

Congregation of Our Lady of Sion Canada-US Province

Provincial Leadership Team Meeting Toronto, Ontario

**May 15-16, 2010 - Jackie Chenard, Mary Babic, Isabel Lewis, Margaret Hughes
May 17-18, 2010 - Jackie Chenard, Mary Babic**

CHAPTER MANDATE 2008

Anchored in God's heart and bursting with passion for our Charism, we commit ourselves to:

- **Strengthen our local areas and faithfully live out our projects of life.**
- **Celebrate and nurture our deepening relationships with our friends and associates.**
- **Honour and support one another in the process of discernment affirmed at this Chapter.**

DIRECTIONS

- We will nourish the spiritual life of the Province through the study of our Biblical, Foundational, Jewish and Church sources.
- We will be united with the whole Congregation on the journey of transformation/reconfiguration.
- We value our networking relationships and we will reach out and explore other relationships for the sake of the mission.
- We will live out the last chapters of our life in Sion as fully as possible.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Local areas and regions invite more friends and associates to study days, meetings and workshops.
- Each area be more mindful about sending items for the newsletter.
- Information of the hopes and plans of sisters in their later years be gathered and analyzed in order to put appropriate actions and future plans in place.
- A networking/communication system for sisters in various retirement facilities be established.

Prayer and Faith Sharing

I. Mandate

1. Mandate - Directions

We spent some time reflecting on the following point from the directions section of our mandate:

We will nourish the spiritual life of the Province through the study of our Biblical, foundational, Jewish and Church sources.

We recognize that some of this has taken place through the preparation for the General Chapter as outlined in booklet 2. The small booklets on Louise Humann (distributed by Elizabeth Losinski at the Fall 2009 Chapter) and Theodore prepared by Patricia Watson can also be a help to us in this area.

We will plan for the retreat days before the Chapter in July 2011 with this directive in mind.

2. Thoughts to Ponder

As we stated in our April minutes, we would like to share here some of the ideas, questions and challenges that struck us from the presentations we heard at the LCWR and the St. Luke-Southdown Conferences we attended.

Please see this section attached to the minutes. We invite each one to take whatever time is available to ponder these thoughts and to share in conversation about them with others as possible.

II. Congregation

1. UK-Ireland Province

The UK-Ireland Province will be celebrating the 150th anniversary of Sion's arrival in England on June 13, 2010. Kay MacDonald will be present at the celebration. Greetings will be sent on behalf of the Province.

III. Province

1. Visits to the Province and Areas/Clusters

Jackie visited Edmonton May 22nd to May 25th.

From June 3rd to the 7th, Mary visited Connie Caron and joined the Eastern Seaboard Area in Boston for a celebration of Audrey Doetzel's time at Boston College.

2. Notre Dame de Sion Kansas City School

Isabel Lewis who is the liaison with the board of trustees for the Kansas City schools and Mary Babic attended the Trustee meeting on May 19th. They will also visit both sites of the elementary and high school.

3. Ecole Bilingue Notre Dame de Sion

Anne-Denise Rinckwald will give a day long workshop in French on Sion's charism to the staff on August 26th, 2010. Previously these types of workshops have been done in English. This is to continue to expand and deepen their formation in the charism and its application in the school. She will be in Montreal from August 24th to the 30th.

IV. Teams/Committees/Collaboration

1. Vocation Reflection Group

At our April meeting, we discussed the report received from the Vocation Reflection Group and made some decisions for the immediate future. We called the Province to a year of prayer for vocations. A prayer card has been sent out to all the sisters.

At this meeting, we also decided, for the coming year, to take up another of the recommendations arising from the summary reflections: the naming of persons and establishing a process for:

- a) "Inreach": for our own reflection and preparation to receive those who may be interested in religious life at Sion, and
- b) "Outreach" in two ways and for two purposes. 1) to respond to those making inquiries and 2) to produce materials to use in making ourselves visible and better known.

Mary Ellen Coombe and Stephanie Schmidts have agreed to take responsibility for the production of promotional materials that we will use in our local areas and across the province. They will produce

advertisements, brochures, and business cards as needed, and further develop the Vocation Section of the provincial website.

We also felt it important to name someone in relation to women making inquiries and Isabel Lewis has agreed to be this person. She will respond to direct inquiries through ads or the website. She will also be available to be of assistance to those sisters in the Province who may have initial contact with someone at the local level or are accompanying those who are interested in religious life at Sion.

During this year of prayer for vocations, her role will also include sending out articles, etc for us to reflect on.

Thank you to Isabel, Mary Ellen, and Stephanie for your generous response to help us in these ways.

We are sure that the year will bring us varied experiences and learnings throughout the province, which will help us all to refine and further develop the recommendations arising from the province reflection.

2. Friends/Associates

The Provincial Team for Friends and Associates met in Toronto and decided that their first work would be to get to know one another and the other Friends better. They would also like to coordinate times when they will engage in prayer, study and a deepening of their knowledge of Sion history and the understanding of living the charism wherever they are and in whatever work they do. They will meet via Skype to continue building their relationships with one another, their planning and discussions.

V. Finances

1. Recreation Fund

Margaret Hughes \$500.00. Approved

2. Request for support for a family member. Approved.

3. Request for Funds for Friend's Retreat

The Winnipeg Community requested \$451.00 to fund a retreat day at a center for Friends of Sion in Winnipeg. The day will focus on praying with Midrashim on Sarah. Approved.

4. Interim budget

Sylvia Obrigewitsch sent in an interim budget. Approved.

5. Investment Committee Meeting

Mary Babic and Jackie Chenard attended the committee meeting on April 20th.

Fred Chenel from Brockhouse Cooper presented a Performance Appraisal Report of our portfolio with Letko Brosseau over the last year. Then Marc Noble of Letko Brosseau met with the committee to discuss the performance of our investments up to March 2010. Our investments on March 31, 2010 are valued at \$13,955,185 which is up from \$13,596,646 on October 31, 2009.

Given the volatility of the market and the fact that our fund is relatively new in comparison to others at Letko Brosseau, it was understood by the Investment Committee members and by Brockhouse Cooper that our fund will require more time to catch up with the performance of older funds in Letko Brosseau's portfolio.

VI. Other

Next Meeting:

September 18-21, 2010

Thoughts To Ponder

(From presentations at LCWR and Southdown-St Luke's March-April 2010 Conferences)

The Importance of Starting With “Why?”

In a number of different workshops, the presenters each spoke about the importance in any group, project, idea, or issue to be addressed of starting first with a shared conversation about the “why” of what we do.

We were presented with the image of 3 concentric circles with the word “WHY?” at the center, the word “HOW?” in the next, and the word “WHAT?” in the outer circle.

It was observed that at most chapters, assemblies, team meetings, planning sessions, even brainstorming and discernment reflections, religious spend great amounts of time developing the “what shall we do” and “how shall we do it” questions placed before them. This begins in response to reflecting and working towards what it is that we think God is calling us to do.

However, the amount of time taken to try to come to a decision or course of action, sometimes around the same issue, happens because we jump into the ‘how’ and ‘what’ of trying to solve the content issues of a project or idea too quickly, without naming or understanding the ‘why’ of its importance or significance to the group. The result is that we get frustrated and bogged down. In taking some time to share the why’s of what it is we feel called to do, first for ourselves and then with each other, the how’s and the what’s of what we are to do become clear and are more clearly seen.

We are learning that in responding to the needs of our changing world as religious communities, we need to explore the motivations for what we do and communicate our motives. This exploration and communication gives structure to our thoughts. Together, they reflect, without words, the connection between the values we hold and the ways we choose to live them out.

In other words, it is important to start with ‘why’ individually and the communally, because when we do, we are connecting our faith and our life. The conscious connection of these makes healing, wholeness and mending possible, within our own souls and in the world.