Pre-Chapter Summary - Group Park Ridge (2)

January 15-16, 2019

Attendees:

Christopher Jungers

Tu-Jin Kim

Angela Kwasinski

Claire Smith

Don Webber

Phil Jackson

**Engagement level –**

The Pre-Chapter gathering afforded us opportunities to experience one another in a casual, comfortable context while exploring important and significant issues. Conversations on ageing, finances, technology, the abuse crisis, and the general decline in the participation of Catholics in the life of the Church, allowed us as laity to understand the issues and feelings of vowed members who face the challenges in a different way and on a more personal level. These conversations presented many moments to share the blessings that enrich our experiences and to understand and gain insight into how each of us, because of our roles and histories, views the challenges and opportunities we face in the future.

The members of our group came to the Pre-Chapter meetings highly motivated and ready to fully engage in the Pre-Chapter Program. Our time as a community allowed many opportunities to dialogue and reflect on the information presented in the formal program. The pre-chapter offered a lively sense of hope, of possibility and of re-imagining to minister and serve a Church that continues to be in need of compassion.

**Offline Session 1:**

**How are the signs of the times reflected in the Working Group reports?**

Highlights from our discussions include:

**Charism:** The Passionist charism is not static and needs to be conveyed through the energy of captivating storytelling. The story of the Passion transcends time, divinely inspires and connects us to other people.

**Community:** As we move into the future, community life may be defined differently than it is canonically. A community that includes vowed and lay members may be difficult to define, but we must be willing to sit down and re-imagine our identity.

**Collaboration:** We must grow to a deeper understanding of collaboration between vowed and the laity. There needs to be an acceptance of responsibility and accountability from both sides. Collaboration between vowed and lay needs to be understood before we move to collaboration with external groups.

**Outreach:** We need to communicate our spirituality globally using a universal language. Our preaching needs to be relational through the use of storytelling and collaboration.

**Preaching:** Passionists are being called to look at different models for preaching. Our current preaching model has “others visit us,” in the retreat centers or in other ministries. Laity in particular, seems to be looking for outreach in preaching which meets people in the “everyday lives.” This may require looking at other ways to communicate the message. We have already begun changing the way we communicate our spirituality through Fr. Cedric’s TV ministry, our website and social media outreach.

**Offline Session 2:**

**What obstacles are with us in this Community and in the Province and how can we address them?**

We discussed parallel obstacles facing development efforts and the Province.

**Province** **PDO**

Aging of vowed members Aging benefactors (attrition in our database)

Aging staff

Attracting younger people Attracting younger people

Aging – of our secular followers as well as religious is viewed by laity as an obstacle to maintaining vigorous ministries. The vowed religious pushed back in regard to senior Passionists. The vowed do not want to be seen as obstacles. This was not the intention.

Aging as an obstacle was more about asking ourselves, “What happens to Passionist ministries as vowed member’s age and can no longer engage in traditional ministries?

Attracting younger people - will need to look toward a creative response to ministry, i.e. Fr. Joe Mitchell’s approach to spiritual development, social compassion and Earth literacy.

Vocations –seems to be more of a concern for laity then vowed. Vowed trust in God and the Holy Spirit to bring vocations, not to necessarily to go out and actively recruit.

Misconduct – vowed and lay have to consider the sexual abuse scandal. As more states release their reports (as Pennsylvania did), this is an issue that will be with us for at least the next 20-30 years. There needs to be accountability and transparency on the part of the organized church.

**Offline Session 3:**

**Where is the Spirit leading us in bold & prophetic ways?**

One of the vowed members in our group shared that he immediately thought of the Angel appearing to Mary and saying: “Do not be afraid.”

We cannot let fear paralyze us.

Like Mary, we do not have a blueprint. We have to create our own.

Mark Clarke’s use of the Disney model was inspiring and encourages us all to keep moving forward.

Dream Believe Dare Act  
the vision in faith to risk with courage