

Chapter 2008

May-June Questions for Personal Reflection

These questions are for your personal reflection and in preparation for an Associate meeting discussion. We will be expecting collective responses from Associate meetings by June 25, 2007. If you are unable to attend a meeting with your local associate community, you may return an individual response or a response from a few associates from your area.

1. Consider the Paschal readings about the early Church (Acts of the Apostles, e.g., Chapters 14 and 15)—it was neither Jewish nor yet Christian; not sure if it should keep up the practice of circumcision; worried about eating things which were not “clean,” arguing about teaching Jesus Words to the Gentiles. Note that at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-12) the apostles not only received the gifts of wisdom and courage, but also the gift of communication with their contemporaries, who spoke different tongues. It was not easy to work under the strain of disagreements and real communication difficulties (see Acts 13:44-52). How did the early Church handle differences and tensions? What kept them together?
2. What is it about the experience of being an Associate that keeps you in this relationship?
3. Pope Benedict XVI stated in his first encyclical: “The Church is alive with the love enkindled by the Spirit!” If you feel the same to be true about the Grey Nuns and about Grey Nun Associates, how do you experience our being “alive with the love enkindled by the Spirit?”
4. Read and reflect on the Associate responses. If you responded, do you feel we accurately describe your response? If you did not send in a response, did anything in the Associate responses reported resonate with your own experience as an Associate?
5. How did you *feel* after reading the responses from Associates? From the Grey Nuns? How do you *feel* about the differences and tensions among us?

Response to this sheet is optional. If you wish to send an individual response, please send by email to Mary Lee Farrell, GNSH: makeitso2921@peoplepc.com on or before June 25, 2007. If sending paper response, please mail it to Ann McKee, GNSH, 1750 Quarry Rd., Yardley, PA 19067-3998 or FAX it to 1-215-504-2459, attention Ann McKee, GNSH.

Chapter 2008

Introduction to Associate Meeting Reflection Process

Following your personal reflection in preparation for an Associate meeting discussion on the Paschal readings, the summaries of Associates' responses and Grey Nun LAG groups' responses, and the cover letter from the Chapter Planning Committee, we invite you to have a conversation at your Associate meeting. Remember that "taking time to listen to each other at ever-deepening levels and to appreciate and enjoy the gift that we are to one another is the most vital part of the Chapter experience. The issues we choose to address, the decisions we make together and the energy for mission we envision together ahead of us will flow out of that experience." (from the cover letter from the Chapter Planning Committee)

As a context for this deeper conversation, we again offer the following quotations from Margaret Wheatley's book, *Turning to One Another* (2002):

"... For conversation to take us to this deeper realm, I believe we have to practice several new behaviors. Here are the principles I've learned to emphasize before we begin a formal conversation process:

- *We acknowledge one another as equals.*
- *We try to stay curious about each other.*
- *We recognize that we need each other's help to become better listeners.*
- *We slow down so we have time to think and reflect.*
- *We remember that conversation is the natural way humans think together.*
- *We expect it to be messy at times.*

... Where can we find the courage to start a good conversation? The answer is found in the word itself. Courage comes from the Old French word for heart (Coeur). We develop courage for those things that speak to our hearts. Once our heart is engaged, it is easy to be brave.

... It takes courage to start a conversation. But if we don't start talking to one another, nothing will change. Conversation is the way to discover how to transform our world together."

Associate Meeting Collective Response Form

1. In your Associate meeting, let each person share her response to personal reflection question number 5: *How did you feel after reading the responses from Associates? From the Grey Nuns? How do you feel about the differences and tensions among us?* **How did you feel as a group after listening to this sharing?**
2. If your meeting group responded to the March reflection questions, do you feel we accurately describe your response? If you did not send in a response, did anything in the Associate responses reported resonate with your own experience as Associates?
3. What keeps your local associate community together in the Associate relationship?
4. Pope Benedict XVI stated in his first encyclical: “The Church is alive with the love enkindled by the Spirit!” If you feel the same to be true about the Grey Nuns and about Grey Nun Associates, how do you experience our being "alive with the love enkindled by the Spirit?"
5. Is there anything new emerging from your prayer or reflections that you would like to share?
6. Is there anything else you want to say to the Chapter Planning Committee?

Please send collective response by email to Sr. Mary Lee Farrell at makeitso2921@peoplepc.com or by post to Sr. Ann McKee, 1750 Quarry Rd., Yardley, PA 2+0+8-3998 on or before June 25, 2007.