



## THE FRANCISCAN FEDERATION MAKES A HOME FOR ASSOCIATES

The 2022 *"Hearts on Fire...Journeying Together"* Franciscan Federation Conference made a concerted effort to reach out and welcome all those who identify as Franciscans, not just vowed religious. They are embracing Associates, Companions, Cojourners, Affiliates, as well as all those who seek to live out a Franciscan life in today's world, to journey with them toward the future.

In conjunction with this outreach, the former *Commission of Charism Services* was renamed *Life and Mission Committee*, formed to focus on programmatic, practical, and mission-driven endeavors that provide the space and opportunity for growth in the Franciscan tradition. Unique to this Commission, is a subcommittee structure that supports the three main areas: Formation, Congregational Associates, and Emergents. As head of this committee, Margaret Carney OSF, posed this question to Associate Directors: *Could the Franciscan Federation be More Helpful to Associates and their Directors? If yes, How?* A survey was sent to the Associate Directors of Franciscan Congregations and the findings were presented at the conference.

The survey and conversations identified six areas where the Federation could be of assistance:

- ❖ Assist in making available current, updated materials for initial and ongoing formation of Associates (including materials in Spanish).
- ❖ Compile a list of quality Franciscan presenters for retreats, days of reflection and workshops.
- ❖ Host/Facilitate Zoom calls for Associate Directors on a semi-annual basis.
- ❖ Promote articles about and by Associates for the Federation newsletter.
- ❖ Research and share the various possibilities of how Associates can be sustained into the future.
- ❖ Develop leadership materials to assist Associate Directors on how to facilitate/encourage/promote small group leaders within their own communities.

On November 16<sup>th</sup> seventeen Associates and Associate directors met to review this list and choose an area of interest that they felt called to pursue. Six of those participating were Allegany Franciscans: Colleen Brady, Rita Canfield, Linda Dees, Kathy Doyle, Mary Laubenthal and Cheryl Maggio. The six small work groups have been meeting to develop plans that implement their assignments.

This collaboration should provide opportunities to further ignite our Franciscan-Clarian charism and values and space for the emergence of new ideas. At the end of the meeting, we were asked to give a word that described how we were feeling. Some of the emotions that were vocalized were Hopeful, Energized, Motivated, Excited. A very good beginning!