**SUMMARIES OF COMMUNAL RESPONSES**

**For follow-up reflections from Carol Zinn’s Presentations**

1. **In what ways is God inviting us to bring about new life?**

Allegany/Olean – Nevins

* By inviting us to more alignment between the gospel and our daily lives.

Allegany/Olean - Bernhardt, Caldwell, Dwyer, Hollis, Miritello, Seiter

* As Gospel Women, we are invited by God to continue our life together in incarnational love and light.

Allegany/Olean – Bartkowiak, DiCara, Gellineau, Kennedy, Magee, Vinci

* To consciously be more present to others. Together in small groups to share prayer, scripture and just life.
* Recognizing that God is active in our intentions to come together to foster “new life.”

Allegany/Olean – “1st Sunday Cluster Group” (Christopher, Conboy, Guaracsi, Hoppe, Lodge, Magee, Schumacher

* By showing up (to whatever opportunities present themselves); being present and open to “the new” with an awareness that recognizes new life in whatever from it comes.

Allegany/Olean – Berret, Cote, Kenyon, Magee, McGinnis, O’Neil, Pellegrino, Perry, Silva, Teevens, Wachter

* Being aware of the culture of our times, God is moving us to respond to that culture with more positive and life-giving energy. This energy can only come through a deep relationship with God.

Massachusetts – Bertero. Matthews, Roberts

* Listening in depth to the promptings of the Holy Spirit.
* Risk practicing feedback from Assemblies.
* Exploring new forms of religious life.
* Entering into relationships that give new life to others.
* Developing one to one relationships in Faith Sharing.
* Continue prayer and conversion for transformation.
* Visible care of creating/support programs of climate care/fossil fuels.

South Jersey Cluster – D Aherne, K Aherne, Augustini, Owens, Schuler, Sheeran

* We are called to be a presence to people in whatever our surroundings; it may be one encounter at a time.
* We continue to look forward to each new day as a new beginning.
* As an aging community, we become an example to others our age of living joyfully and sharing the Word of God.

St. Elizabeth Convent – Finley, Goggin, Joseph, Moore, Oehl, Sharkey, Tenn, Young

* To be more open with Associates, Partners in Ministry and all we encounter.
* To invite Associates and others as much as we can.
* To mentor young people as we can.

Florida–East Coast – Brady, Cardet, Dawson, Dolyk, Frascino, Murphy, Streva, Sullivan (and Affiliate Manshia)

* We share our faith and insights by praying with the fourth Advent reflection by Interfaith Immigration Coalition Partners, entitled “Defending Families Facing Deportation”. As Franciscan women professing and witnessing the gospel of life, we deeply oppose the injustice of our government’s inhumane treatment of families seeking asylum in the US, especially the suffering of children.
* Although we may seem powerless to change this situation, we must personally engage with other organizations (FAN, Network, LCWR) to speak out publicly as witnesses of the Christian values of love and acceptance, dignity and safety for all hurting people.
* We can make a difference by searching for the immigrants, veterans, elderly, homeless in our local community, and then choosing to personally and/or communally assist a particular person or group.

Florida–Christopher, Foley, Kane, Oehl, Robonie, Tucker, Vargas, Williams

* Awareness of our own growing frailty and a growing desire to be our best selves.
* Bringing new life in a new way.
* Keep giving the best we can be.
* Through whatever way we can, we can’t become stagnant.
* To bring Christ in me to them.
* Trusting in wherever the Spirit is leading us.
* Excitement in each new day.

JAMAICA - Sr. Angella, Gwen, Celia, Colleen, Helen Rose, Maureen Clare, Teresita and Trinita

**Question 1**. In what ways is God inviting us to bring about new life?

The focus of Part One of Carol Zinn’s presentation focused on seeking to live the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ. We see this as a future oriented, forward looking movement. As such, we need to look at ourselves and our world realistically. We are in the twilight of our lives, with diminishing numbers, with a “quarter tank of gas” left…How will we use this gas? We refer to an article written by Joseph Chinnici in the Winter edition of the Cord magazine. He makes reference to the Old Testament stories of Elijah and Elisha during a time of famine. The prophets were directed to the women who had a small amount of flour, and a partial jug of oil as food throughout the famine. In obedience to the words of the prophet, neither the jug of oil nor the jar of flour was emptied. Also in “rebuilding the house” we are invited to look within ourselves as the dwelling place of God… as we face our present reality realistically….

Thus, new life begins:-

• with the faith and realization that there is still an abundance of oil and gas, and that we must nurture the indwelling spirit through deep prayer and contemplation..

• the topic of abortion, and the violence in our society points to the question of the sacredness of life. We are invited by our own living to demonstrate the value of the sacredness of life, and to help others in this regard as well as treat others as God would like us to. We may not be able

to be truly “activists” but must be contemplatives in action.

• In charting the future, there needs to be inner freedom… a freedom that enables us to be realistic and truthful about what we hold on to, and what we fear letting go of.

• We can encourage enthusiasm where it is already present, and recognize new ways of partnering, and being instruments of God’s goodness and generosity, especially to the poor.

• Be open, willing, and ready to accept and enter into the unfamiliar circumstances and move with the changing times in our society and world.

1. **How might we bring the Word of God into our world into the next 10 years?**

Allegany/Olean – Nevins

* By being present to and accepting of what comes into our lives.

Allegany/Olean - Bernhardt, Caldwell, Dwyer, Hollis, Miritello, Seiter

* We shall bring the Word of God into our world by continuing our efforts in social outreach through the various Foundations, Ministries and Corporations established to serve the poor and marginalized.

Allegany/Olean – Bartkowiak, DiCara, Gellineau, Kennedy, Magee, Vinci

* By continuing “to be and to witness” through kindness, focused presence to the other, to practice the Beatitudes in our lives (positive approach) to our days and our outreach to others. Supporting each other in our varied ways of “reaching out.”

Allegany/Olean – “1st Sunday Cluster Group” (Christopher, Conboy, Guaracsi, Hoppe, Lodge, Magee, Schumacher

* Develop the proposal for Live-In Associate program(s).
* Develop the proposal for Temporary commitment(s).
* Mt. Irenaeus attracts those looking for something more to deepen their faith, develop proposals that would provide/facilitate faith development opportunities.
* Moving from I → We (Zinn) to “Build Up Our Church,” reach out to other Franciscan congregations.
* Develop ways we can assist in Pope Francis’ intention to focal on the youth of South America.
* Develop a program for parishioners modeled on the “Renew” program and invite parishioners to join/attend.

Allegany/Olean – Berret, Cote, Kenyon, Magee, McGinnis, O’Neil, Pellegrino, Perry, Silva, Teevens, Wachter

* We are called to be the word of God in the world. People need to know how much God loves them and one way we can do that is by loving.

Massachusetts – Bertero, Matthews, Roberts

* Be the visible witness of the Good News/personal outreach by listening.
* Use of technology (PowerPoint presentations); YouTube development.
* Reflection groups/faith sharing (1 to 1) small clusters.
* Reaching out to disenfranchised/joining other communities in discussions.
* Deepening relationships with Associates/Partners in Ministry.
* Supporting clergy in transformation of Pastoral life (others first).
* Being present in prayer with other religious denominations.

South Jersey Cluster – D Aherne, K Aherne, Augustini, Owens, Schuler, Sheeran

* Be in touch with current realities, read the signs of the times and make use of new technologies.
* Continue to be open to the present moment and respond.
* Be an advocate for issues and joining with other groups already engaged such as LCWR, FAN, etc.
* Support our lay Associate Program.

St. Elizabeth Convent – Finley, Goggin, Joseph, Moore, Oehl, Sharkey, Tenn, Young

* Preach the word by our presence.
* Awareness of the Spirit working through us in sharing our faith in any opportunity given.

Florida–East Coast – Brady, Cardet, Dawson, Dolyk, Frascino, Murphy, Streva, Sullivan (and Affiliate Manshia)

* Learning from others how and where to serve – in whatever way we are able.
* Encouraging one another to move from our comfort circles and stretch ourselves to be women of hope.
* Inviting and welcoming others in our lives – to be present, listen to their stories, affirm their gifts, and offer to accompany them on their journey.

Florida–Christopher, Foley, Kane, Oehl, Robonie, Tucker, Vargas, Williams

* To work in a ministry that we enjoy.
* A quality of presence.
* To be available and present.
* Today is the only day we have.
* To live day by day with joy.
* Signs of the times – we still can do it.
* Partnership.
* Change in leadership.
* We are blessed wherever we are.
* More partnering with Associates and partners in ministry.

JAMAICA - Sr. Angella, Gwen, Celia, Colleen, Helen Rose, Maureen Clare, Teresita and Trinita

Question 2: How might we bring the Word of God into our world into the next 10 years?

In describing our present changing reality, we become aware that many persons come to us, especially in the exercise of our ministry of Franciscan hospitality. Our interactions therefore with those who come into our midst, those who work with us and all others must mirror Jesus’ manner of being with others on word and actions..actions often speak louder than words.

In this I.T age, telephone ministry, Whats Ap as well as letter writing are ways to bring God’s Word to our world.

Establish support groups.. e.g. Cancer Groups, disability groups---walk with and partner with other persons in supporting those in need.

Show appreciation to those who take of us..doctors, nurses, caregivers etc.. gratitude is a gift of God.

Continue with our foundation as Franciscan women with renewed hope: attentive to who we are and use what we have and know to support our response as we move in and with time in the future.

1. **How will we choose another path (like the Magi) and what wisdom/star is God giving us as we journey?**

Allegany/Olean – Nevins

* By being open to the unexpected, event when it at first seems negative and challenges our perceptions of the future.

Allegany/Olean - Bernhardt, Caldwell, Dwyer, Hollis, Miritello, Seiter

* We will choose another path through contemplative listening to the Holy Spirit, the inspiration of our sisters who have gone before us, and our lay advisors. This on-going process will unfold gradually with our faith and trust in God and one another.

Allegany/Olean – Bartkowiak, DiCara, Gellineau, Kennedy, Magee, Vinci

* As Franciscans, our wisdom/star stands before us as Francis and Clare. The more we are consciously present to their guidance, the more we will be open to our call as Franciscans. We are called to listen to others and see the signs around us, to enable us to choose the path God will continually reveal to us – Women of Faith

Allegany/Olean – “1st Sunday Cluster Group” (Christopher, Conboy, Guaracsi, Hoppe, Lodge, Magee, Schumacher

* We choose another path by keeping our eyes on Jesus, creating “the path by walking it” (J. Rupp). The wisdom/star is that it’s not just about “doing” but includes “being” and pursuing/modeling Clare’s contemplative practice in order to grow in Franciscan/Clarian Spirituality and what that means (embracing the masculine and feminine of our spirituality).

Allegany/Olean – Berret, Cote, Kenyon, Magee, McGinnis, O’Neil, Pellegrino, Perry, Silva, Teevens, Wachter

* Following the star which is our charism (littleness, joy, peace, hospitality, being at home with everyone) we desire to live it in such a way that it speaks to our times.

Massachusetts – Bertero, Matthews, Roberts

* Live the Gospel at all times/following example of Pope Francis/speak your truth.
* Encourage discussions/openness on women’s ordination/married clergy.
* Need to confront all “isms”…racism, sexism, materialism in our own lives and help others to do the same.
* Continue 2016 Chapter initiatives/Franciscan-Clarian spirituality.
* Engaging members to broader thinking of praying/with Islamic Community.

South Jersey Cluster

* Continue to follow Christ, the Gospel and our Charism with love and faithfulness.
* Let’s go in peace and trust in God and with a contemplative spirit, reflect and discern the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

St. Elizabeth Convent – Finley, Goggin, Joseph, Moore, Oehl, Sharkey, Tenn, Young

* To have an attitude of questioning what path to take daily before God.
* To accept the fact that we are on the journey and remain very open to what the Spirit is inviting us to – be alert, watch and pray.
* The Holy Spirit working in each of us – sisters, associates, partners in ministry, church members.

Florida– East Coast – Brady, Cardet, Dawson, Dolyk, Frascino, Murphy, Streva, Sullivan (and Affiliate Manshia)

* The path of communal discernment demands honest and open dialogue about our vulnerability and our faithfulness in the midst of personal struggles. This process can become the guiding star for sharing our common values, resources and experiences with those who are in need.
* We recommend that be given at every FSA area assembly for sharing our local experiences of outreach to others and ways that we may offer more support or involvement to meet various needs of hurting people in our own neighborhoods.

Florida–Carberry, Chin Fatt, Christopher, O’Brien, Pereira dos Santos, Robonie, Stagnaro, Tyre, Weidenborner

*(Addressed primarily the third question though we felt all three overlapped.)*

* Our “star’ is Jesus as we live the Gospel life.
* Looked at the reality of who we are – FSA and our gifts. Even though age and health are a significant part of our reality, they are or should not be inhibitors.
* Need to see the world as God sees it, knowing we are women of hope and contemplation.
* Our relationship with God, both personal and communal, challenge us to be a present – to one another, to others, to be women of prayer.
* In looking at the signs of the times, we recognize our gifts of right relationships, our presence to and for others, women of pray, be a listening ear. Ask ourselves – can the other person sense in us how deeply we are in love with God?
* In being “stars” for others we are called to be transformed, to be consumed with the love for God, for others, for all of creation. This implies putting into practice what we say, i.e. walk the talk.
* Resistances to face – overcome our fear of the unknown, of diminishment, of being moved out f our comfort zone, to be vulnerable, lose our independence.
* Be aware and conscious of where and in whom we recognize/find God.
* How can we be Jesus for the other?
* Think positive – let go of negativity, of being judgmental, of holding on to the old and familiar.
* We think our current Congregational logo is a good one and sufficient. Theme: Courageously Living the Gospel (this is the theme for the Diocese of St. Petersburg).

Florida–Christopher, Foley, Kane, Oehl, Robonie, Tucker, Vargas, Williams

* Let ourselves be led by the Spirit.
* Be open to opportunities that come.
* Be alert and open and trust in the Lord.
* Support the ones who follow the star, be aware and keep our spirit open.
* What we are able.
* To trust in the Spirit leading and we can take the step in the darkness that will lead us to the light.
* Don’t hold back.
* The future in in God’s hands.

JAMAICA - Sr. Angella, Gwen, Celia, Colleen, Helen Rose, Maureen Clare, Teresita and Trinita

Question 3: How will we choose another path (like the Magi) and what wisdom/star is God giving us as we journey?

One wisdom path is learning to “let go” as we go forward. Learn to empower others to do what we have done- the Franciscan way…in our “Journeying in Faith” as a country, we are attempting to do this.

How ready are we to further trust others as we engage in partnering in new areas such as our financial management.

Expand our relationships from the past, for example, our Alumnus----our Charism is in others... Christ is there; let us bring it out from others as we journey into the future.

Being open and present in all circumstances and situations as we live and relate to others from day to day and further discern and act on the choice that best fits our Franciscan Values. Perhaps, the wisdom or star to guide us could be new and different ways to consider and live our vows as FSAs.

Jamaican Song: A little more oil in our lamp, keep it burning,

A little more oil in our lamp , I pray,

A little more oil in our lamp, keep it burning,

Keep it burning till the break of day.

Comunidade Mãe Admirável, Anápolis – GO - Margarida Maria de Carvalho, Maria Donizete de Freitas Rabelo, Oneida das Graças Rezende, Teresinha de Jesus Santos (Thê), Teresinha dos Santos (Jacinta)

Anápolis, January 9, 2019

Theme: **I** - **Challenge and Audacity: fertile ground for transformation /or**

**II - Where there is a challenge there is transformation**



**"But now, O LORD, You are our Father;**

**we are the clay, and You are the potter;**

**we are all the work of Your hand. Is 64: 8**

Feedback on the Communal Reflection for Advent

Going a step further in the process of Chapter discernment, after communal reflection on the Advent, Christmas and Epiphany readings, Carol Zinn’s presentation and congregational responses from the assemblies, being enlightened by the Holy Spirit in order to incarnate this study which enriches our desire to bring the mission and charism of the Franciscan Sisters of Allegany to the future, with all that God gives us, the reality that the 21st century imposes upon us, the urgent need for transformation that brings forth the NEW, we think:

1. To give life/generate is to create, God creates and recreates every moment, day by day, in each season – let us look at the nature;
2. To generate life in the Franciscan vision is to move, transform; The change must have the power to recreate, transform like the clay is transformed by the hands of the potter, as the vase is molded in to a new vase (Jeremiah 18.6);

* Change that starts in interiorly, as if before a mirror (Clara the Inês) and leads to an exterior change, structural change (works);
* Change of convictions even continental convictions (immigration), The earth does not belong to anyone, the world has no owner (Our home is not here. Hebrews 13.14);
* True change is openness, not a place (house, bedroom or kitchen) but attitude (novelty);
* Change that brings Newness to consecrated religious life. Newness that drives us to be women missionaries, not women in an office, a vision imposed by valid structures, but women who are asking to look to the new realities that open up to a much broader future, with new demands from a world that encompasses all nations, with proposals for Action and Mission, which are beyond the visits. In a system of ants, where the Queen Mother commands from her space the work of the others, waiting until her reproductive time is over. This type of system wounds dignity, kills, because everything lives only for the hive that is already built and structured, until the death of the Queen;
* Structural changes that make us Invest in partnerships, well known to the Franciscan Sisters of Allegany since its origins, (Marvelous Works of God) rebuild the Porciúncula of God's desire, being a counter sign:
* That presents the Newness of the Gospel for the world of the 21st century.
* That includes women, those without voice and or place in society;
* That presents a new dimension of life, of the Charism being experienced even when the contingencies of life ask for a new way of witnessing;
* That Christ be our reference as experienced by St. Francis, where Minority in all of its dimensions, is made visible
* That we create healthy and lasting relationships based on the centrality of Christ.

It is urgent that we unite our forces to respond adequately to the appeals that emerge from the best of the church, the congregation and the parishes to the personal needs of prayer and health, time to reflect on the past which will illuminate the present, showing advances and setbacks, balance in action and focus on the Mission that God has entrusted to us, opening ourselves to the surprises that are given to those who trust and abandon themselves.

May the Lord of Life lead us in this process and teach us the way of building a New World through the witness to truth and commitment.