



## GNSH CHAPTER '08

October 24, 2007

Dear Associates,

The Grey Nuns met together at the Motherhouse in Yardley the weekend of October 6-7, 2007 for one of their regular congregational meetings. During that time Sister Marlene and the Leadership Council provided updates on significant plans underway and invited questions and suggestions from the Sisters.

In addition, Sister Marlene, in the spirit of St. Marguerite, delivered a talk on our religious life together that included reflections on individualism, on the common good, and on how critical it is for each person to consider how her personal decisions impact the whole group. Sister Marlene also reflected that “the ‘yes’ of later life needs to be based on the fruit of contemplation and deep recognition of God in our lives.” These issues, of course, are of critical importance to all in our world today and not just to those in religious life. Care of the earth and sharing its resources—God’s gifts to all—in ways that accommodate everyone’s needs and preserve the health and integrity of our beautiful planet are important for all God’s creatures. Our corporate stance in support of the Earth Charter calls us to listen more intently to the needs of all.

Sister Margaret O’Brien, an Ursuline Sister based on Long Island, facilitated our group sessions during the meeting. Sister Margaret will be facilitating the Grey Nun Chapter in April and has been working with the Chapter Planning Committee (CPC) throughout its planning process. She helped us to have some deep conversations with each other during the weekend in an atmosphere rooted in contemplation and attentive listening, mindful of the gift that each of us is to

herself, to each other, and to the world. According to comments on evaluations, Sisters generally found the experience positive, energizing, and hopeful.

During the weekend the Sisters confirmed or decided several things about the Chapter planning process:

- that we will continue to use our local area government (LAG) Group meetings as the primary mode of participation in Chapter preparation,
- that we will continue with a reflective process rooted in a contemplative stance that includes individual prayer/reflection in preparation for LAG Group meetings and that fosters an appreciative and listening attitude during each meeting, and
- that we will identify issues to be addressed at Chapter using the three categories or types as presented by Barbara Valuckas, SSND, in her article entitled “Discernment Chapters of Complex Affairs” that appeared in “Human Development” magazine’s Winter 2004 issue. (For anyone interested, each Associate convener has a copy of this article. It is also available on the Associates’ section of the Chapter link on the Grey Nun website. Associates who receive this mailing via e-mail have directions on how to access that site.)

During Sunday morning’s Eucharistic celebration, Sister Donna Lord did a wonderful job of sharing some reflections on the readings which included a reading from the book of Habakkuk. Sister Donna reminded us of the challenge of Habakkuk’s call to keep the vision alive and to keep it bright and not dim. A copy of her talk is included with this mailing.

We appreciate your continued prayerful support and sharing with us in this Chapter preparation process. As the Sisters move forward in surfacing and clarifying issues for Chapter, we invite you to continue reflecting individually, sharing with each other in your local Associate community if possible, and responding to the CPC as feasible for you. You will find the following enclosures to guide you in this:

- suggestions for individual reflection,
- suggestions for sharing with your local Associate community,
- a response form to return to the CPC on or before November 26<sup>th</sup>.

May the Spirit continue to guide you and all of us throughout this Chapter process!

Sincerely,

*Julia C. Lanigan, Jnsd*

Members of the Chapter Planning Committee:

Rosalie Bertell  
Mary Lee Farrell  
Mary Karen Kelly  
Julia C. Lanigan, Chair  
Frances Whitman

Leadership Council Liaisons:

Kathleen Purser  
Elizabeth Bagen

Enclosures: (2)