

DOMINICAN SISTERS OF SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS

JUST *Words*



General
Chapter
2024



THE CONTEXT

“Together, we will...”

With great joy and gratitude, I recall hearing the first draft of the 2024 General Chapter Direction Statement (p. 4) read aloud in the meeting room. Even in draft form, the work of our four designated listeners held deep resonance with the movement of the Spirit, who guided us during months of preparation and the graced days of chapter. When the final statement was affirmed by the general chapter, it became the focus of prayer, study, contemplation and action for each member of the congregation. In this issue of *JUST Words*, we begin to unpack what that will mean for our sisters, associates, friends, colleagues, and coworkers who share our passion for the gift of Dominican life and ministry for the church and the world. Their voices, too, were present and made a significant contribution to the work of chapter (p.13).



With this shared vision before us, the general chapter elected a new leadership team who began their ministry on June 15 (p. 4). In these pages you can glimpse how Sisters M. Paul McCaughey, Joanne Delehanty, Elyse Marie Ramirez, and Kathlyn Mulcahy will embrace the

will of the chapter and support the congregation in bringing it to fruition. Their reflections highlight our desire to live our vocation in collaboration with our associates, the Dominican family, our partners in mission, and all those we encounter.

As we move from one general chapter to the next every five years, the efforts from the previous years are integrated and reshaped into our hope-filled desire to serve God’s mission into the future. In our constitutions we read, “Called together for the good of the Church, the Chapter by its decisions challenges us to a renewed fidelity to the mission of the community in the spirit of St. Dominic.” (Art. 71); and, “As Dominicans, we embrace the mission of Christ in our own time and place.” (Art. 1). I pray you will see these words come alive as you read this issue of *JUST Words*.

In the joy of Dominic,

Sister Rebecca Ann Gemma

Sister Rebecca Ann has just completed a long period of service to the congregation in elected leadership, two terms as a councilor and two terms as prioress general. She completes her term as past president of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious in August.

Mission Statement:
Called by God
into right relationship with all creation and graced by Dominican life and mission, we compassionately preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

JUST Words
Sharing the mission, and ministry of the Dominican Sisters of Springfield, Illinois. Published three times a year Volume 24, Number 2.

Dominican Sisters of Springfield, Illinois
Sacred Heart Convent
1237 W. Monroe
Springfield, Illinois 62704
Phone: 217.787.0481
www.springfieldop.org

For inquiries about this publication:
Sister Beth Murphy, OP
Director of Communications
sbmurphy@spdom.org

For inquiries about vocations:
Sister Denise Glazik, OP
Director of Vocations
dglazik@spdom.org

For inquiries about the Associate Program:
Sister M. Joan Sorge, OP
Director of the Associate Program
smjsorge@spdom.org

For inquiries about Mission Advancement
Sister Kathleen Anne Tait, OP
Director of Mission Advancement
skatait@spdom.org

EDITORIAL BOARD MEMBERS:
Catherine Becker
Sister Barbara Blesse, OP
Michael Goldasich
Kara Mernaugh
Jean Ann Miller
Shirley Morris, Ed.D.
Sister Beth Murphy, OP
Sister Elyse Marie Ramirez, OP
Dave Sanders
Carolyn White
Alexis Williams

TRANSLATOR:
Sister Mila Diaz Solano, OP

PUBLICATION DESIGNER:
Jean Ann Miller

Ten Dominican Sisters celebrate milestones in 2024

Ten Dominican Sisters of Springfield are marking profession milestones in 2024 including three of our sisters who made their first profession 75 years ago, in 1949.

Jubilee is a biblical concept that involves marking time with a period of celebration and gratitude for gifts received from God.

It is a time for renewal, reflection, rest, and restoration. Typically, each year consecrated women religious observe their profession anniversaries, 75, or 60, 50 or 25 years of profession, with celebrations of Eucharist, family gatherings, and—in the case of our community—a joyous Eucharistic celebration and

a festive meal that always includes a lot of storytelling and laughter. This year the jubilarians who live at Sacred Heart Convent invited their family to join them for Mass and dinner on April 21. The community jubilee celebration is scheduled August 4.





75
years

Sister Norma Somers

Sister Margaret Grueter

Sister M. Gabriella Luebbers



60
years



Sister Rita Marie Range

Sister Patricia Burke





Sister Karen Marie Kvidera

Sister M. Santina DeLuca

Sister Marie Michelle Hackett

Celebrating our Jubilarian Sisters




50
years

Sister Maira Barry

Sister Kathleen Anne Tait

Together we will: the leadership team reflects on the 2024 General Chapter statement

We, the Dominican Sisters of Springfield, guided by the Holy Spirit, join with others to reimagine a future of promise and hope.

Rooted in our prayer for the life of the world, and in our care for our common home, we are strengthened by our Associates and partners in mission to walk together in a future of authentic intercultural living.

Trusting in the transformation already at work within us, we step into the challenges, riches, and grace of the unknown.

Together, we will strengthen relationships within our congregation.

Together, we will invite, welcome, and support new members to our congregation and to Dominican life.

Together, we will build relationships with those of other cultures, through study, engagement and interaction.

We take the next steps into our congregational future, grounded in the freedom offered in our Constitutions. We are energized by participating in the emerging movements of governance within the Dominican family.

Together, we will engage in ongoing conversation and communal study in our effort to move toward a collaborative form of governance.

Together, we will embrace individual and shared responsibility for participative Dominican governance.

Compelled by our passion for mission, we respond, in Christ, for the life of the world.

~Affirmed by the General Chapter, April 5, 2024, Springfield, Illinois



Sister M. Paul McCaughey, OP | Prioress General

As Sister Kathleen Ryan spoke at Chapter on behalf of the committee charged with drafting the direction for our Gospel mission, she eloquently spoke of the document's deliberate parallel structure: Together, we will... I was sold.

“Reimagining a future of promise and hope” is never done in splendid isolation, above the work—and quite frankly, the messiness—of real relationships. Placed in the context of Dominican participative governance, the mandate provides the freedom both to dream and to structure a plan that

allows all to serve according to their gifts, passion and capacity.

Why not stretch a bit?

The Holy Spirit in Celtic myth is a wildgoose. The Sisters elected an odd duck. I believe that, even if things are not perfect as they unfold, together we will, in and as Christ, be always “for the life of the world.”



Sister Joanne Delehanty, OP | Vicress General

“We” is the first word of the statement. The last two: “the world.” They bookend perfectly the commitment that is our hope and our choice for the next five years.

We will engage with all that the world is, in emerging and

ongoing ways.

Six times we say “together.” And then the dynamic verbs: “join with, reimagine, step into, invite, welcome, support, participate, move towards, embrace, respond.”

The chapter statement is forward-facing and vigorous and spirited. I am struck by the trajectory of change it invites us to, while humbly remembering the gift, the grace, the beginning and the end that God is. For that is what shapes and enables all of this. Rooted in and grateful for our past, we face the future with collegiality, synodality, and trust, with open minds and hearts and arms. All of this, for the life of the world.

Amen! Alleluia!



Sister Elyse Marie Ramirez, OP | Councilor

In my life as a Dominican Sister of Springfield, general chapter is always this moment of Pentecostal transormational grace! Each one since 1983.

For the last five years, as a congregation, along with our associates and partners -in-mission, we have been praying with an awareness of our “interconnectedness in the cosmos and in solidarity with the rostros concretos of the marginalized.”

In that awareness, in the same prayer, we asked, “Draw us into communion with You and all creation... Free our hearts to recognize you...Bless our efforts to be the holy preaching... Christ, you are expansive. We journey in that truth, offering our testimonio de vida.”

So absolutely, as we came into our 2024 General Chapter, we saw a future of promise and hope!

God is answering the Prayer for the Life of the World in this renewed commitment to strengthening relationships, inviting others to do the same, and collectively committing to intercultural living as a becoming-Gospel-actualized community!

Gathered together at general chapter, obediently listening

to the Spirit speaking though each other, and through all the needs in our church and world, of course such a direction emerges.

This is who we are. It is what we do. I am humbled and thrilled to be part of our “Digo Si Señor!” going into the next five years.



Sister Kathlyn Mulcahy, OP | Councilor

In the 2024 Chapter

Statement we speak of joining with others to reimagine a future of promise and hope.

For me, the statement is a commitment to reimagine our collective dream for the future, and even more our commitment to embrace God's hope for the future. God's promise of wholeness is evident in the blessings of

peace and mutuality in diversity, in our story of creation (Gen. 1) in Jesus' prayer, “May they all be one” (Jn 17), and in our founding as Springfield Dominicans when seven women prayed and discerned together to establish

a new Dominican congregation.

This promise is envisioned for this moment in our history as walking together into a future of authentic intercultural living, trusting the challenges, riches, and grace of the unknown. A key word, repeated no less than six times in the chapter statement is TOGETHER.

We will walk together, building and strengthening relationships, inviting and welcoming new life, embracing collaboration and shared responsibility for decision-making.

Our focus in these next five years, as I see it, is not as much on what we will do as on how we will be—together. We look forward to working with our friends and partners in this mission!



The new leadership team, from left: Sisters Elyse Marie Ramirez, Kathlyn Mulcahy, M. Paul McCaughey and Joanne Delehanty.

Recognizing who we are together

The “listeners” reflect on general chapter

JUST Words invited the sisters who served as listeners during General Chapter to talk about their experience. We edited the conversation into a Q&A format to capture their insights.

Sister Susan Karina Dickey is vice-president for mission integration at St. Dominic Health Services, Jackson, Miss.; Sister Katherine O’Connor is beginning a new ministry teaching English language learners in Springfield; Sister Kathleen Ryan has just completed her ministry as director of the Dominican Literacy Center, Aurora, Ill., and Sister Sharon Zayac is an Earth literacy and eco-spirituality educator on the team at Jubilee Farm, Springfield, Ill.



Sisters Susan Karina Dickey, left and Sharon Zayac read the responses from chapter participants.

JW: What was it like for you to participate in this general chapter as a listener knowing you’d be responsible for drafting the chapter statement for approval by the chapter delegates?

SZ: I suppose I was listening in a different way because I knew I would be held accountable for it when the four of us gathered. It was a more intensive listening for me than usual.

KOC: It was very energizing! One of the amazing things to me was how committed we are to the Prayer for the Life of the World from the 2019 chapter. It was a surprise.

JW: How did you come to see that?

KOC: When we had discussions at our table, people kept referring to the prayer. Sisters seemed to recognize, in hindsight, how

the prayer has led us to think about interculturality. It really helped us to come to unity, I think.

SKD: I, too, found that we had been profoundly influenced by the words of the chapter prayer. At our house it was part of our evening prayer so we recited it countless times. Apparently, others did, too.

JW: As we talk in mid-May, we are a bit more than a month past chapter. What stands out in your minds now that you’ve had some space to ponder?

SZ: Reflecting back, I sense three important movements during chapter: our faithfulness to the *Prayer for the Life of the World*, our readiness to move past anxiety about change, and our recognition that living interculturally is a witness much needed today.

SKD: Yes. Compared to other chapters I’ve been part of, I didn’t get that sense of apprehension or fear of the future. This is an anxious time in the world; we are not immune from that. But I found a wonderful openness—an eagerness—to engage in collaboration with other Dominican communities.

KOC: You said it, Karina. The contemplative spirit of our chapter allowed us not to be bound by fear and anxiety. It’s hard to be living at this time in our country and not experience those things. Chapter created a space that allowed us to move beyond it.

KR: My sense throughout chapter was of being both deeply reflective and outward-focused. Our contemplative time deepened our congregational self-knowledge, which is so

necessary for a fruitful, lasting impact.

JW: How much of that has to do with an evolution in understanding the purpose of our lives?

SZ: Yes, we talk about a transformation of consciousness. I think we are living into it. We are moving into a deeper understanding that it is not what we do but who we are together. That takes time to come to, and the wisdom that comes from aging is part of that.

SKD: Yes, aging contributes to it. I’m also seeing the influence of Pope Francis. One of his recurring themes is encounter...encountering

the other. I think there is a realization that to encounter others—intercultural living—is a high ideal, one we might strive for by truly encountering people of other cultures—even among those with whom we live!

SZ: We did speak about that, didn’t we? We talked about the fact that we have different cultural backgrounds and as a congregation we have a culture. We are beginning to understand that culture is not just ethnic culture. It is that, and it is also the culture

of LGBTQ persons, for example, and other groups we encounter. Culture is more than just faith or ethnicity.

KR: Having Sister of St. Joseph Carol Zinn open the chapter was good. She has a wide vision [as executive director of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious]. Her theme was that there is a new, shifting reality in religious life. That was good for us to absorb.

SKD: Carol is grounded in the ecclesiology of the Catholic church, and through that lens she reminded us that we are part of a larger whole. She also spoke about our relationship



Sisters Katherine O’Connor, left and Kathleen Ryan read the responses from chapter participants.

to Jesus. Her talk was comprehensive, addressing the 360 degrees of religious life. I thought it was good groundwork for the work of chapter.

KOC: Part of her gift was helping us know we are not in this by ourselves. Almost all religious congregations are going through this kind of change.

SZ: I don’t think we can underestimate that. I also think what helped was to realize we are doing this together as a group of Dominican congregations. You can handle a lot of things when you know you are not by yourself.

JW: Are you noticing any impact on your lives since chapter closed?

KOC: For me, just transitioning from one ministry to another, and just completing sabbatical, everything is new. I do think there is more openness to things, trying to move forward.

KR: I’m sure the chapter statement will become something we live into, like we did the *Prayer for the Life of the World*, but there hasn’t been that much time!

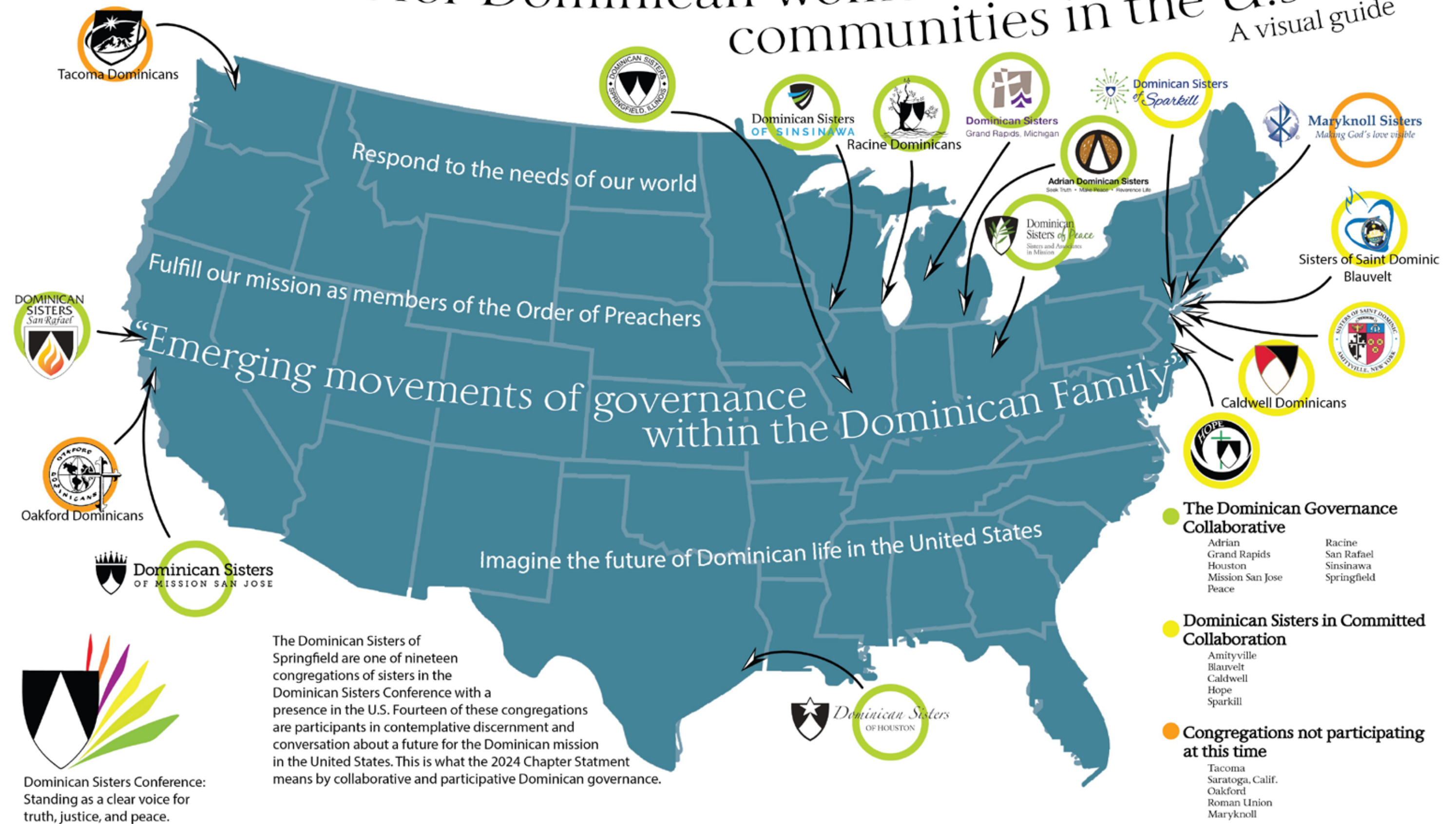
SKD: I’m pleased that there seems to be widespread recognition that the future is going to look different for our younger sisters and even those who are into their 50s and early 60s. I’m looking forward

to getting more engaged interculturally.

SZ: I’m not sure it’s made an impact for me yet! But I feel sure that whatever comes next, we really are committed to doing it together. That is encouraging to me.

What's next for Dominican women's communities in the U.S?

A visual guide



The Dominican Sisters of Springfield are one of nineteen congregations of sisters in the Dominican Sisters Conference with a presence in the U.S. Fourteen of these congregations are participants in contemplative discernment and conversation about a future for the Dominican mission in the United States. This is what the 2024 Chapter Statment means by collaborative and participative Dominican governance.

Dominican Sisters Conference:
Standing as a clear voice for truth, justice, and peace.

From peacock to feather duster

Father Timothy Radcliffe, Master of the Order of Preachers 1992–2001, once famously said that the nature of Dominican governance means elected leaders are peacocks one day and feather dusters the next. With that in mind, the outgoing leadership team was, on the last day of their term, June 14, presented with dusters and aprons during a joyous celebration of gratitude for their years of service to the congregation and the church for the life of the world. From left to right: Sisters Marie Michelle Hackett, Mila Díaz Solano, Rebecca Ann Gemma, and Rose Miriam Schulte good-naturedly accept these symbols of their completion of their term of leadership.



New associates join Dominican sisters in Peru



Twelve Peruvian women and men made their commitment as Springfield Dominican associates during a hybrid ceremony that spanned the distance between Lima and Springfield on Sunday, June 2. Seven of them are shown here, with the associate director for Peru, Sister Betty Vila Alania, second from right. For the first time, North American sisters and associates were able to witness the celebration at Casa Maria, the Lima center house for the community in Peru.

After the ceremony sisters at the motherhouse approached the camera to extend their greetings to the sisters and associates in Peru, including Sister Charmaine Kribs, who served in Peru in the 1970s and 80s. She was accompanied by Sister Dorothy Marie Solak, left, and Sister Maira Barry.



Reconocer quiénes somos juntos

Las “escritoras” reflexionan sobre el capítulo general

JUST Words invitó a las hermanas que sirvieron como oyentes y, en última instancia, escritoras de la declaración del capítulo general de 2024, a hablar sobre su experiencia. Esta conversación editada captura sus ideas.



La hermana Susan Karina Dickey

La hermana Susan Karina Dickey es vicepresidenta de la oficina de integración de la misión en St. Dominic Health Services, Jackson, Mississippi; La hermana Katherine O’Connor está comenzando un nuevo ministerio enseñando a estudiantes el idioma inglés en Springfield; La hermana Kathleen Ryan acaba de completar su ministerio como directora del Centro de Alfabetización Dominicana en Aurora, Ill., y la hermana Sharon Zayac es educadora de alfabetización sobre la tierra y eco-espiritualidad en el equipo de Jubilee Farm, Springfield, Ill.

JW: ¿Cómo fue para ti participar en este capítulo general como escritora, sabiendo que serías responsable de redactar la declaración del capítulo para su aprobación por las delegadas del capítulo?

SZ: Supongo que estaba escuchando de una manera diferente porque sabía que tendría que dar cuentas cuando nos reuniéramos las cuatro. Fue una escucha más intensa de lo usual para mí.

KOC: ¡Me dio mucha energía! Una de las cosas más maravillosas para mí fue ver lo comprometidas que estamos con la Oración por la Vida del Mundo del capítulo 2019. Fue una sorpresa.

JW: ¿Cómo llegaste a ver eso?

KOC: Cuando teníamos discusiones en nuestra mesa, la gente seguía refiriéndose a la oración. Las hermanas parecieron reconocer, en retrospectiva, cómo la oración nos ha

llevado a pensar en la interculturalidad. Creo que realmente nos ayudó a llegar a la unidad.

SKD: Yo también descubrí que habíamos sido profundamente influenciadas por las palabras de la oración capitular. En nuestra casa era parte de nuestra oración vespertina por lo que lo recitamos innumerables veces. Al parecer, otras también lo hicieron.

JW: Mientras hablamos a mediados de mayo, hemos pasado poco más de un mes del capítulo. ¿Qué destaca en sus mentes ahora que han tenido algo de espacio para reflexionar?

SZ: Al reflexionar, siento tres movimientos importantes durante el capítulo: nuestra fidelidad a la Oración por la Vida del Mundo, nuestra disposición para superar la ansiedad por el cambio y nuestro reconocimiento de que vivir interculturalmente es un testimonio muy necesario hoy en día.

SKD: Sí. En comparación con otros capítulos en los que participé, no tuve esa sensación de aprensión o miedo al futuro. Éste es un momento de ansiedad en el mundo. No somos inmunes a eso. Pero encontré una maravillosa apertura –un entusiasmo– para colaborar con otras comunidades dominicas.

KOC: Tú lo dijiste, Karina. El espíritu contemplativo de nuestro capítulo nos permitió no estancarnos por el miedo y la ansiedad. Es difícil vivir esta época en nuestro país y no experimentar esas cosas. El capítulo creó un espacio que nos permitió ir más allá.

KR: Mi sensación a lo largo del capítulo fue que estuve profundamente en reflexión y centrada en el exterior. Nuestro tiempo contemplativo profundizó nuestro autoconocimiento congregacional, que es tan necesario para un impacto fructífero y duradero.

JW: ¿Cuánto de eso tiene que ver con una evolución en la comprensión del propósito de nuestras vidas?

SZ: Sí, hablamos de una transformación de la conciencia. Creo que lo estamos viviendo. Estamos avanzando hacia una comprensión más profunda de que lo importante no es lo que hacemos sino quiénes somos juntas. Se necesita tiempo para llegar a eso, y la sabiduría que proviene del envejecimiento es parte de eso.

SKD: Sí, el envejecimiento contribuye a ello. También estoy viendo la influencia del Papa Francisco. Uno de sus temas recurrentes es el encuentro...el encuentro con el otro. Creo que nos damos cuenta de que encontrarnos con otros (la vida intercultural) es un ideal elevado, uno por el que podríamos esforzarnos al encontrarnos verdaderamente con personas de otras culturas, ¡incluso entre aquellas con quienes vivimos!



La hermana Sharon Zayac

SZ: Hablamos de eso, ¿no? Hablamos sobre el hecho de que tenemos diferentes orígenes culturales y como congregación tenemos una cultura. Estamos empezando a comprender que la cultura no es sólo cultura étnica. Es eso, y también es la cultura de las personas LGBTQ, por ejemplo, y otros grupos con los que nos encontramos. La cultura es más que solo fe o etnia.

KR: Tener a [Hermana de San José] Carol Zinn al abrir el capítulo fue bueno. Tiene una visión amplia [como directora ejecutiva de la Conferencia de Liderazgo de Mujeres Religiosas]. Su tema fue que hay una realidad nueva y cambiante en la vida religiosa. Fue bueno para nosotras asimilarlo.

SKD: Carol se basa en la eclesiología de la Iglesia católica y, a través de ese lente, nos recordó que somos parte de un todo más grande. También habló sobre nuestra relación con Jesús. Su charla fue integral y abordó los 360 grados de la vida religiosa. Pensé que era una buena base para el trabajo del capítulo.

KOC: Parte de su regalo fue ayudarnos a saber que no estamos solas en esto. Casi todas las congregaciones religiosas están pasando por este tipo de cambios.

SZ: No creo que podamos subestimar eso. También creo que lo que me ayudó fue darme cuenta de que estamos haciendo camino juntas como grupo de congregaciones

dominicas. Puedes manejar muchas cosas cuando sabes que no estás sola.

JW: ¿Están notando algún impacto en sus vidas desde que se cerró el capítulo?

KOC: Para mí, simplemente hacer la transición de un ministerio a otro y completar un año sabático, todo es nuevo. Sí creo que hay más apertura a las cosas, tratando de seguir adelante.

KR: Estoy segura de que la declaración del capítulo se convertirá en algo en lo que viviremos, como hicimos con la Oración por la Vida del Mundo, ¡pero no ha pasado mucho tiempo!

SKD: Me complace que parece haber un reconocimiento generalizado de que el futuro será diferente para nuestras hermanas menores e incluso para quienes tienen entre 50 y 60 años. Tengo muchas ganas de involucrarme más interculturalmente.

SZ: ¡No estoy segura de que me haya impactado todavía! Pero estoy segura de que, pase lo que pase después, estamos realmente comprometidas a hacerlo juntas. Eso me resulta alentador.

Partners in mission on synodal journey

Friends of the community share insight for chapter discernment

By Dave Sanders

Keep doing what you are doing. Those words best capture the essence of responses to the Dominican Sisters' request for feedback from associates and other partners in mission during the weeks before their April general chapter. The feedback, gathered in a synodal spirit, was presented at the chapter by an associate panel and through several videos made by representatives of a broad range of allies.

The panel and videos increased the stakes for associates and others to help carry forward the congregation's charism while giving sisters additional insights to reflect on as they decided their future amid present-day challenges, particularly those relating to the decline in the number of sisters.

There was wide agreement among respondents that the sisters are exemplary in seeking and speaking veritas—truth—and in spreading the Gospel message. Their work with those in the margins, their passion for justice and peace, and their leadership in protecting our common home—Earth—were repeatedly pointed out as essential for the life of the Church and the world. The sisters' continued study and prayer to discern the most

effective ways to impactfully carry out their varied missions, their preaching and educating, were seen as vital. The importance and power of the sisters' prayers for all were mentioned by nearly everyone.

The pre-general chapter outreach was expansive and thorough. Sister M. Joan Sorge, the associate director, offered opportunities to associates through two virtual sessions asking (1) their experience with the sisters, (2) what they thought the sisters need to be For the Life of the World, and (3) what they need from the sisters. Associates who could not participate in either session were encouraged to respond in writing.

Before the associate panel took the microphones to give an overview of the replies from associates in North America, the chapter heard, via video, from Carlos and Mirella Lopez Torres, long-time Peruvian associates. Being associates "Makes us feel alive, and that we are really members of a community," Carlos said. Associate Nancy Armstrong, who led the panel, said



Carlos and Mirella Lopez Torres speak to the 2024 Chapter delegates.

participating was an honor that "allowed me to share the appreciation and love that I have for the sisters," and "gave me an opportunity and to voice my desire for continued education regarding the Dominican charism and the topics of *Laudato Si'* and racism."

Mary Rowland said participating in the chapter was meaningful for her. "The sisters were welcoming and sincerely interested in what the associates had to share." Mary said she was able to be part of the live panel even though she lives in Virginia, because the sisters widely use communications technology in their outreach and collaboration.

Associate Susan Hickman said being on the panel was humbling. "It was a gift to be able to express, even a little, how much the sisters mean to me, how much they have,

insight for chapter discernment cont.

and continue to transform my life.”

The sisters also reached out to others through synodal moment interviews with a range of friends they work and interact with including the Collaborative Dominican Novitiate, Cor Unum, and LGBTQ allies. A representative from each of these groups provided thoughts via pre-taped videos.

Dr. Bradley Leger, a Circle of Allies friend, offered, “It was a great honor to be asked to participate via video in the recent Dominican Sisters of Springfield’s general chapter. I have been involved with

their circle for the past couple of years, and I am extremely grateful for this prophetic initiative.” While aware that all allies are in different places in their understanding of the issues, Dr. Leger pointed to the group’s openness in supporting the LGBTQ community on various levels. He appreciated their willingness to listen and to ask some honest questions.

One insight that arose strikes deep into the heart of the sisters’ mission—past, present and future. The Church needs the sisters, their voice and their work. Some might say the heavy lifting has already been done by the sisters through the years and their legacy is established,

but there is still much work to be done.

On some levels, the future might look more challenging than the past, but the hope and prayer of all who participated in the chapter alongside them is that God will guide the sisters, bless their congregation, and grow it in new and innovative ways so they can keep doing what they are doing far into the future.

Dave Sanders is a Dominican Associate and a member of the Just Words editorial board. He lives in Chatham, Ill.

PARTNERS IN MISSION

Doing our part...Doing what needs to be done

By Sister Kathleen Anne Tait, OP

A religious community’s general chapter, like the one we just completed in April, is, ultimately, a commitment of the sisters to do their part and do what is needed for others. A chapter also requires prayer, contemplative dialog, and direction-setting for the coming five years. Ultimately it boils down to each sister doing her part and doing what needs to be done for others.

This is the same mantra that our associates, Mike and Betty Goldasich, have lived out since they married 61 years ago. From the beginning, Mike and Betty were committed to centering their social life on their community, parish, and their children’s schools. While they lived in Springfield initially and have returned there, they also spent nearly thirty years in Jacksonville, their children attending Our Saviour School. Mike tells a story about his son, Matt, who finally felt accepted by his classmates once he kicked a soccer ball over the convent roof into the courtyard. Grinning, Betty added, “It takes a while not to feel like an outsider when you move to Jacksonville. However, we made long-lasting, cherished friends there.”

Betty and Mike benefitted from and strengthened the community spirit at Our Saviour. Betty chaperoned class field trips and brought treats for school and parish meetings. Mike responded to many of Monsignor Driscoll’s requests for advice on buildings and parish needs. They were eucharistic ministers at Mass. They wanted to do their part, even while running an architecture business and Lonzerottis Restaurant.

When they moved back to Springfield, the Goldasiches helped out with the Heritage Days event at Little Flower Parish. They also became associates of the Dominican Sisters, visiting sisters at Sacred Heart Convent and helping to coordinate associate volunteers for our 150th Anniversary celebration last year.

Like many of you, our Partners in Mission, Mike and Betty Goldasich are always willing to do their part and help when there is a need. Whether it is promoting Gospel values in the home or



Mike and Betty Goldasich

neighborhood, lending a helping hand, or donating to organizations like the Springfield Dominicans, you are generously “doing your part, doing what needs to be done” to build a community on Gospel values.



Sister Kathleen Anne is the Mission Advancement director for the Dominican Sisters of Springfield.

IN MEMORIAM

Please pray for the repose of the souls of these sisters and associates who have died in the peace of Christ.

Maymie Bergschneider, Associate, March 6, 2023

Chantal Batten, Associate, January 8, 2024

Sister M. Veronica Doolin, OP, January 22, 2024

Sister Myra Flahive, OP, March 27, 2024

Sister M. Gael Daley, OP, March 27, 2024

Kathryn Ann Turner, Associate, May 21, 2024

Burnette Hill, Associate, June 2, 2024

Visit <https://springfield.org/donate> to make a gift in memory of a sister or associate who has died.



DOMINICAN SISTERS
OF SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS
FOR THE LIFE OF THE WORLD

Sacred Heart Convent
1237 West Monroe Street
Springfield, IL 62704-1680

Nonprofit Org
US Postage
Paid
Springfield, IL
Permit No. 414

Go green

Receive JUST Words in your inbox. Subscribe here:
www.springfieldop.org/just-words

On the cover: Photos from the week of General Chapter, April 1-7.



Dominican Sources

“What would happen if our daily celebration of Eucharist was received as a perpetual invitation to truly become one intercultural body of Christ? Can we be so vulnerable as to truly become what we eat?”

~Springfield Dominican Sister Kelly Moline, preaching April 4, 2024, on Luke 24: 35-48

DATEBOOK

July	4	Independence Day
	5-7	Come & See vocation discernment
	11	Eucharistic pilgrimage stops at Sacred Heart Convent
	17-21	Eucharistic Congress, Indianapolis Visit us at booth #1017
August	22	Feast of St. Mary Magdalene, Apostle to the Apostles
	4	Community Jubilee
	8	Feast of St. Dominic de Guzman, founder
	19	151 st Founders' Day Dominican Sisters of Springfield
September	30	Feast of St. Rose of Lima
	1	Season of Creation begins (through Oct. 4)
	2	Labor Day