

## ***Love Gives Everything*** in times of Transition

Greetings and welcome to another virtual visit. I am Sister Charmaine Krohe, Provincial Leader of the Atlantic-Midwest Province and I am delighted to connect with you. As we approach SSND's founding on October 24<sup>th</sup> 188 years ago, I am happy to share a few moments with you. I hope you all had a good beginning of the board year and that you and your loved ones remain healthy and steadfast in hope as we continue to navigate this pandemic-era reality. I also want to extend a special warm welcome to those new to serving on one of our ministry boards and to those new serving in the particular roles of board chair and executive director. Welcome and thank you for sharing your time, expertise and your love to sustain and grow the mission of your respective ministry into the future.

Today, I would like to lift up some happenings with SSND and how these developments connect to our charism, mission and Directional Statement of the 24<sup>th</sup> General Chapter, *Love Gives Everything*.

For a significant time now, the Provincial Council with the support of the Sisters of the province and the General Council is preparing a transition of leadership to a new Council, that was delayed due to the pandemic. In addition, you may have heard that the province closed its health care centers and moved Sisters to other assisted living and health care facilities. This was to assure best care for our Sisters in their respective stage of life and to free the province to divest themselves of buildings that have become too large to maintain. These are a number of transitions at the same time, calling forth in us a deep prayerfulness, the need for discernment, courage and hope to move toward the vision of 'what the human person is called to be and the world is destined to become' [YAS 22]. In all this change, our focus was and continues to be on our mission of 'making one'. While we set things in motion to accommodate the congregation for the future, the mission – while evolving - at its core, remains the same.

But not only does the mission remain the same, we always look for new ways to deepen our commitment to the mission in light of the approaching Foundation Day and the many alarming signs of our times. We attempt this by deepening our understanding of the Triune God, who we are in relationship with this Triune God, our fragile planet and one another. Father Steven Bevans, Professor Emeritus of Mission and Culture at Catholic Theological Union, in a recent address to our Sisters named the inexpressible reality of our Triune God and our participation in God's mission as *Love Gives Everything!* Of course, he borrowed this phrase from a letter of our Blessed Mother Theresa of Jesus Gerhardinger, and we named our current Directional Statement after this exclamation, but what a fitting description for our God – God as 'Love giving everything'. However, the challenge flowing from 'Love Gives Everything' as a name for God, or name for our Directional Statement, is no small directive in light of the many frightening developments in our world.

So, one way towards deepening our commitment to God's mission and living the Directional Statement, and answering the summons of Pope Francis, SSND as an international congregation, signed on to become a *Laudato Si'* Congregation last May. The *Laudato Si'* movement was launched among others by the Vatican dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development. SSND made a [public commitment](#) to be a *Laudato Si'* community, meaning we have set out on a seven-year journey toward total sustainability in the spirit of integral ecology of *Laudato Si'*. On this journey, we will examine our relationships with God, our sisters and brothers, and creation and educate, advocate, and act for the dignity of all life. Scripture, our constitution *You Are Sent*, our Directional Statement,

and the [Laudato Si' Goals](#) will guide our discernment and shape our decisions and actions as we live this commitment. We urge you and your ministries to embrace with us the call to a profound personal and communal conversion, to strengthen global solidarity, and to deepen universal communion. This expansion of mission focus is an evolution of our conviction that the world can be changed through the transformation of persons and is another way of making Christ visible [...] by sharing our love, faith and hope [YAS 4].

**-Pause-**

### **Process for reflection and sharing:**

**I now invite you to prayerfully reflect for a few moments on the reality of transition and commitment to mission in your own ministry and write down your thoughts. Perhaps the following questions may start your pondering:**

1. What does the word 'transition' evoke in you?
2. In light of changing circumstances due to the pandemic and/or other realities, how might your ministry have been thrust into a transition? How do you feel about this? How might the board as a whole navigate this transition? What might be your specific contribution? What might you need?
3. How do you and your board consider deepening and/or focusing your commitment to mission? What resources do you have? What else might you need?
4. How might the work of transition and the work of mission be connected/ intertwined?

**Then I would ask your board chair to lead you in a bit of sharing, with your neighbor at the table, or with your whole board—and record all your thoughts concerning transition and mission.**

**Please pause the video, and when you've completed your sharing, turn it back on. Thank you.**

### **Resume video / Closing**

Welcome back! As leader and on behalf of our Provincial Council we thank you for your service on an SSND sponsored or co-sponsored ministry board and assure you of our prayers for you. Please call on the department of Ministry Services for any support with board orientation and board development needs. Let your prayer at the beginning of your board meetings encourage you to serve through times of transition and inspire you to deepen your commitment to the work of mission.

May you be echoing Blessed Theresa's words,

***Love gives everything gladly, everything again and again.***

Have a *Happy Foundation Day!*