

MONTHLY MEMO
June 2023

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE DISCALCED CARMELITE NUNS, TORONTO

Emerging Futures has been engaged with the Discalced Carmelite nuns, previously of Varroville and now living at Toronto, since August 2021. As a contemplative order, the path to the future has been different to that of our service partners which are apostolic in nature. We have been fortunate to have our international connections in the US and Canada with canon lawyers who belong to contemplative orders or work closely with contemplative orders. At a Zoom meeting with the Carmelite international leader and his vicar in December 2022, the idea of petitioning Rome for the appointment of a prioress administrator for the next triennium was proposed as a temporary, tailored measure for governance, allowing more time for the nuns to resolve outstanding matters particular to their circumstances.

On 6 June, 2023, a few days before the term of office of the current prioress -Sr Jennifer Jones- ended, the Dicastery approved the petition for appointment of a prioress administrator for the next triennium. The regional superior of the Sisters, Father Bernard Hancock OCD, was present with the Sisters this week on an informal visitation and, having consulted with each sister, on June 29 he announced the appointment of Sister Jennifer Jones OCD as prioress administrator for 3 years.

The appointment of a prioress administrator is a first for Carmel in this region, and perhaps for other women's contemplative groups in this part of the world. We offer our congratulations to the Sisters on this important milestone in their history.

We continue to be very busy implementing solutions to support our Service Partners. June saw us appoint four Health and Wellbeing Co-ordinators and a Cook who will work across three different Service Partners. Aaron Evans (Shared Services Manager) who joined us on 17 April is fitting in very well and adding tremendous value to the team.

19 June saw the Fundraising Committee meet for the second time. The Committee focussed upon agreeing the content of a letter that could be sent to Business Partners on behalf of the Members. The letter seeks financial support to further the mission of Emerging Futures and encourages organisations that have benefitted commercially from Religious Institutes to meet their corporate social responsibility objectives by giving back. We are now working towards creating a database of contacts and encourage readers to reach out to us if you have suggestions.

Members of the operations team have been travelling in June: to Melbourne for a workshop with our service partner the Sisters of Our Lady of Sion; and to New Zealand in this past week for work with our service partner the Dominican Sisters. We also had a day in Sydney with the Patrician Brothers. Although we have always done Transition Team work on Zoom since we began, it is good to sometimes be in the same room to continue the conversations.

Emerging Futures Collaborative is as much an emerging organisation as are the service partners with whom we work. We are constantly learning from our service partners and the interactions in which we engage and our own story is in constant transition. During June we have been looking again at the Schedules which are appendices to our Service Agreement, particularly in the light of now having twenty service partners. We wrote the original documents when we had three service partners and we must look carefully at necessary changes as we now need to work with twenty diverse religious institutes.

Working with twenty service partners also means we are growing very rapidly at an employee level. In fact, we have more than doubled in size in the last 12 months. This has necessitated a review of our human resources framework and governance structures in order to support the organisation going forward. Work in this area will continue over the coming months.

The growth of the organisation has also required an assessment of our current software systems and their capacity to address the organisation's needs going forward. After completing a needs analysis and attending multiple demonstrations, we will soon begin to implement a new database and record keeping system and train our staff accordingly.

The Annual Assembly of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) is coming up in early August and Linda Ferrington rsc will be attending again this year for EFCL. The Assembly is in Dallas, with a theme entitled **Drawn By Sacred Mystery: A Journey Into Hope**, with keynote speakers Brian Swimme and Barbara Reid *op Religious life leaders are working with a vast array of challenges today that include exploring new collaborative and partnership opportunities, imagining new expressions of mission, envisioning religious life into the future, attending to changing structures, assuring the care of their members, pondering new approaches to institute leadership and governance, and more. In this LCWR assembly, we will look at these realities through a cosmic lens. How does our story fit with what is evolving and emerging in the larger universe and how might we draw hope from all that we are seeing and learning? How might we grow in our awareness of the sacred mystery that surrounds us and trust its movement within our own lives and the lives of our institutes?*

On Thursday, August 10, the assembly will offer breakout sessions on eight areas of interest to religious leaders today, with each participant asked to register for one breakout session. The session being offered are:

1. Intercultural Leadership: A Transformative Element for Religious Life
2. International Congregations: The Unique Challenges of Our Emerging Future
3. Making Change Happen: Leaders as Agents of Change
4. Enlarging the Tent: Collaboration and Expansion of Charism
5. Possibility Thinking: Living the Call Fully for the Next 20, 30, or More Years
6. Sacred Encounters: What Are We Learning at the Various Stages of the Journey
7. Sharing Our Resources: The LCWR Collaborative Administration/Management Initiative
8. Rethinking Institute Assemblies and Chapters at This Time of Significant Change

There are so many interesting topics and Linda is working with our network in the States to meet with presenters of sessions - other than the ones she is able to attend - at other times during the Assembly. The Assembly creates a perfect opportunity for continuing our international networking with our colleagues in Canada and the United States and from UISG. Linda wastes no opportunity!

Dates to diarise:

Tuesday November 7, 2023: An EFCL Zoom event for all interested participants from 11am-1pm AEDT.

Monday-Tuesday April 22-23, 2024, two-day conference at Treacy Centre **Melbourne**.

Monday-Tuesday May 13-14, 2024, two-day conference at MMP, North **Sydney**.

Brad Hannagan, CEO

Sharon Price rsm, Transition Manager

30 June 2023