

Mid Atlantic Region - Vocation Directors Meeting

*Location: Washington, DC at OFM Conventual Friary/Zoom
May 3, 2023 (1-3 p.m.)*

Members Present (in person or via Zoom)

Sr. Dulce Aguilar, OP (San Jose, CA)

Sr. Theresa Bretthauer, MSBT

Sr. Josita Colbert, SNDdeN

Ms. Kathryn Davis (Bon Secours USA)

Sr. Patricia Dowling, CBS

Sr. Inga Kvassayova, ISMM

Sr. Judy Long, OCD

Sr. Kathleen Persson, OSBVA

Sr. Jean Rhoads, DC

Br. Nicholas Romeo, OFM, Conv.

Sr. Ruby Sampang, RMI

Mr. Chris Swain (Christian Brothers)

Fr. Emanuel Vasconcelos, OFM, Conv.

Sr. Mindy Welding, IHM

Sr. Kieran Williams, IHM (new Vocation Director)

Guests -- Sr. Debbie Borneman, SSCM, NRVC, Director of Mission Integration
Sr. Jo-El McLaughlin, OSB

Welcome, Check-ins, and Prayer

- Meeting was led by Sister Jean Rhoads, DC. She expressed gratitude for those who were present in person and virtually.
- Each person introduced herself or himself and shared briefly about Congregation and role.
- Sister Kathy Persson led us in a prayer, emphasizing the Holy Spirit since this is the month of Pentecost and we are all in need of the wisdom and fortitude of the Spirit in our vocation ministry.

National Office Update

Sister Debbie Borneman, SSCM, was invited to provide an update from the *National Religious Vocation Conference* office (NRVC). She referenced many resources NRVC offers to vocation directors and recognized the amount of information may feel overwhelming at first. Sister Debbie gave us a brief tour of the updated NRVC website and highlighted the *Member Guidebook* and *Member Toolbox*. She also reminded us we could download information from sessions we attend and share it with our congregations.

Another great aspect of the NRVC website is that we can see what other congregations are doing since the website provides links to other websites and includes meeting minutes from Member Areas.

Sister Debbie also shared there will be 8 workshops offered this year – in summer, fall, and several virtual workshops. Due to the content and important aspect of in-person sharing, the *Behavioral Assessment II* workshop will be offered in Tucson, AZ.

Sister Debbie reminded us of the *Misericordia Fund* for congregations in need of financial assistance for educational sessions. This fund will cover 75% of the cost of a workshop but not does not include travel expenses.

The address of the NRVC website is NRVC.net.

Member Area Business, Best Practices, and Vocation Activities

- Sister Jean thanked Sr. Debbie for her time as well as her informative and enthusiastic presentation. She asked meeting participants to help us keep the Member list updated by sending any changes to Marge Argyelan, Director of Database Administration.
- Several participants at the meeting shared some programs they have attended or undertaken and offered us some creative ways to meet young people who may be interested in consecrated life. Examples included the following:
 - *Sunday with the Sisters* (Benedictine monastery in Bristow)
 - *The Chosen* day retreat (Planned by Catholic high school students)
 - *Youth Rally* (Arlington Diocese – October 22, 2023)
 - *FIAT* (Arlington Diocese; at Mount St. Mary's, Emmitsburg, July 15-20, 2023)
- Sister Jean shared an event our Mid-Atlantic Region offered during Covid in April 2022 called *Pray, Walk, Eat*. This was not well attended due to cold weather and challenges in collaboration and marketing. Fortunately, we are now connected to Campus Ministry at Catholic University (Julie Cilano) and have a confirmed date to initiate this event with the students on Monday, September 29th about 4:30pm. This will include a Rosary walk, Mass in the Crypt Chapel at 5 PM followed by pizza. The Knights of Columbus will probably cover the cost of food. About 75 students usually attend Monday Mass and possibly more will come since it's early in the semester. Sister Jean asked for volunteers to assist her with planning. Sr. Inga, Sr. Ruby, and Br. Nick offered to help.

Next Meeting Date / Adjournment

- We had a brief discussion on the optimum number of meetings for the Member Area to have each year. It seemed that 2 or 3 might be good. Co-coordinators Sr. Kathy and Sr. Jean will initiate a doodle poll to set a date for our next meeting in the Fall.
- Participants thanked the Friars, Nick and Manny, who were kind enough to host us for the meeting. The hospitality was perfect!

Minutes submitted by Sister Kathy Persson, OSBVA