

WORKING GROUP ON COMMUNITY LIFE
THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES AND THE NATURE OF PASSIONIST COMMUNITY
IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Introduction:

The purpose of our paper and accompanying video testimonials is to serve the Chapter by tracking the changes that have taken place in the form of our Passionist community life over the past few decades, the causes and inspirations for this change, and the record of those changes in our official documentation and Church teaching since Vatican II. Our goal is to both inform the chapter and to prompt creative thinking about the future development of our community life.

I. The Evolution of our Passionist Community Life in Holy Cross Province:

- a) From “monastic” to “apostolic.”; community life as apostolic or evangelical witness.
- b) Clarification of our Passionist charism and its impact on the development of community life, particularly the evolving invitation for interested laity to participate in our Charism and in the deliberations of our Province (chapter; assemblies, etc.).
- c) The Vatican II emphasis on the role of the laity in the mission of the Church (i.e., the church as the “people of God”; *Lumen Gentium*; *Gaudium et Spes*); the statements of recent popes and particularly Pope Francis that stress the essential role of the laity in the mission of the church and the need to avoid “clericalism”.
- d) The evolving emphasis on inclusion of the laity in Passionist life in our General Chapter and Holy Cross Province documentations. Reflection on the possible need to update these statements to meet the reality of our current situation.

II. The Social Context that Impels us to Review Our Community Life:

- a) The hunger for community life in the midst of the individualism and isolation of modern 21st century life.
- b) The demographics of vowed Passionist membership and its impact on forming sustainable communities.
- c) Reviewing the multiple ways in which lay participation in our community life is currently expressed in various current Passionist communities. An invitation to our various communities in Holy Cross Province and the Configuration to respond.

III. Identifying the Essential Components of Passionist Community Life in all its forms:

- a) Relationship to our Passionist charism: the memory of the passion; the Passion of Jesus as sign of God’s love for the world; the need for compassion; solidarity with the crucified of today; a contemplative heritage.

b) What is that we cannot leave behind in reconfiguring our community life for the future; what is non-essential and subject to change?

c) What can we learn about various forms of community life from the wider culture and from the desires of the young? [VIDEO INTERVIEWS AND PORTRAITS OF CONTEMPORARY SECULAR FORMS OF COMMUNITY LIFE].

Conclusion:

--Where do we go from here?? Prompting a deeper conversation among our lay and vowed members about the future of Passionist Community Life.

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