



MONTHLY MEMO
February 2022

Emerging Futures has had a busy start to 2022. Five religious institutes approached us about engaging with the collaborative process and three of those institutes, including one overseas, have begun working with us. We continue to work with the service partners from 2020 and 2021, deepening and extending our areas of transition planning and shared services. Perhaps you saw this story about one of our very first service partners in recent weeks: [Sisters and soccer players get a kick out of unlikely friendship](#)

Religious institutes engage with EFC because they have a need, whether it is for canonical governance or shared services, or both. Our work with religious institutes is tailored to the needs of the group: we can begin with addressing the Congregational Will and Distribution Plan, detailing how the members of the institute wish to live out their lives and the legacy they wish to leave behind. Or if there is a pressing need for a service to free up the members of the leadership team to consider other issues, we begin with service delivery. The point is that EFC is not a program that religious institutes are joining, but rather a support service customized to each different group.

A reminder that our website is up and running on multiple platforms and can be accessed via <https://www.emergingfuturescollaborative.org.au> Recent editions of the *Monthly Memo* can be found there as well as information about Emerging Futures and its Board and staff and the video from the November 8 presentation by our first three service partners.

Emerging Futures continues to engage in international networking which allows us to share thinking and strategies with other conferences, to derive value from sharing and helps avoid the feeling of “being in this alone.” We know that the situation of diminishment and ageing facing Australian religious institutes is a global occurrence, giving rise to a prediction that 350 religious institutes will face completion in the next couple of decades.

In November 2021, I was asked by Carol Zinn csj, Executive Director of LCWR to assist them with what Australia has done about the future of sponsored ministries. I met their Project Officer, Elizabeth McGill ihm on Zoom and we discussed what assistance could be given. My recommendation was that we organise a webinar of personnel from religious institutes and the AMPJP to speak with Elizabeth and any leaders she would like to nominate. That way the information is first-hand. As a preliminary, I organised a Zoom meeting for Elizabeth with Paul Oakley cfc, a founder of EREA and of the AMPJP. That was very successful meeting and we are in the process of organising the webinar for American leaders at the moment. Linda Ferrington rsc, member of the EFCL Team with extensive experience in the governance of PJPs will step into this space for EFCL.

The Resource Center for Religious Institutes (RCRI) in the USA is planning their 5th *Fidelity to the Journey* Workshop for institutes in transition to completion or fulfillment. The workshop will be

structured with three sessions to address the essential elements of transition such as discernment, ministries, and property; care of members; canonical governance options. 50-60 leaders of institutes will be invited– women and men, apostolic, monastic – for the workshop. RCRI is planning to videotape the program and place the videos in RCRI's Toolbox for all to use.

I accepted an invitation to co-present a session on the evening of June 22 with a religious from Canada, so that participants could hear what is happening around completion/fulfillment in Australia and Canada and ask questions. RCRI thinks it would be a wonderful experience of global sisterhood and truly enlightening for participants. The presentations/reflections could be around 20 minutes each followed by Q&A.

Our connection with the Resource Center for Religious Institutes has already been very helpful to one of our service partners who required some intricate and delicate advice from an international setting. RCRI was able to connect us to this specialized advice on Zoom, giving our service partner information for consideration.

I was also formally invited to be USIG's guest at the UISG Assembly from May 2-6 in Rome. The theme *Embracing Vulnerability on the Synodal Journey* is a very important one for religious women (and men) as we live during such challenging and demanding times. We declined this invitation given the need to travel to Rome in this pandemic time, but Emerging Futures was honoured to receive the invitation.

The EFCL Board met on Thursday afternoon and Friday, February 24 and 25. We had hoped to hold this meeting in person and finally all meet together for the first time, but once again plans changed due to Covid. The Board now plans to meet in Sydney at the end of July. While Thursday afternoon provided time for the business of the Board, including prayer, reflection and formation, Friday's longer gathering allowed for a considered discussion of two important EFCL issues: staffing and succession planning and future canonical governance.

Emerging Futures is currently looking to add to our pool of potential canonical delegates and consultors. The role of the canonical delegate and consultors is to ensure that

- all canonical governance responsibilities are met and addressed;
- the interests of the institute and institute members are safeguarded;
- the care and wellbeing of every member of the institute;
- the religious life, mission and charism of the institute is respected and nurtured;
- the institute is formally represented to church and other bodies.

Religious institutes members who have had experience as leaders or on leadership teams are invited to consider this ministry. EFCL plans to offer a webinar after Easter that provides further information about the role and fosters questions and discussion.

Many religious institutes members receive a copy of this *Monthly Memo* via your own leadership team. If you would like to receive each edition direct from EFCL, please send your email address to me at sharon.price@efcl.org.au and I will add you to our distribution list.

As the season of Lent begins, we ask you to join with us in praying for and working towards peace in our world.

Sharon Price rsm
Transition Manager
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