

# INITIAL CHARTER: MINISTRY COMMISSION

## VISION

The ministry of the Sisters of St. Joseph and Consociates expresses our charism of unifying love in ways that make visible our commitment to loving God and neighbor without distinction. Our ministry, done in the name of the Church, promotes the mission of Jesus by responding to the needs of the times.

## PURPOSE

The Ministry Commission seeks to support existing and evolving ministries of the Sisters of St. Joseph and Consociates. It facilitates extending and connecting the ministries and partnering with new eyes for the sake of our mission. It recognizes its role in relationship to the Province's responsibility for ministry.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

The Ministry Commission supports existing and evolving ministries of the Sisters of St. Joseph and Consociates by:

- Raising awareness of and celebrating the ministries of the Sisters and Consociates
- Providing educational opportunities for Sisters and Consociates who serve as board members
- Providing tools for ministries to do self-assessment

The Ministry Commission encourages extending and connecting ministries and promotes partnering with new eyes by:

- Facilitating networking experiences among ministries
- Being vigilant in identifying the needs of the times
- Seeking opportunities to partner in new ways to further our mission

The Ministry Commission recognizes its role in relationship to the Province's responsibility for Ministry by:

- Dedicating itself to understanding that role as expressed in the Constitution of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet (C-14):

“Our congregation from its foundation has been dedicated to the exercise of ‘all of the spiritual and corporal works of mercy of which woman is capable and which will most benefit the...dear neighbor’—ministry to orphans, the sick poor, young girls, the destitute and others in need. We continue in this spirit and engage in works of compassion and mercy which respond to the spiritual and corporal needs of persons in our times. We do this in a way that:

- heals and reconciles
- serves all persons without distinction
- makes known through our lives the gospel we proclaim
- enables others to assume a more active responsibility for continuing the mission of Jesus

- recognizes and defends the human dignity of all persons
- promotes justice with a particular concern for the poor.

As Sisters of St. Joseph our mission is that of the church: to continue the mission of Jesus. It is our responsibility both as a congregation and as individuals within the church to share the task of identifying and responding to spiritual and material needs.... The expression of these needs varies with times, cultures and conditions of persons. The congregation, confirming a particular expression of ministry, sends its members in the name of the church to share in the building of God's reign of justice, love and peace through our charism of unity and reconciliation [which is now referred to as *unifying love*].

We use our gifts generously in embracing the command of Jesus: pray, heal, teach, love and forgive. In gentleness, peace and joy we strive to become more loving and effective instruments of Christ's zeal, knowing he is faithful in accomplishing His mission through us."

➤ Seeing its work in the context of Christian liberation of persons as expressed in the Complementary Document of the Sisters of St. Joseph (CD-13A):

"Each member is called to live in a way that assists in the Christian liberation of persons. As a work of the Spirit, Christian liberation is a continuing effort to recognize, affirm and defend the inherent dignity of all persons against every type of discrimination and against every form of violence and oppression which deny full human development. Each member realizes that, to carry out the social mission of the church and of the gospel, her witness at times will necessarily be counter cultural. Regardless of illness or age, a member by her very life continues the ministry of unity and reconciliation [*unifying love*].

A service is a valid form of ministry in the congregation when

1. It promotes the mission of Jesus and fosters our ministry of unity and reconciliation [*unifying love*] in response to identified needs, and
2. The congregation confirms the member in that service according to the procedures designated in province policy."

➤ Recognizing the primacy of an informed conscience as expressed in the Complementary Document of the Sisters of St. Joseph (CD-13C):

"The congregation encourages each sister to witness in areas of concern according to the dictates of an informed conscience, and it supports the right of members to take a public stand on matters of justice. Since both the individuals and groups reflect the congregation and the church by what they say, they act interdependently with the congregation and the persons with and for whom they take a stand."

## OPERATIONAL PLAN

- *Membership on the Ministry Commission*
  - 3 Sisters selected by the Sister Assembly
  - 3 Consociates selected by the Consociate Assembly
  - 3 others selected by the Community Assembly
  - 1 member of the Province Leadership Team

➤ *Terms*

Initially terms are staggered (one year, two years, three years) as determined by lot. Thereafter, each serves a three year term. In all cases terms are renewable once.

➤ *Officers*

The Commission has a chair or co-chairs as determined by the Commission and a secretary selected from among the members of the Commission. The term is one year renewable twice.

➤ *Working Groups*

The Ministry Commission may establish working groups. At least one member of the Ministry Commission is on each working group. The Ministry Commission may invite persons with skills needed for the tasks to join the working groups. The Commission may also solicit volunteers for working groups. Working groups will develop clear and measurable goals and meet as necessary. Working groups are accountable to the Ministry Commission.

➤ *Meetings*

The Commission meets at least 4 times per year.

➤ *Accountability*

The Ministry Commission is accountable to the Community Assembly.

## **WORK PLAN**

Work plan priorities for the initial year of operation of the Ministry Commission include:

- Steeping itself in the role of the Ministry Commission in relationship to the Province's responsibility for ministry;
- Planning the annual Network event which gathers representatives from Province ministries and ministries founded by, sponsored by, or affiliated with the Sisters of St. Joseph and Consociates;
- Determining the outreach of the ministries of the Sisters and Consociates to assess the breadth of our mission;
- Recognizing and affirming individual ministries of Sisters and Consociates.

Approved by Ministry Board 8/6/15  
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