**To: Anne Kemp, Keith Zekind**

**FR: Elizabeth Velarde**

**Re: Pre-Chapter Report**

**January 15-16, 2019**

**Louisville Community**

Attended January 15, 2019

David Horvath

Jim Williams

Fr. Chris Gibson,C.P.

Terry McDevitt

Mary Anne Burkardt, SCN

Fr. Simon Herbers, C.P.

Br. Jerome Milazzo, C.P.

Fr. Ronald Corl, C.P.

Fr. Bob Crossmyer, C.P.

Br. Kurt Wernert, C.P.

Dee Dee Lockhart

Fr. Sebastian MacDonald, C.P.

Kyle Kramer

Br. John Monzyk, C.P.

Fr. Eric Meyer, C.P.

Jim Byrne

Fr. Febin Barose, C.P.

Julia Senn-Reeves

Elizabeth Velarde

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Session 1 –

1. How are the signs of the times reflected in these reports?
2. What connections or opportunities are emerging from the Working Groups?
* Seem to be effective in our use of technology on some fronts – could improve on others.
* Keep a positive attitude
* Worry a great deal about the prediction that 40% of businesses will be going away
* Need to seize the opportunities that present to us – we can’t dream of outreach targets that aren’t interested and miss one that shows up on our doorstep
* We are shrinking in number of vowed members but should be viewing the outreach that is possible with technology – Fr. Hugo on Facebook, Fr. Cedric ministry
* It was recalled that Fr. Leo Grantz, C.P. served as a street preacher in eastern Kentucky – he would literally take a box to stand on, a portable mic, a chalice, and preach on the streets. Is something similar called for in taking our ministry out of the institutional setting?
* National Religious Vocation Conference concluded that the “nones” are longing that their needs be filled but are only interested in being preached to by something relevant to them. The key is to figure out what that is, find them, and program accordingly.
* They don’t want traditional preaching – they want to celebrate God. Per Paul Waddell, they say – “I will listen to you if you say something relevant to me.”
* Problematic emerging trend of the divisiveness of our world and the conflict between the factions (young/old, rich/poor, Evangelicals, immigrants). People are “getting squashed like bugs” -- being wounded both physically and spiritually by the meanness that is emerging in various factions. There should be a sense of urgency of being responsive to this trend.
* Louisville is an excellent example of a collaborative community, with vowed and lay in various capacities incorporated into the daily life of the community. It remains vibrant because of the variety of involvement by lay and vowed people.

Session 2

1. What obstacles are with us in this community and in the Province and how can we address them?
2. What are we ready to let go of in this community and in the Province as we live into our future?
* Lack of vocations is our primary obstacle.
* “What if” the Holy Spirit is leading us into this period and lack of vocations is really not an obstacle, but an opportunity to grow beyond where we have ever been?
* The culture and church that called the religious of today to their vocation is not the culture and church that we live with today. What does that mean in the future for the vocations that are realized today?
* But we don’t want to give up on vocations and force ourselves into extinction or reinvent ourselves into something totally different.
* The Church itself is a very real obstacle and it is out of our control. How are we relating to the Church?
* We as a Province are not making ourselves attractive to the people who are seeking a vocation as a priest or brother.
* Sticking with recruiting vocations will take the “grit” to stay the course and get it done.
* On the other hand, walking a new path together will take “grit” as well.
* Remembering Mark Clark with his story of how the space race drew the attention of the American people away from the devastating Bay of Pigs debacle, would a new reality brought about by collaboration between vowed and lay take our attention away from the crisis in the Church?
* How do we get rid of the “Bay of Pigs” in the Church? The only real answer is transparency, airing out, time for healing and accepting responsibility for the past transgressions.
* How can laity assist the vocation committee?
* Another obstacle brought up by a Louisville community member (C.P.) is the enormous cost of caring for older, sick men, and how difficult it is for a community to pay for care.
* Our model of religious life is not attractive to potential younger people seeking a priestly vocation, but the leadership of the Province looks down on this reality and isn’t willing to change Passionist community life to mirror what the seekers want.
* You don’t marry someone you hope will change as time passes. Those coming in have to be in sync with those already in – they have to be drawn to the smell of the flock.
* This conversation is too pessimistic and will get us nowhere. To others it is “realism” which needs to be named and claimed in order to move forward.
* There is the obstacle of the loss of the number of Passionist Brothers in our communities.
* We should look at older vocations and perhaps consider allowing for less than a “lifetime” commitment?
* Obstacle – We talk, and talk, and talk, and nothing different happens.
* Obstacle – the ability to trust enough to have an open conversation in order to fully understand one another. We don’t have a safe place in which to talk.
* We need to let go of our pseudo-hierarchical relationships.
* We have to focus on what is coming to us from the outside that is going to require us to change (signs of the times.)

Session 3

1. Where is the Spirit leading us in bold and prophetic ways?
* We don’t exist in a vacuum - we have to consider that what is bold and prophetic for us would also apply to the universal church.
* The Passionists have always been progressive and that quality will serve us well into the future.
* Hope for the future depends on knowing exactly what the future is.
* The drive for vocations should be for both vowed and lay persons. Boundaries should be pushed for different opportunities for people to serve. We have to go beyond the all or nothing approach in the way integrate resources.
* The Passionists could be effectively served with the model of associate programs so well known in the women’s religious communities.
* We must challenge hierarchical structures in light of the misuse of power and secrecy of the larger church. How might we become the advocates for new models of ministry and community based on our needs?
* Do laity sense the presence of a “glass ceiling”? Is there renewed pressure to examine the level of which laity can participate in leadership and decision making relative to HCP?
* Could we grow in a more organic way of engaging people and acknowledging their gifts; e.g. RCIA model.