



*Sacred Mystery
embraces us in unifying love and
we are in communion.*

*Breathing in and breathing out
unifying love -
our charism, our mission -
we participate in the Mystery of
Transformation.*

(Congregational Chapter 2013, page 4)

March 8, 2016

Dear Sisters and Associates/Consociates/'Ohana/Familia de San José,

We are eager to share with you highlights of our Congregational Leadership Group Meeting held in Lima, Peru from February 18 through February 22. After a very warm welcome by our Sisters in Peru, we gathered in the "kitchen of LePuy," then spent an afternoon of personal reflection on two questions: What am I being called to now? What grace do I need to ask for as we begin our days together? We came back to the kitchen and shared our responses.

Mary Dacey, SSJ, from Philadelphia who facilitated our retreat experience at Linwood Retreat Center last September, spent two days with us to help us think creatively about our congregation. We explored images, thoughts and feelings about our future which evoked stimulating discussion.

After reviewing the historical background of the Chapter 2013 Call to Action to "continue intra-congregational conversations and discernment about oneness and structures begun at chapter" (p.9), we discussed how the experiences created by the Process Design Team have been addressing this call. We emphasized the importance of every sister's participation in one of the upcoming retreat opportunities, either in her own or another province of the congregation. We named as integral to the retreat experience the opportunity for each sister to share her insights on how our relationships and structures will enable us to move forward in mission as a congregation.

Regarding finances, we approved proposed budgets for chapter implementation projects. We also received our 2017 congregational budget and reviewed our congregational investment funds and how they are used.

We discussed the recommendation from the archivists of each province and vice province based on a professional study of the archives in Albany, Los Angeles, St. Louis and St. Paul. There was unanimous approval of moving forward with the consolidation of the archives, with the goal of finalizing the site no later than September 2016.

The Partnering with New Eyes Call to Action to “collaborate with representatives from CSJ-sponsored ministries and institutions to explore ways to build capacity for mission integration into the future” (p. 11), was addressed with a brief summary of the work done by the St. Louis Sponsorship Task Force. Everyone was encouraged to continue sharing developments as they pursue this Call to Action.

Our Peruvian leadership team led a discussion of cultural differences. Videos about the Peruvian culture provided thought-provoking personal reflection. We also discussed the differences between surface culture and deep culture and how we are called to respond.

Updates were presented about sister formation and vocations: 1. The Congregational Formation Plan is still being developed. 2. Albany, Los Angeles, Hawaii and Peru are working on a plan for a congregational sister formation process. 3. A working group will develop plans for a congregational approach to vocation ministry for women interested in becoming sisters.

Our congregational magazine focusing on the mission and needs of our sisters in Peru will be mailed around May 1st. Our first intention is to raise awareness, trusting that significant financial support for our sisters will follow.

We were touched by each of our sisters in Peru, especially by their deep faith, their faithfulness to one another and the mission, and their deep trust and hope for the future. The hospitality we experienced was total gift!

We left with grateful hearts and returned to our home provinces eager to celebrate the feast of Joseph with our jubilarians. We know ever more deeply that our congregation is blessed by women who live into the mystery of being called by God. May we courageously continue that graced journey!

Blessings to you.

*Kate Arseneau
Danielle Bonetti
Patty Chang
Barbara Dreher
Katie Eiffe
Angela Faustina
Maureen Freeman
Meg Gillespie
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Sally Harper*

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