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Minutes of the 784th Provincial Council Meeting September 8-9, 2008, Walls, Mississippi

PRESENT: Fr. Thomas Cassidy, provincial superior; Fr. Yvon Sheehy, Fr. Vien Nguyen, Fr. Jack Kurps, Fr. Jim Brackin and Dn. David Nagel, councilors; Br. Frank Presto, provincial secretary, and Mary Gorski, minutes. The proposed committee for provincial chapter follow-up joined the council on its second day to discuss the chapter and how its work should continue. Those present: Fr. John Czynski, Fr. Richard DiLeo, Br. Duane Lemke, Fr. Bill Pitcavage, and Sr. Barbara Stanbridge (chapter moderator).

I. Minutes — Via e-mail communication, the council approved the minutes from the 783rd council meeting. During the 784th meeting, Br. Presto noted two corrections that need to be made to the 783rd minutes since their approval: 1) The new members of the Admissions Board are Fr. Charles Bisgrove and Richard DiLeo, not Frs. Bisgrove and Jim Walters (Section IX). 2) Also, in Section IV, C, the following should be added: “The provincial superior and council approved proceeding with the sale of the Baileys Harbor farm and assets (excludes parcels 6, 7, 13 and 14 on the map) to Mr. Thomas Lutsey for \$3.6 million.

II. Sharing — Councilors briefly updated each other on themselves, their communities and their ministries. Fr. Cassidy noted that his visitation with the Mississippi community was going well. Dn. Nagel commented on the work involved in regards to selling the Baileys Harbor property, as well as issues related to the province development office. Br. Presto talked about the added requirements of Praesidium accreditation; the previous week he had met in Chicago with the formation team to discuss procedures that need to be implemented as a result of Praesidium accreditation. Fr. Nguyen noted that he enjoyed spending time with the Raymondville community recently and was especially grateful for the opportunity to do prison ministry. One of the prisons dealt with the undocumented and he was able to get a better understanding of their situation.

Fr. Brackin talked about the help that Marge Lirette has been at Villa Maria; another person was recently hired to assist her.

Fr. Kurps noted that his time away for the summer was good, and Fr. Sheehy said that school recently started at St. Martin of Tours.

III. Administration

A. Baileys Harbor — Fr. Cassidy reported on his visitation to the Baileys Harbor community. Fr. Mark Fortner will remain in his ministry. Fr. Guy Blair is also committed to ministry in the Diocese of Green Bay. There have been conflicts with the mayor once again regarding the homeless shelter. It is hoped that the new bishop will be supportive of the shelter.

B. Mississippi — Fr. Cassidy was in the midst of a visitation with the Mississippi community prior to the council meetings. As he noted earlier, the visitation was going well and he thought that the community was in good spirits. Last year the community was dealing with two men with terminal illnesses. Fr. Jim Cunniffe also died. Both situations were a strain to the community. The community is much different this year. New to the community are Br. Mike Fette, who is doing AIDS/HIV ministry, and Fr. Tim Gray, who will be in parish ministry. Fr. Cassidy noted that the new church at Robinsonville is coming along well and will serve many tourists who frequent the casinos.

C. Personnel

1. Fr. Rob Naglich — He has settled into 37th Street and is assisting at St. Martin of Tours.
2. Fr. Byron Haaland — Fr. Haaland is planning to join the Trappists in August, 2009. He is on excommunication until then.
3. Fr. Mike McMillen — The vicar for priests in the Diocese of Joliet contacted Fr. Cassidy to finalize details regarding Fr. McMillen's incardination into the diocese.
4. Fr. Joseph Dinh — Fr. Dinh is completing his first year in the counseling degree program for Licensed Professional Counseling (LPC) and Licensed Marriage Family Therapy (LMFT). He will complete his work in a year-and-a-half. He is now requesting permission to continue his studies and enter the Doctor of Ministry program in counseling.

The council voted to approve the request.

D. Texas — Fr. Cassidy noted that the following week he would do a visitation in Texas.

E. SCJs With Health Concerns — Although there is good support for an elder to receive assistance if he has health care needs, there is not a plan for assisting younger members of the province who may be ill or injured. If an SCJ comes to Milwaukee for medical assistance, where does he stay? There is room at Sacred Heart Monastery, but is it realistic to ask the community there to assume responsibility for possible needs that a sick or injured person might have, such as rides to doctors' appointments or minor home care needs?

Related to this, how does the province get members to take better responsibility for their health care needs? Some men allow health concerns to escalate; they are not always good about basic health maintenance, which allows minor issues to turn into major ones.

Fr. Cassidy noted that it is difficult for a community that might already be stressed by ministerial obligations to deal with a member who has significant health needs. How, as a community, does the province address this? It is certainly something that families often face. Fr. Cassidy may write about this in a future letter to the province.

F. North American Forum on the Catechumenate — Fr. Cassidy shared information on "Handing On What We Have Received from the Lord," a three-day gathering presented by the North American Forum on the Catechumenate. Fr. Cassidy will forward an electronic copy of the information to Mary Gorski to share with the province.

G. Request, Archdiocese of Milwaukee — Rick Tank from the Archdiocese of Milwaukee wrote to Fr. Cassidy to inquire as to whether the SCJs might have a priest who would be able to commit to being an "assistant priest" to do sacramental ministry at a parish administered by a parish director. It was not thought that the province had anyone who could fill such a role at this time.

H. Elder Care — Fr. Brackin presented a proposal from the Elder Life Commission titled "A Pastoral Dialogue on Aging." The dialogue will be three-fold, addressing: 1) the aging of the province as a corporate entity, 2) aging as a human experience, and 3) the aging of the province membership. It is hoped that the publication will be ready for publication by October 10, 2010. At its completion, there will be an extended conversation among the membership, using the document. It is hoped that this conversation will result in a better understanding of aging with recommendations to the provincial and council, or for the next chapter.

The council indicated that it was in favor of the project and asked to be kept informed of its progress.

I. CMSM — Fr. Tom Cassidy was elected president-elect of the Conference of Major Superiors of Men. Fr. Cassidy said that he isn't sure how much work this will entail but noted that superiors of larger provinces than the SCJs' U.S. Province have held the position. There is a full-time staff at the CMSM office so Fr. Cassidy does not anticipate a significant burden to the Provincialate staff.

IV. Finance

A. Audit — Schenck Business Solutions is the new accounting firm doing the audits of the province and the development office.

B. Development Office — The new director of the development office, Bill Rondeau, seems to be working out well. He is help-

ing to bring a change in the culture of the office. A fund raising department within the office is being developed to bring an enhanced business sense to the fund raising activities and analysis of their performance. JCR Direct, the consultants who have been working with the office this year, will be more involved with the office in the future. Also, it is anticipated that staff will be hired for the department, including professionals for web design and print layout.

In October the office will change its software from the AS/400 to a PC-based server.

- C. Investments — Dn. Nagel reported that meetings were held with the Investment Committee on August 12th and with stakeholders on August 13th. The meetings reviewed the year-to-date results for the investments with a focus on the second quarter of the year. Although markets were down, the Growth Fund and Annuity Fund were both in the top performance percentile. Councilors are encouraged to attend one of the twice-yearly meetings to better familiarize themselves with the investments.
- D. Baileys Harbor — Information regarding the sale of the farm has been sent to Rome for final approval. The closing date has been set for October 1, 2008. The selling price is \$3.6 million and \$100,000 for the farm content. The sale of the farm content, including the cattle, took place August 11th. The \$100,000 is considered a down payment for the farm property in addition to being a payment for the farm content. The buyer is Thomas Lutsey.

Dn. Nagel is waiting for a final appraisal of the retreat center property. There are several options for disbursement of it. The province offered it to the Diocese of Green Bay for use as a retreat center. The new bishop, Bishop David Ricken, visited the property several days before the council meeting.

Sr. Judith Miller, a member of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, has visited the facility with her provincial superior. The community said that it was interested in operating the retreat center but wanted to do a feasibility study regarding it that would not be completed until June, 2009. Dn. Nagel told Sr. Miller that the SCJs would not wait that long for a study.

Other parties interested in the center: Catholic Youth Expeditions of Appleton, Wis. and the Archdiocese of Chicago (a representative of the archdiocese visited the center). Mr. Lutsey, the buyer of the farm property, has requested first option to purchase the retreat center if no Catholic organization is found to continue ministry at the center. Also, the owner of an island on Kangaroo Lake has a group of investors interested in the property. Cardinal Stritch University and Alverno were suggested as possible recipients of the property. They have not yet been contacted.

However the property is dispersed, efforts will be made to ensure that the next owner/user does not have the option to quickly sell the property for profit.

The intention is to continue a Catholic ministry on the property.

Retreats are scheduled at the center through November 3. That will be the closing date for activities at the center. The farm house is rented until December 1. Fr. Mark Fortner will remain at the center as a caretaker following the center's close. Brs. Lewandowski and Monek have the option of staying in Door County but have to make their decision by November 1.

Dn. David and Fr. Cassidy will meet with Bishop Ricken on October 2 to discuss the province's plans and intentions.

- E. Retirement Facility — The province remains in negotiation to purchase the frontage property in front of Villa Maria. It is estimated that the property will cost \$100,000 although higher figures are now being suggested by the government agencies that hold the property. Mark Carstensen, the developer working with the Treasurer's Office on the project, believes that the property is now being over-valued.

Plans for the retirement facility are moving forward. A variety of studies are needed before permits can be requested. Mr. Carstensen and Dn. Nagel have been discussing how the partnership between the developer and the Priests of the Sacred Heart might work. As noted previously, plans are to have a retirement center with a wing for the SCJs, but also other sections that can be rented to the general public. This would bring income to the province and give more options for activities for the SCJ elders. In a partnership, the SCJs bring a "Halo Effect," which is similar to the business term "Goodwill." There is value in the SCJs' name backing a retirement community and that value has financial worth. In discussing a partnership with the developer, that value needs to be taken into account.

Discussion also needs to take place with the members of the Villa Maria community. There needs to be a determination of what the community is willing and able to bring to such an arrangement. Is there be an openness for daily Mass with the wider

community of residents, or is the Villa Maria community's preference to have liturgy just with the SCJ community?

Kathleen Dahlgren, province attorney, is also reviewing partnership issues.

Plans for the building are still in the conceptual stage. Much depends on whether the SCJs are able to acquire the frontage land.

F. Hales Corners Housing — Dn. Nagel has been researching several possibilities for SCJ housing close to Hales Corners. He presented three options:

- 1) A new condominium project on 92nd and Forest Home where the SCJs could buy eight condos (an entire building) for \$1.25 million. Each condo has two bedrooms and two bathrooms, an attached garage, combined living room and dining room and a galley-style kitchen. It might be possible to alter the condos to allow for common space and a chapel.
- 2) A new condominium complex on 70th and Puetz (Avian at Tuckaway) being developed by Mark Carstensen. Two units could provide housing for four to five SCJs; four units could house eight to 11. Each would have a bedroom, small office and bath. The units are \$389,000 each. To complete the lower level (which would add another bedroom and bath) would cost \$58,000 each.
- 3) An existing apartment building. Dn. Nagel has looked at an eight-unit building on 92nd and Hayes (Lincoln Avenue). There are seven one-bedroom units and one efficiency. The building needs some work and would have to be remodeled to allow for common space. There are also several long-term tenants who would need to leave the building. The asking price is \$538,000.

The residence on Woods Road could be sold to help finance a new property in the Hales Corners area.

The council discussed the options. They were not in favor of buying an apartment building. The cost of the condominium options seems high, especially in that while the layouts of each unit are nice, the overall scheme is not conducive to community living. Building something that is more appropriate to the SCJs' needs is preferred, but there is also a concern that the structure be saleable if in the future the province no longer needs it. It was suggested that a building be designed that could meet the SCJs' needs for community living now, but be easily converted into a conventional apartment or condo structure for sale later. For example, appropriate space could be made in the individual units to allow for a kitchen. However, instead of a kitchen, the space could be used as a walk-in closet while the SCJs live there. If the building were to be sold later, it could quickly be converted into kitchen space.

Is it possible to remodel the community section at Sacred Heart Monastery, allowing for better living space as well as a community dining area? Dn. Nagel said that Mike Erato at SHST is investigating the possibility of making double-rooms in the SCJ wing. Others noted the need for individual bathrooms, as well as the fact that there are a number of SCJs who do not want to live at SHM, regardless of the accommodations.

Another suggestion was to incorporate a building or section at the retirement facility that would allow for a separate community of SCJs in active ministry apart from the community of elders. There were mixed opinions on this. Some felt that there would be conflict with the communities brought on by lifestyle differences between the two groups. Others suggested that there could be enough space between the two communities to allow for independence. Also, if at some point there is no longer a need for the space, it could be incorporated into the senior residence center.

Several suggested that if a new structure is built that it be done on property the province already owns. However, some felt that it would be best not to build on the grounds of Sacred Heart Monastery/School of Theology.

Dn. Nagel will investigate possibilities for a new structure that will have 12 residence rooms and two guest rooms for non-retired SCJs as an addition to the retirement complex.

G. Support and Maintenance Trust: The council voted to appoint Fr. Jim Walters to a three-year term to the Support and Maintenance Trust beginning in December, 2008. He replaces Br. Ben Humpfer. They also voted to appoint Br. Ray Kozuch to the board for a three-year term beginning in December, 2008. He replaces Fr. Bernard Rosinski.

H. SCJ Medical Plan

1. Money Transfer — The council voted to transfer \$250,000 from the retirement portion to the medical portion of the

Support and Maintenance Trust to help fund the medical expenses of the upcoming year.

2. Medical Plan Contribution — Dn. Nagel noted that health care costs as well as the expense of claims made by SCJs have risen. Expenses are higher than anticipated. Also, costs related to the SCJ Medical Plan administration are projected to rise by 5% when the plan renews in October. In order to meet the rising health care needs of the province, Dn. Nagel proposed that the monthly contribution for members be raised from \$650 per month to \$725. The council realizes that this places an extra financial burden on local communities, especially those in dioceses that offer much less for health insurance, but the plan needs to have the assets to adequately meet rising medical expenses. It was noted that the budget is a guideline. If a local community needs to go over its budget because of the increase, or needs financial assistance from the province to meet the added expense, that's preferable to not planning adequately for medical expenses.

The council voted to raise the monthly contribution to the SCJ Medical Plan to \$725 a month as of January, 2009.

- I. Oversight of Development Offices — Fr. Cassidy is grateful that Dn. Nagel, a person with a strong knowledge of fund raising and finances, is the treasurer. The province needs to have strong oversight of all three of its development offices to ensure that financial misbehavior does not go undetected.

Dn. Nagel said that several changes have taken place. He now receives monthly financial reports from the three development offices. Previously this did not happen. Whistle-blower policies are also being put in place to ensure that employees have a "safe" way to share sensitive information. The possibilities for better checks and balances are being investigated.

Could the province benefit from some type of independent review board to help to monitor the offices? Other religious communities face these same concerns. Perhaps there is a way to collaboratively review development offices. The National Catholic Development Conference might have suggestions or resources to help the province develop an oversight plan. It is a difficult issue.

Br. Presto noted that the provincial chapter asked that there be better review of the province development offices

- J. Meetings — Dn. Nagel informed the council that the directors of the development offices will meet in Orlando on September 29th to discuss common issues. The General Finance Commission, of which Dn. Nagel is a member, will meet in Germany October 8-10th following the celebration of the German Province's 100th anniversary.
- K. Corporate Board — Annually, the corporate board of the Priests of the Sacred Heart needs to hold a meeting to appoint its officers. This council meeting constitutes the annual board meeting. The council voted to appoint the following to the board of directors of the Priests of the Sacred Heart:

Fr. Thomas Cassidy: president
Fr. Yvon Sheehy: vice president
Dn. David Nagel: treasurer
Br. Frank Presto: secretary

- L. St. Luke's Institute — St. Luke's is in the midst of a fund-raising drive to raise money to help religious who cannot afford care at the institute. The president of St. Luke's asked Fr. Cassidy if the SCJs would be able to make a pledge. The council voted to approve a pledge to St. Luke's of \$20,000 a year for five years (\$100,000 total).
- M. Hurricane Assistance — The council agreed to give \$15,000 to Catholic Charities to assist with relief efforts as a result of Hurricane Gustav. If needed, another \$15,000 should be donated to Catholic Charities for needs related to Hurricane Ike.

V. Formation

- A. Student Loans — There has been a two-tiered system of student aid for candidates, with international students receiving full funding because of the difficult economic situations in their home countries, as well as work restrictions that come with student visas. However, the two-tier system creates tension. Regardless of why, one group of students is getting more financial assistance from the province than the other. The formation team discussed the issues, and while there is a hesitation in giving full grants to non-professed students, this seems to be a better option than a two-tier system.

Councilors agreed with the formation team. However, they said that in return for the financial grants, all candidates should be required to spend AT LEAST six weeks of their summer break working in an SCJ location. Also, eligible students should be

required to apply for financial aid from traditional sources. The SCJ grants would cover academic expenses not met by financial aid.

It should be expected that after two years the candidate will apply for novitiate unless he is not yet 21. Only after review and approval of an independent board should a student be allowed to continue in candidacy beyond two years if he is 21 or older.

The formation team is asked to write a policy regarding financial grants for candidates for the council to review and vote on.

Dn. Nagel noted that it would cost approximately \$8,000 per U.S. citizen to cover tuition this academic year.

Br. Presto raised a concern in regards to a candidate for whom the province accepts full financial responsibility. In the eyes of civil law, is that person considered a member of the community? If he commits a crime, will the province have legal obligations toward him? A councilor responded by noting that if a student on a full scholarship to a university commits a crime, the university is not responsible for him. Why would the province be responsible for a student it fully funds?

Br. Presto will review his concerns with the province attorney.

Although the primary concern of the formation team is parity in the financial burden of academic expenses for the candidates, it was noted that international candidates receive financial benefits beyond academics that candidates who are U.S. citizens do not, such as spending money and travel expenses. This is a difficult issue to address.

- B. Ministry of Lector/Acolyte — At the 780th Provincial Council meeting, petitions were received to install Brs. Long Nguyen and Clay Diaz into the ministry of reader. Councilors stated that such ministries could be given to those in final vows, not temporary but told the formation directors to review the issue if they believe that those in temporary vows should be allowed to receive ministries. Fr. David Szatkowski, a canon lawyer, and 12 members of CMSM shared their opinions or community practices regarding such ministries. Fr. Szatkowski said that there was nothing in Canon Law that prevents the brothers from receiving the ministries if they have the appropriate qualifications. Practice in religious communities is mixed.

It was suggested that the ministries of lector and acolyte be conferred on a brother in conjunction with his first assignment. The formation team is asked to write a policy that reflects this and send the policy back to the council for review and approval. Once approved, it will go into the formation ratio for the province.

VI. Provincial Chapter

- A. ACTA — The council voted to approve the chapter minutes. Br. Presto will send the ACTA, which includes the minutes and lengthy appendix, to the Generalate for approval. With it, he will send a separate document identifying the juridical decisions.
- B. Evaluations — Only nine evaluation forms were received. Comments, both in the formal evaluations and in casual conversation, indicate that participants either thought very favorably of the moderator or were very negative toward her and the process. It was suggested that future evaluation forms be distributed at the gathering, not after, and that the form be less complicated.
- C. Brainstorming — The members of the chapter follow-up committee were to join the council on its second day of meetings to discuss the chapter and what needs to be done to respond to it. The council took time at the end of their first day of meetings to talk about what they hoped to accomplish in their second day's meeting.

Councilors said that they'd like to see the province continue the conversations that were begun at the chapter. Using the communication skills learned, and sharing those skills with those who weren't at the chapter, needs to be a priority. Deeper conversations "from the heart" need to be developed not only to assist the province in planning for its future but to enhance community living and the personal health of the members.

The directional statements need to be a key part of chapter follow-up. It was noted that the Elder Life Committee is doing work that responds well to the statement regarding aging.

Previously, the council suggested that another province gathering be held in early 2009. Although it may seem like short notice to plan for a province gathering, to wait much longer will lose the momentum of the June chapter. If that isn't feasible, something needs to be done on the local level to continue the conversations begun at the chapter prior to the next province gathering. The ideal would be to have a province gathering in early 2009 and a second in the summer.

It was suggested that the province gathering(s) would start with dinner on Monday and end at noon on a Thursday, allowing men in parishes time for travel. Expenses could be covered by the province so local communities aren't burdened.

It should be emphasized that ALL members of the province are encouraged to attend the gathering, not just those who took part in the chapter.

If a gathering can be arranged for early 2009, a central location should be chosen — one that is easy to travel to. The facility should allow for participants to have private bathrooms. There should be good meeting spaces for large and small groups and a good sound system, or ability to bring in a good sound system.

If a larger meeting is not feasible early in the year, something needs to be done on the local level. However, there was concern that in some communities only a limited number attended the chapter. Would it be difficult to continue the chapter dialogue in communities where some were not chapter participants? Could a facilitator help on the local level?

How does reconciliation fit into the discussion? Some thought that through dialogue on the directional statement regarding community, dialogue and work toward reconciliation can also be done. It is through deep-level conversation that people can share their hurts. And, it is through deep-level conversation that healing can begin.

Many in the province are anxious to discuss ministry. It's not just a desire to be task-oriented, but there is also the pressure of trying to staff current province commitments with limited personnel. However, most on the council agreed that discussions of ministry need to flow from community. Community issues need to be addressed before ministries can be discussed.

Councilors noted that in planning for chapter follow-up they, and the organizing committee, need to realize that there are some members of the province who are going to resist the process. Everyone should be welcomed and encouraged to participate in the on-going dialogue, but the province cannot wait for those who resist such discussion. People will be welcomed at whatever point in the process they choose to enter, though the hope is that most will be a part of the entire process.

In reflecting on the chapter, most councilors felt that the "circle time" was the most meaningful. Very personal sharing was experienced when men spoke about issues close their hearts. How can this openness, this sharing, be repeated?

Finally, the councilors noted that there is a difference in experience and perception among older and younger members of the province. Post-chapter follow-up needs to help both understand and appreciate the opinions of the other.

VII. Provincial Chapter Follow-Up — Members of a chapter follow-up committee joined the council on its second day to reflect on the chapter and talk about hopes and expectations for follow-up. The committee included: Fr. John Czyzynski, Fr. Richard DiLeo, Br. Duane Lemke, Fr. Bill Pitcavage, and Sr. Barbara Stanbridge (chapter moderator; Sr. Stanbridge has also been asked to facilitate future gatherings).

- A. Review of Chapter** — The council and committee members briefly reflected on the chapter. Paraphrased comments:
- There was a powerful sense of intimacy in the group that I have never experienced before in a province setting. We learned a new way of communicating with each other but also learned how easy it is to slip back to our "old ways."
 - It was a moment in time. There were many positive things, but also some things left unsaid. Some left happy; some left angry and frustrated.
 - We are called as a men's community to listen contemplatively. I am amazed at how we struggle with what it means to listen contemplatively.
 - Most significant was the sense of care brought forward for province elders, especially by those caring for them. Also, the sense of community support that Fr. Rick DiLeo shared when discussing care-giving issues in regards to his mother was moving.
 - The election process stood out. It was at times a struggle.
 - The chapter was a moment that calls for "more." But more "what?"
 - We gathered to go "deep sea diving." Sometimes we were very lucky in what we found. Let us continue to dive to see

where it takes us.

- It was a beginning, but we need to bring this to the local level.
- A moment in time cannot be repeated, but how can we build on it?
- Not everyone was happy, and not everyone was there. But most were. How do we bring along those who either are not comfortable with the process or have not taken part in it?
- The interjection of juridical procedures in the midst of a reflective process was abrupt. It would have been better to separate the juridical needs from the reflective time.
- There was an expectation by some that more was going to be done in regards to ministry. Groundwork is needed but those who call for discussions on ministry are going to feel frustrated that such discussions are not happening more quickly.
- Issues of aging received the most focus, ministries the smallest.
- It was a significant time of sharing, but also unsettling for many. It was obvious that there are still hurts; many of the issues that have caused pain in the past are not issues of importance to the younger members, or at least not issues that are a part of their lived history.
- We need a strong base in community before we can address ministry. At the chapter, people spoke from the heart, not just the head. How can we continue this talk to address community issues? Most members of the province will need help in continuing to speak from the heart. As members spend more time in deep level communication, it will get easier. And as it gets easier, members will be better tooled to have discussions about ministry. But this will not happen quickly.
- Talk of community is a distraction to the realities that need to be dealt with in regards to ministry. We are an apostolic community. We need to integrate the two – community and ministry. Both are a part of who we are.
- There is a disconnect between the older and younger members with too much emphasis on discussions of the “good old days.”
- The chapter was a foundation for us to build on.

What moved you? Sr. Stanbridge asked participants to cite a moment at the chapter when their heart was “moved.” Again, responses are paraphrased:

- One person said that he appreciated being able to share the struggles of taking care of his elderly parent and expressing his gratitude toward the community for its support.
- There was not a specific moment; I was moved by the depth of listening and the sharing without judgment.
- The circle time, hearing the retired speak.
- Also, the circle time. I was moved hearing my brothers speak on a level I never experienced previously.
- The one-on-one conversations.
- I can't define a moment but it happened sometime after seeing the movie. I feel that I am now moving toward the end of my journey with the SCJs and I want to leave something behind for others on the journey.
- I was moved by [Fr.] John Czyzynski's response following the vote that was taken in regards to the temporarily professed and the possibility of allowing them to vote at the next chapter. His openness and honesty was moving.
- Realizing that most were trying to do what was asked of them in the process. There was disappointment in the end because I felt that we were making a shift and we needed more time to continue the process.

- The small group sessions. There was a good connectedness.

Sr. Stanbridge asked participants to touch into the moments that were either positive or sad. Some felt that the chapter ended on a note of disappointment; how do participants feel about that? Again, responses are paraphrased:

- Tension came from the mix of task-oriented work and reflective work. It would be nice to separate the two needs: action and reflection.
- How do we connect the head, heart and hands? There was a disconnect at the chapter.
- I didn't leave on a sad note. There was enough positive that happened at the chapter that left me hopeful even though we reverted to previous levels of communication at the end.
- I ended the chapter with a sense of relief and was grateful to Sr. Stanbridge and the steering committee. Some things could have been better but I thought that things could have been much worse.

Sr. Stanbridge noted that the tension that SCJs feel in integrating the head and the heart is a common one. Many apostolic religious struggle today with what it means to be an apostolic religious community in today's world. It is hard to find time for contemplation when one is burned-out by ministry. Community and ministry needs to be integrated but there is a need to base that integration in community.

Br. Presto asked Sr. Stanbridge and Mary Gorski, as observers, to comment on the chapter. Paraphrased they said:

- Sr. Stanbridge said that she watched people struggle to allow their hearts to be touched. The "fishbowl" or circle experience was very powerful. She felt the energy of the group shift dramatically and was moved that the men felt comfortable to cry with each other. Some people would not let down their defenses and enter the process but overall they were grace-filled days. People shared a lot of pain and it was obvious that there is a need to go to a deeper level.
- Mary Gorski said that there were some very powerful and moving moments during the chapter and that she was touched by many of the same things that had already been mentioned. However, she also noted that it was a moment in time. Outside of the chapter activities she heard some of the same sarcastic and/or cynical comments that are often said once participants are away from the process. The nature of the moment does not continue for some. What was started doesn't continue and in another year or two there is another call for the province to get together to discuss past hurts, community and vision for the future. Moments often remain as moments, or so it seems. She hoped that this experience can move beyond its moment.

Continued reflection:

- Reflecting on what was said, one participant said that often when he has allowed himself to be vulnerable he quickly "re-arms" himself with snide comments and sarcasm. Many men do this.
- How can we continue moments and get beyond sarcasm?
- The geography of the province works against its members. We don't spend much time together. We become absorbed in our local area and its needs. But our province is much bigger than its local areas and ministries.
- We have a tendency to "freeze" people in time and not allow for them to grow or change. If an individual was a difficult person 40 years ago people's sense of him remains regardless if he has changed.
- Similarly, the province is often frozen in the past. People talk about what was, not what can be.
- At the chapter I felt many positive moments. When I returned to my local community I was surprised that others didn't have the same experience that I did. Several did not view the chapter positively. It is uplifting for me to hear others' positive experiences from the chapter.

- How can we continue a moment that is created?
- We need to look at our time together not in a sense of what we accomplished but what we did, the moments we created.

Evaluation — participants were invited to give further feedback on the chapter and to comment on the evaluation forms received. Paraphrased comments:

- I was surprised at how few responses there were. Perhaps the evaluation was too long. It would have been good to have more feedback.
- People seem to want to revisit ministry.
- In the future it would be good to separate the juridical work from the reflective work. The transition between the two was jarring.
- Reflection and the “nuts and bolts” work can be done together if there is appropriate discussion and better integration. More discussion was needed before the proposal regarding those in temporary vows was brought forward. Our juridical work can come from the heart.
- Next time more work needs to be done so that plans are in place to deal with things such as the call for a secret vote. The steering committee hadn’t envisioned the ramifications of the scenario.
- The difficulty surrounding the vote may have had nothing to do with the issue itself but instead a need by some who were uncomfortable with the process of the chapter to finally express some control.
- It should be noted that this chapter did something very different and courageous — anyone who wished to could take part. This in itself is significant.
- In preparation for a previous chapter a provincial conference was held to sort out juridical matters. Perhaps it would be beneficial to do something like that in the future.
- Those who are considered experts with the “traditional way” of making decisions and addressing juridical work should be consulted next time so that the traditions of both the reflective process and traditional process are respected and integrated.
- Missing from the process was a way to hold each other accountable to the directional statements on a personal, local and regional level. However, one person noted that that was the reason that the follow-up committee was formed.
- How is the experience of the chapter shared with those who weren’t there? How does a person who found the chapter to be a positive experience talk about it among community members who found it to be a negative experience?
- It is too bad that more people didn’t fill out evaluations, but regardless if an evaluation was completed by an SCJ, he still has a responsibility to move forward with the work of the chapter.
- There will always be those who are disgruntled, who are cynical; we can’t be stagnant because they don’t want to move forward. Those who disagree have to be given voice, but if they are the minority, they cannot be allowed to hijack the process.

Sr. Stanbridge said that the voice of cynicism needs to be heard because the reason for the cynicism needs to be addressed.

- In many ways the province has been spinning its wheels for the past 20 years. We have had several province planning processes but they all stagnate. We need to make this move forward.
- There is cynicism, but there is joy. We need to focus on the joy.

B. Directional Statements —Sr. Stanbridge asked participants to talk about the directional statements from the chapter. Paraphrased comments:

- These statements need to be opened up. We went back to “business as usual” after the chapter. We need to work on the statements but need direction to help us on the local level to do so.
- There is a movement underway, lead by the Elder Life Committee, to address the statement on aging.
- If I wasn’t asked to be on this committee, I probably would not have looked at the directional statements after the chapter.
- Br. Duane Lemke was credited for initiating discussion of the statements in the Chicago community.
- The statements on aging and community reflect who we are. We need to address the ministry statement.
- The statements are reflective of where the province is at right now. Aging received a lot of attention because obviously it is a major challenge for the province right now. We need to address the community statement and from that ministry will unfold.
- The ministry piece is difficult. As an older person I don’t want to tell the younger members where they have to minister or what they have to do in the future.
- We need the young to come forward and give input. Future ministry is their future.
- There is a disappointment in that the chapter wasn’t able to do more with ministry; however, there needs to be a more thorough discussion of community before we can move to ministry.
- Regarding ministry, it is difficult when we say that we want to be in a particular place, but then people don’t want to live or minister in the area.
- Members often act like ostriches, not looking around to see what the reality of the province is. Many simply do not accept the fact of our diminishment. The concern is often with “my” ministry and “my” area.
- How do new ideas become old ideas that can be accepted? Repeat the new ideas over and over until they are old ideas.
- We need to accentuate the positive when we look at the future. There is much that is positive.

Sr. Stanbridge asked if work had been done with the statements on the local level as a follow-up to the chapter.

- The statements were sent to the membership but there has been no discussion or processing of them on the local level.

C. What is to be accomplished? Sr. Stanbridge asked participants to state their goals for post-chapter follow-up. Paraphrased comments:

- Address hopes, dreams and fears.
- The committee needs to know what the council wants to accomplish. Is the committee to refine the statements or implement processing?
- How will the committee, provincial superior and council interact together?
- One councilor said that he hoped the committee could take the three statements and get the whole province to dialogue on them. Eventually, discussions would move toward concrete action.
- Somehow reconciliation needs to be included in the process – but don’t blatantly use the word “reconciliation” or people will not take part. The word has too much baggage. Others asked what was actually meant by “reconciliation.” Do those asking for reconciliation seek “apologies” for past wrongs?
- One person suggested that people in general, and SCJs in particular, need to appreciate the gift of forgiveness. People

need to develop the capacity to forgive or reconciliation will never move forward.

- Another noted that sometimes things will not be reconciled. People need to learn how to accept that and work with it.
- The chapter was just a start. If nothing happens from it the work done there and the communication shared will be lost. If there isn't a follow-up soon, the spirit of the chapter will be gone. More important than topic is discussion. The province membership needs to practice communication skills that bring them to a deeper level of sharing. Talk among SCJs is often too superficial.
- According to the minutes of the last council meeting, the primary purpose of the next gathering is to continue the work of the chapter.
- Some participants felt that holding a province-wide meeting in early 2009 is too soon. Others said that it is necessary for the spirit of the assembly to continue.
- A facilitator is needed to continue the process. The council would like to continue to work with Sr. Stanbridge since the process began under her facilitation and she is becoming familiar with the community. Some have suggested that she brings an important feminine element to the dialogue; however she suggested that more important is that she is an outside observer.

D. Mechanics — How will the committee operate and what are the next steps?

- There are two councilors plus Br. Presto on the committee. They should be able to keep the council well informed of the progress of the committee both verbally and in writing. It was noted that the next council meeting isn't until November 11. Significant work and communication needs to be done prior to that meeting, especially if a province gathering is to be held early in the year.
- Is early 2009 too soon to organize a province gathering? Would it be better to do something on the local level and perhaps regional level to build to a province gathering later in the year? Something could be done on the local level if there is a process and perhaps a facilitator.
- Br. Lemke has designed a process for the local level. With input from the committee, could it be the first component of the process prior to a gathering later in the year?
- While a local process for discussion is important, some said that a province-wide gathering, as soon as possible, is needed to further what was started at the chapter. Most SCJs don't have the communication skills needed to get to a deep level of conversation on the local level.
- On whatever level discussion takes place, it is vital that there is a good structure and process for it.
- Future province-wide gatherings are vital, but it is not an "either-or." Work needs to be done on all levels to continue the discussion begun at the chapter. However, more weight needs to be given to the larger gathering.
- The younger members of the province need to be heard; whatever is done, efforts need to be made to ensure that their voices are heard.
- We need to look at the glass as being half full, not half empty. In ten years (assuming that all variables remain the same) there will only be 29 SCJs in the province under 70. How can the process help the membership to look at that in a positive light? Twenty-nine people can do a lot. This province started with only a handful of men.
- The process needs to be future-driven.

E. Final comments — Committee members and councilors were allowed an opportunity to make final comments regarding chapter follow-up. Again, paraphrased:

- The goals of the chapter follow-up seem nebulous. However, this leaves room for creativity.

- We can do much as a province but we need to “refashion” ourselves as a province, or retool for the future.
- I want to do more than just survive. We can do more as a whole than as individuals.
- The province is good at drafting statements. It is not always good at implementing what is said in its statements. Let’s hope that the directional statements of the chapter can be implemented.
- I could see the need for three to four province gatherings to continue the process.
- The committee has a very important task but committee members should realize that they are not responsible for the outcome of the process, the province is. The committee facilitates a process, but it is up to the province as a whole to participate in it.
- The council chose the men who are on the committee because they bring a variety of skills and represent different areas and age groups. The council has confidence in them.
- The committee will review several meeting options during its meeting on September 10. However, several meeting venues were suggested during the council meeting: Columbus, Ohio; Bellevue, Il.; and Dallas. It was noted that Sacred Heart School of Theology will be in session in the winter, so it would be difficult to use this location if there is a gathering in early 2009. Also, there is benefit in having a central location so that people can focus their energies on the gathering.

F. Evaluation — Participants briefly evaluated their time together. Paraphrased comments:

- Initially, the meeting was difficult, but as the day went on it became more hopeful.
- What I thought that I was being asked to do as a committee member was different than what I now see is expected of the committee.
- At times the meeting was agonizing but at other times insightful. The end of the day was better. I feel that we are moving in the right direction.
- I feel that the committee is being asked to continue what the chapter started.
- Entering into the meeting, I assumed that it would be a half-day at most. That it took all day shows how difficult the work is.
- The meeting was difficult but good. I am hopeful.
- It was difficult in that there was a lot of “process.”
- Some questions were answered, some new ones developed and more questions are now waiting to be born.

VII. Conference Call — The council will meet at 10 a.m. on Thursday, September 18, by conference call to review these minutes.

CALENDAR

2008

September 8-9 Provincial Council meeting (Mississippi)
November 9-10 North American councils meeting (Ottawa)
November 11 Provincial Council meeting (Ottawa)
December 15-16 Provincial Council meeting (Hales Corners)

2009

January 12-15 Province Gathering (Belleville, Il.)
January 26-27 Provincial Council meeting
March 9-10 Provincial Council meeting
May 4-5 Provincial Council meeting (budgets)
May 17 - June 12 General Chapter (Rome)

UPDATES

FR. BOB TUCKER until December 15:
2517 Virginia Street #8
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FR. DOMINIC PELUSE
526 Louisiana Street
Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235
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FR. QUANG NGUYEN
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FR. TIM GRAY
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662-429-8424

FR. BOB BOSSIE
New e-mail: bobbossie@gmail.com

NECROLOGY

FR. VITANTONIO GIAMPIETRO, a member of the South Italian Province, who died August 21. He was born in 1926, professed in 1943 and ordained in 1952.

FR. IGNATIUS CIPTAHARSAYA, a member of the Indonesian Province, who died September 10. He was born in 1943, professed in 1966 and ordained in 1972.

FR. ROQUE JOSÉ SCHMITT, a member of the South Brazilian Province, who died September 11. He was born in 1920, professed in 1939 and ordained in 1946.

FR. MICHAEL WALSH, a member of the British-Irish Province, who died September 12. He was born in 1942, professed in 1962 and ordained in 1969.