

Collaboration Working Group Minutes
February 13, 2019
10am EST

Faith, Sandra, Claire, Patty, Julia, Keith, Christopher, Fr. Phil, Elizabeth, Anne, Jean, Fr. Bruno, Fr. Alfredo, Fr. Alex, Matt

Prayer

Objective: joint conversation with Outreach Working Group

Preparation: read and reflect latest minutes; key points to include:

- What might be the ‘elephants in the room’ that need to be named and claimed so we can transform our future
- Are we willing to be ‘radical’ (deeply embedded in charism), bold and prophetic
- How might we learn to embrace the tension and bring about new life and possibility

Key points for conversation:

- **How does deeper collaboration impact outreach?**
- **What are some barriers to outreach?**
- **how do we shift the energy and focus back to charism and foundation rather than a particular ministry**
- **can there be lay driven outreach?**

- Faith – happy birthday, Keith! Welcome to Christopher, Mater Delarosa from California, young adult group, from Outreach. Mentioned to Julia about helping with the combined survey. Some things we heard in common with each group was, as we move to be visionaries, **How can branding, companioning and technology be utilized to help with our presence and visibility?**

- **What happens to outreach without collaboration?**
Thoughts from Christopher?

Anne – Christopher maybe meet those young adults from Outreach and Preaching groups.

Faith – we are very effective in collaborating with other groups to get a task done, outside orgs, where does the energy need to go, how do we strengthen the relationship between the vowed and

the lay? What happens to charism and outreach without collaboration, with regard to vowed and lay.

Fr. Phil – Outreach needs collaboration simply for the fact of feeling free enough to innovate, free enough to do different outreaches. If we do either outreach expressed as starting in a new place or doing more creative things in the places we are at, collaboration needed to free us up for that.

Elizabeth – I see it as two topics that are intertwined and interdependent. We talk about collaboration, primary point begin vowed and lay – but if we want to enhance or expand between vow and lay, we have to extend outreach to whoever our target is.

Julia – collaboration as related to outreach, being innovation – innovation is scary and uncertain, but one thing I think perhaps we may be a barrier for us is to find the perfect solution. In order to do some of the work with collaboration and outreach, we need to do some small tested change and see how those things went – sometimes they will go well or not, but we will learn something through the outcome. There is a small test of change, say in Detroit, and they decide what they will do and they share what works. Then Mater Delarosa can take that because their target or demographic is slightly different, how do I use that work or knowledge to inform what we are doing to do our own test of change. We also have to go toward that global vision – what is the direction, where are we all headed. We have to feel like its ok to do the small things and fail because we learn from the things that fail and the things that work. We are stifled on having to have the answer.

Elizabeth – relating to what Anne brought up yesterday with Outreach when she spoke of the idea that we have a tendency to talk about something new we would say that's just not who we are. We have a shell around ourselves so we don't consider it. Change to that's not who we've been in the past but we are open to new visions. The boundary can be permeable and the hard shell is eliminated.

Keith – we have to get out of the theoretical, post June 11 – whatever new leadership comes takes our vision and puts all of those ideas into place, concrete not just talking about it.

Faith – can the laity initiate outreach? Does outreach always have to come from the vowed? It has to be supported by the Province.

Sandra – we would be short sighted, to be practical, a new mission – our vowed average over 70, how many can go out to mission. Retreat centers, itinerate preachers both need support – lay has to be right there helping.

Keith – or we use our elders in a different way electronically. They can do an online ministry, different than we have done before outside of physical locations.

Sandra – what is the expectation for the retired vowed, can they collaborate with laity, become comfortable to work together that would be life-giving.

Keith – we have the prayer ministry through development office – how can we go beyond using this type of technical, get the fathers involved in prayer services, etc., using technology. Simon or someone else who is incredibly sharp but physically unable to participate.

Julia – Fr. Ron (Roth?) is already doing the small test of change – mass through Skype. What works, what doesn't work for him? His hearing is a challenge, so we don't know what he hears from outside, but people keep coming back. There are little pieces of what we want on a broader scale. What do we take forward? I was talking to someone the other day about how travel is becoming less of a good thing for him, how do we continue for him to engage in ministry? Great opportunity for some of the guys who are limited.

Jean – reminds me of a conversation with Fr. Bruno the other day. What are we hearing – we both agree that whatever is going to happen, maybe there is an organic outgrowth. One thing very effective with the women's retreats – compassionate listening. We can both sit and listen – we can't fix and can't change it. Having that opportunity with our vowed members, just listening. Feeling anxious – call this number, for example. Small test of change – I like that. Can we get a homerun – we don't need to win the game.

Elizabeth – with Joe Castro, we have a perfect model of a lay initiative that has been successful. I think that it's because he had the tenacity and grit, he had to be willing to say, if I'm not going to do this I won't be here – that's how much it meant to him. That was a definitely lay initiative, continuing on to this day.

Julia – Speaking to older province members, figuring this technology piece out, how to continue to engage those in ministry that could also be a catalyst that allows them to continue to be fulfilled spiritually and physically. They might be encouraged to take care of their physical health as well. I feel a lot of barriers to them addressing their physical health just getting physical assistance, how does this take away from what I should be doing?

Keith – we can't only think of the elder religious, we have to look at the young adults, women, men around the table who provide spirituality; this can be expanded a whole different way because of technology, outreach can be so much broader than it is now.

Sandra – Faith has a program for spiritual direction, Fr. Phil and Faith have done a mission. There is a partnership between vow and lay in order to get people accustomed together.

Alfredo – Are we thinking about outreach in English? We have many linguistic resources in the Province. Expand outreach in multiple languages.

Claire – We talk about the collaboration with vowed and lay, extraordinarily integral. We visited the sisters in Carpentersville, IL and in Lansing, MI. Talking about something we can do with them with immigration. I was happy to hear that he is coming up with that proposal. Second, from technological standpoint, does the Earth and Spirit Center offer anything online? That could attract young adults that can collaborate with vowed and lay. If he could do something like that online with the Passionist labor, he could expand across the province and beyond.

Faith – historically, the ministries and the outreach have centered around the person – I, my ownership. How do we get back to the charism and foundation of the Passionists? This conversation we have now rounds us in the charism – it isn't about me but about the Passionist charism. Expanding the charism is outreach.

Jean – as an outreach committee, we want to find out what is going on to validate what people are doing. Encourage people to dream with us if there is a chance – what is your big dream? Some have posted questions on our Facebook page – something said earlier reminded me that perhaps its not even understood – how can we sow the seeds to membership to help them be creative to help them consider to push the boundary?

Fr. Phil – Cedric put questions on FB chat, part of what he said, questions were like what kind of outreach do you do now, what is your future vision of outreach – perhaps a question that could lead to that is what are the unmet needs? Who are the people we are called to reach out to? At least that would be a question for me, what can I do about that? What can WE do about that? Can I find some partners to aide me in fulfilling that unmet need?

Keith – What are we doing, what aren't we doing, what should we be doing?

Jean – we will be in touch with you to form the questions, if you don't mind

Julia – make sure we are clear who should receive the survey, we will be left with more questions than answers because you can't ask all the questions. Some could write 2 or 3 pages on a single question. How do we elicit that info? Having just surveyed the guys, they were very transparent, other themes were there concerning relationships, how they feel in their communities, good and bad. That culture becomes very evident, don't read too much into the answers we receive.

Keith – can Jean share the FB page for working groups to view? Put on the website for the resource page? So we can see what our groups are doing together and others might want to grow off of that.

Jean – ask Fr. Cedric, if you wanted to be on the page, send Fr. Cedric your email address because it is a closed FB group. We had an email from Fr. Jack and Mike Cunningham if they could join a call and collaborate – haha – they feel that they are at the point to spend with other groups. Are conversation was stilted yesterday, but at least we talked. Can we get all of the working groups co-chairs together to have this kind of conversation?

Anne – we talked about this after pre-chapter, included a time table with key dates. We anticipate having two more whole group meetings between now and chapter. I vaguely recollect having a time line.

Jean – is it a good time for that conversation?

Anne – inquiries between groups it is organic.

Keith – with community meetings in March would be great to have co-chairs and shepherds together to see what we want to get out of it.

Anne – Keith's three questions – the fourth question is most difficult – what should we no longer be doing? It is a real question.

Fr. Alex – question 4 is an incredible. A couple of chapters ago, people were asked to put their keys on the table, to give access of their kingdoms to the whole. It is a critical question – what is it that unifies us and gives us communion. The suffering body of Christ today. A question on those key points – how do we shift the energy focus back to charism and vocation. We don't want to spend all our time on the depth of the charism, but it is important that our segments bring to mind that lens through which we are all seeing. Finally, can there be lay driven outreach – of course! Women's retreat in Kentucky for our Passionist lay women.

Julia – in my world, rather than asking what we shouldn't be doing – we do that – but asking how does this activity add value, whether it be to vision, mission, charism – we have a lot of things that we do in our daily lives that are really important and we think they add value, but they don't. We have to focus and prioritize what truly in our daily work and prayer, whatever we work on, that it adds value and where that value is assigned.

Faith – what has served us well but has outlived its purpose. It served us well.

Jean – yesterday after our meeting, at Mater Delarosa we gather and discuss after the meetings. Once, we talked about – like – what's happening at the water cooler. How many more chapters will we have as Holy Cross Province? It's the context of what is happening in the greater Passionist world, never mind the church and rest of the world. I think that is growth, getting energy and moving into new regions, Mexican province, etc. – that is growth.

Keith – to take further, get into Nashville – create a new community in Nashville. We don't have guys to do it – do we need guys (vowed) or can we get other Passionists from India, etc. There is a huge presence in Nashville. If we don't have enough, how do we bring more in? Who else can we invite, great opportunity to carry on the Passionist charism. A great presence that we don't see.

Faith – can the laity fill that need?

Fr. Alfredo – When would last chapter be? How would you sell this to vowed Passionists at the chapter, presenting in a way that is convincing, eye-opening, especially to those who have been resisting to merging with another province, still resists the "idea", everything we are saying I support, my lay Passionist brothers and sisters, how do you sell this to those resisting the change, a good response to the signs of the times?

Faith – that may be part of what needs to happen at chapter, what will we do to share the work of our groups. It is huge that there would be a ritual around it, we have to learn on multiple levels. There will be some resistance, we have to expect, but on the experienced (sp) level...

Elizabeth – everything we may present there, where will it go. What is the buy in that the whole province decides, what do we go forward with?

Fr. Alfredo – when Joe Castro talked to everyone in Houston, the crucial, essential element for the mission of HC Province, you are good collaborators unwowed – how many of you would leave if things do not change, if you do not see a better opportunity to express and let the charism grow. In the past I have seen the Passionists leaving. Joe great for Galveston-Houston, he did great with spiritual direction in Houston.

Patty – we are all aging. Fr. Alberto touched my heart with his words – would we leave if change isn't affected – I will always support the Passionists – I'm aging as well. We have to utilize technology and bring in the multitudes as Fr. Cedric does.

Fr. Alex – shared, deliberate, routed intention. I assume we are sharing as common as common charismatic people, assume we have an intention for the future, rooted for the poor.

Keith – radical – we need to be radical in our thinking, our doing, moving forward.

Elizabeth – a shared commitment, radical action (may have missed it)

Fr. Alberto – the fourth question – what should we do now that we haven't done? What are we missing because of our resistance to change, to renewal, to expansion of our world view and horizon?

Matt – courageous – courage is acting in the face of fear, action in the face of fear, we are empowered with the spirit.

Claire – all working groups – what happens to the Passionist future without the collaboration of all working groups? Fr. Phil said, outreach needs collaboration to feel free enough to innovate. That stuck with me.

Jean – Fr. Alex, what gives us communion.

Faith – radical grit

Sandra – compassionate expectations

Fr. Bruno – radical trust in God and in ourselves

Fr. Phil – openness to hearing what I want from somebody else's voice, kind of a jarring thing.

Julia – becoming clearer the direction we want to go, we feel is important. To me it is how do we get there, how do we put a couple of things – bold, innovative on the board. What would this look like? Talk about those things, I feel this is what I'm ready for.

Anne – longing and action. Mark Clark – Then I heard the voice of God, whom shall I send – here I am, send me.

Christopher – story, we all share the same story, or different stories that intertwine. How do we bring out the stories of our religious and how that story can come forward?

Fr. Alfredo – SPOC Province have asked vowed Passionists, I have heard from several lay Passionists that we, the lay and vowed Passionists, are better organized in structure. In some ways we have pioneered this, my reflection, in what other ways can we continue to model that pioneering collaboration between lay and vow Passionists that we are not doing.