



Called together
for the **LIFE OF THE** **WORLD**

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PARA LA VIDA DEL MUNDO

Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet
Congregational Chapter 2019



The Call

In July 2019, women traveled from near and far to gather in St. Louis for the 30th Congregational Chapter of the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet: Called Together for the Life of the World. The community gathered at Mercy Center included chapter delegates, chapter companions, women in initial formation for membership, and many generous support staff. For two weeks, we shared prayer, contemplation, and dialogue in the effort to discern the Spirit's invitation to our congregation.

Yet the movement toward this chapter began long before July 2019. Every congregational chapter "reviews the life and ministry of the congregation in light of its spirit, its purpose, and the current needs of the church and society" (Constitution #58). This time, not only the chapter body but the whole congregation prepared for this important review. Almost two years prior to this chapter, Sisters and ACOF began to identify what matters most at this moment in our history and to begin probing the significance of these issues. These processes resulted in the Statement of Future Direction on the following page.

Called by the 2017 Extraordinary Congregational Chapter to consider anew the organization of governance across the congregation, we engaged in local and intra-congregational conversations and several opportunities for feedback, which led to the Recommendation for Governance Across the Congregation and prepared us for the chapter body's approval of that recommendation (p. 4).

Now we turn toward our future. In the coming months and years, we will live into the challenging and inspiring commitments in our Statement of Future Direction, and into the evolution of our governance. With open minds, hearts, and wills, together let us go deeper, journey farther, and respond boldly.

Statement of Future Direction

Called together for the life of the world, our 2019 Congregational Chapter compels us to live authentically our identity as the Congregation of the Great Love of God and our charism of loving God and neighbor without distinction.

The cry of the dear neighbor impels us to **go deeper**, to **journey farther**, to **respond boldly** and creatively. The world is waiting.

Urgent needs call us, Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet and Associates, Consociates, 'Ohana and Familia de San José, to bold conversation and prophetic action.

Striving to be beacons of hope, we commit to:

- Respond to the crisis of Earth and global warming,
- Deepen awareness of our complicity and work toward dismantling interlocking systems of oppression,
- Articulate and authentically live our vows in ways that witness and speak to today's realities,
- Walk with women as we claim our voice and work toward an inclusive church and society,
- Use our collective voice to accompany others in speaking their truth.

As we move into these commitments, we will:

- Make all decisions through the lens of unifying love,
- Embrace the spirit expressed in Vatican II,
- Implement Laudato Si',
- Expand and deepen our partnerships,
- Use a variety of communication media.

We stand in communion with all who share our passion, charism, and mission: St. Joseph Workers, partners in mission and ministry, friends, emerging and ongoing relationships such as agrégées, and all those enlivened by our charism.

Go deeper. Journey farther. Respond boldly.

Dare to be prophetic.

Governance across the Congregation

After a formal communal discernment process, each province/vice province will choose either:

- To remain as a province/vice province, relating to current province/vice province and congregational leadership for governance, or
- To relate directly to congregational leadership for governance and no longer operate as a province/vice province.

Whichever governance structure is chosen by a given province/vice province, the call to simplification is the same.

Additional Chapter Decisions

Implementation of the Recommendation for Governance

As the provinces and vice province undertake their communal discernment, the province/vice province leadership team of each unit will be in dialogue with the Congregational Leadership Team about developments in the conversations among their sisters.

When a province/vice province has completed its discernment process—to “remain as a province/vice province, relating to current province/vice province and congregational leadership for governance, or to relate directly to congregational leadership for governance and no longer operate as a province/vice province”—they present their intention to the Congregational Leadership Team.

Any province/vice province whose intention is to enter into a new relationship with the Congregational Leadership Team will create a path for this transition in dialogue with the Congregational Leadership Team and the Congregational Leadership Group.

Prior to the 2025 Congregational Chapter, the Congregational Leadership Team can authorize implementation of a province’s/vice province’s path toward a new relationship with congregational governance. Any significant changes in the organization of governance across the congregation will be submitted to the 2025 Congregational Chapter for approval.

On-Going Dialogue

Between now and the next congregational chapter, the Congregational Leadership Team will:

- Continue to provide opportunities for intra-congregational dialogue and sharing
- Continue to support ongoing relationships among Sisters in the Kakehashi cohort.

Congregational Leadership Team

The Congregational Leadership Team elected in 2019 will be a team of five, all of whom are full-time; their term will be six years, non-renewable, beginning in January 2020.

Continuation of Team Leadership

The 2019 Chapter chooses to make no changes in the Constitution and Complementary Document relative to the team model. Use of the working understanding and language developed by the 1993 Congregational Chapter and modified by subsequent chapters will continue until the 2025 Congregational Chapter.

Composition of the 2025 Congregational Chapter

The Congregational Leadership Team, in consultation with the Congregational Leadership Group (or its successor), will determine the composition of the 2025 Congregational Chapter.

This includes naming the number of delegates with voice and vote as well as providing for alternates and others (e.g., ACOF, initial formation).

Considerations:

- Feasibility of a “chapter of the whole”
- Determination of the number of voting delegates based on the human and financial capacity within the congregation
- Dates and length of chapter in light of age, stamina/capacity, potential availability of delegates and amount of time required to address chapter business
- Significant shifts in congregational demographics, the economy, etc.
- Identification of a site that will accommodate the entire chapter body.