

Constitutions Revision: Journey towards Oneness



As we begin November we are already half-way through our 2020 Constitutions Revision Process. During this month we will experience sessions 3 and 4, and by December we will have completed the fourth round of community reflection and engagement since Lent 2017. This most recent process is based on the **decision of Chapter 2018** which *'mandates CLT to continue the process of revising our Constitutions ... recognising the need to change our structures ... and affirming that draft 3 is an excellent model...'* (Faithful to God's Call...)

By the end of this round it will be a great help if we are all more familiar with that 'model' - replacing our provincial/regional structure with a more flexible 'diverse branch' structure – and seeing it as more suitable for our life and mission in our different places and times. Details of 'how, and where, and when' would be for further consultation and work at a later date. The image of the TREE which the Working Group have given us has been inspiring, helpful and encouraging.

The Videos for this process have been accessed more than a 1,500 times, so we can rejoice in the great level of participation and union which they have given us, and indeed in helping us to get more friendly with technology! So well done to our excellent film makers. We can easily view any of the videos again by going into the [Recordings Section](#) in the Members Area on our website. The word from all around the Congregation is that Sisters enjoyed the sessions so far, shared with each other thoughts and questions, remembered the past and the present, prayed together in the midst of COVID-19, and are looking forward to the next session.

Following the final session around November 30th, the Constitutions Working Group will gather and collate any comments or queries which Sisters may present and forward them to CLT. These will be published in the New Year and will give CLT a good sense of the mind of the Congregation. They will also inform the finalising of the text of Chapter 4. The wording of Constitutions has to be exact, broad and brief, and able to take in a wide range of circumstances. At this point [Draft 4.2a](#) and [Draft Statutes](#) (on articles 76 to 88) cover what Constitutions need to say now in order to take the next step. You can find those documents in the Members area of the website together with other constitutions materials.

The final text would then have to go to a special Chapter for formal decision in preparation for seeking approval from Rome. The timeline involved could take us to the end of 2022 perhaps. Preparation for the next Congregational Chapter would begin somewhere in 2023 and would include details about the possible number and location of branches and the civil implications. So the current Provincial and Regional structure, and terms of office, would not be affected until after 2024.

Of course we will continue having local conversations on this journey towards deeper and more practical oneness, bringing it into our contemplative living and sharing, searching for God's Spirit at work among us and for 'God's Call' in our evolving reality.

Catherine's words may speak to us at this time: "The blessing of unity still dwells among us this is the spirit of the Order, indeed the true spirit of Mercy flowing on us ..." (Letter to E. Moore, Easter 1841)