest: they can point young potential members to communities welcoming new members.
- How do we distinguish responsibility for the essentials of our religious life from responsibilities related to our civil corporations (ex. resources, buildings, land, hospitals, etc.)? What is at the heart of what we are about? Leadership needs to be spending more time in service of our life and ministry.
- Remember, “Sisters Without Borders” still has funding available for a gathering of younger sisters. (I.e., LCWR9 program fund for Sisters professed post-Vatican II)