

Sponsorship and the Transition to the new Sponsor Council

A Video Message for SSND Ministry Boards

by Charmaine Krohe, SSND Provincial Leader Atlantic-Midwest Province

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Greetings. It brings me great joy to connect with you once more. I hope you had a refreshing and rejuvenating summer and are feeling invigorated for the opportunities and tasks that lie ahead.

A special welcome to our new board members. For those who do not know me, I am Sister Charmaine Krohe, Provincial Leader of the Atlantic-Midwest Province. I have been serving in this role since 2016.

As many of you know, the Atlantic-Midwest Province looked for a new way to strengthen our relationship with you as a sponsored ministry, as well as increase our support to assure the sustainability of your ministry, while promoting the SSND mission far into the future.

Attention to sponsorship of our ministries goes back to 2002 when a meeting of SSND leaders from the then eight North American Provinces met to explore the meaning of "sponsorship." To recall for you, sponsorship is the mutually beneficial and dynamic relationship between the congregation and the ministry in which the SSND charism and educational vision (YAS #2) are defining characteristics of the ministry.

As we move together, and fewer sisters are serving in active ministry, the structure of the relationship between SSND and the incorporated ministry that you are serving needs to evolve.

For this reason, as of July 1st, the Provincial Council appointed a Sponsor Council. The purpose of the Sponsor Council is to nourish and strengthen the ministry and to advance the SSND mission into the future. In other words, Sponsorship is a gift of the SSND mission and vision to the people being served and to the larger Church.

Currently, the School Sisters of Notre Dame holds reserved powers in these ministries, either as members of the corporation in a two-tiered board structure of governance, through the bylaws of the corporation or through a legally binding document. Some of these reserved powers belonging to the members of the corporation will now be transferred to the Sponsor Council. You will receive information detailing this information from the Sponsor Council in future communications. The Sponsor Council is accountable to the Provincial Council

Sister Delia Dowling, as chair of this new Sponsor Council, will lead us into this new form of governance. Sister Delia has visited the ministries and some of you have met her. Five additional Sponsor Council members will serve alongside Sister Delia: Dr. Steve Cheeseman, Associate Mary Anne O'Donnell, Sister Carole Shinnick, Associate Kathleen Sipes, and Dr. Gary Thrift. With this change in governance, one of the Sponsor Council Members will serve as the contact to your ministry.

What should you as board members expect from the Sponsor Council in the near future? There will be periodic communication between the head of the organization, the Board Chair and the Sponsor Council contact, attendance at a Board Meeting, and responsiveness by Sister Delia and/or the Sponsor Council liaison to your questions and concerns as we begin to live into this new model of governance.

The Provincial Council is very happy about this evolution in governance. We are grateful to the members of the new Sponsor Council as they give witness to the Church's fidelity and to its call to build the reign of God.

In the spirit of SSND, sponsorship is grounded in our heritage and at the same time, open to risk and transformation. Sponsorship as a ministry is one of possibility, which "demands a Christian vision of what the human person is called to be and what the world is destined to become." (YAS 22) Above all, Sponsorship lives in faith, hope and prayer.

In closing, on behalf of the Provincial Council and the new Sponsor Council, we thank you for your service on your ministry board. We are grateful for your generosity of time and expertise which "enables persons to reach the fullness of their potential."

The new Sponsor Council contact associated with your ministry looks forward to building a relationship with you and learning all about the ways your ministry fulfills God's mission in the SSND spirit. Together, let us deepen our lives in faith and hope, and let us hold each other and this transition in prayer. With Blessed Theresa we exclaim:

*God has helped wondrously until now; neither will God abandon
us in the future! [5032]*

We wish you many blessings as you begin a new board year!